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« SEROTONINE » DE MICHEL HOUELLEBEC, ENTRE LE SILENCE ET LE TOUT DIRE

Yvonne GOGA*

Abstract. *The speech that is reticent to stay quiet, to say half of things or to say them in a deviated way, has a particular form in Houellebecq's writings since it has a psychological motivation: as he hates his first name, the main character, whilst narrating his story, has to live between the desire to keep his name secret and the obligation to say it. Between silence and speech, one can see his attempts to affirm his individuality, and the way these attempts come up against the world's uncontrollable mutations. Through an analysis of the symbolic value of his journey, I want to prove that the writer actually stages his reticence, choosing love as the best transference and configurational setup to illustrate the speech's restraint in contemporary society.*

Keywords: love, identity, communication.

Renouant avec le roman réaliste, le roman houellebecquien adapte brillamment la formule aux conditions de la vie moderne, en filtrant toute chose par une ironie fine et un style apparemment plat, qui laissent cependant place à la sincérité. Michel Houellebecq désire orienter ses lecteurs vers une compréhension juste de notre société en utilisant des procédés littéraires qui conduisent à la découverte de l'implicite. Dans ce sens, le procédé qui suscite notre intérêt est la réticence, qui nous semble le mieux mise en évidence dans le dernier roman de l'écrivain, *Sérotonine*. Quand on parle de ce procédé, on pense généralement à une omission volontaire de ce qui pourrait être dit, mais aussi à une manière de dire, exprimant l'attitude de quelqu'un qui hésite à dire expressément sa pensée, qui manifeste sa réserve de dire mêlée de désapprobation. La réticence sera ainsi envisagée en tant que constitutive et révélatrice du rapport du sujet au monde et à l'autre, montrant l'oscillation entre le désir de tout dire et le silence vecteur du sous-entendu. Cette forme de manifestations nous semble constituer le point de rencontre des deux pactes littéraires, celui de l'écriture et celui de la lecture¹, pour sonder dans le domaine de l'implicite et ouvrir ainsi à une pluralité de sens.

Nous nous proposons d'examiner la manière dont la réticence se charge de significations, dans *Sérotonine*, au niveau du problème de la communication, à partir de l'analyse du prologue et de l'épilogue du roman.

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¹ De ce point de vue, Tabachnick Moshe considère la réticence comme un élément inhérent à l'architecture du texte : « On peut parler ici de deux sources créatives croisées, celle de l'auteur et celle du spectateur. Et c'est au croisement de ces deux vecteurs que la réticence s'introduit dans la genèse du sens textuel comme élément pertinent de l'architecture textuelle. » Moshe, T., « La réticence comme élément pertinent de la cohérence textuelle : exemple de la chronologie libre dans *Quel beau dimanche !* de Jorge Semprun », in Michel, J., Braestar M., (éd.), *La réticence dans des écritures poétiques et romanesques contemporaines*, EST Samuel Tastet Editeur, 2007, p. 2.

Le sens de la réticence

Dans ses recherches sur l'analyse du début et de la fin des textes littéraires, Andrea del Lungo souligne le lien existant entre ces deux séquences textuelles pour la révélation du sens d'une œuvre littéraire.

Mon hypothèse de départ est que l'*incipit* constitue autant une *exposition* – des thèmes et de significations – qu'une *mise en réserve* du sens, selon un dispositif d'attente qui fonde la lecture même du roman. De ce point de vue, le sens du commencement ne peut être saisi qu'à la fin, au moment où le texte fournit une clé herméneutique, un mode de déchiffrement qui permet de réévaluer et de réinterpréter le commencement. (Andrea del Lungo, 2010 : p.17)

Nous adoptons cette opinion dans l'étude du prologue et de l'épilogue de *Sérotonine*¹, dont le lien est d'autant plus évident qu'ils commencent par la même phrase : « C'est un petit comprimé blanc, ovale, sécable », séparée par une ligne blanche du reste des textes.

Dans le prologue, le protagoniste, se montrant le détenteur de la perspective narrative, commence sa présentation en énonçant ses habitudes matinales : le café, la cigarette et la prise journalière d'un comprimé. Il se présente ensuite à ses lecteurs par les phrases les plus communes : « J'ai quarante-six ans, je m'appelle Florent-Claude Labrouste », auxquelles il ajoute une remarque personnelle : « et je déteste mon prénom (...) » (Houellebecq, 2019 :10) Il explique ce mépris comme résultat de la résonance trop féminine de son prénom, mais il exprime aussi une forme de révolte contre l'autorité parentale qui, le prénommant ainsi, désirait « honorer » la tradition familiale. Cette contrainte imposée par la famille semble être la cause principale d'une attitude réticente qui le fait vivre entre le dégoût de son prénom composé et l'hésitation à entreprendre quoi que ce soit pour le changer. « Mais je n'ai rien fait » avoue le narrateur en reconnaissant sa réticence foncière : « je me suis laissé balloter par les circonstances, j'ai fait preuve de mon incapacité à reprendre ma vie en main (...) » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 12). Le protagoniste de *Sérotonine* révèle ainsi, dès le début de son histoire, sa conduite dans le rapport avec le monde trouvé sous le signe d'une réticence première, source du comportement hésitant, visible dans toutes les circonstances de sa vie.

La phrase d'introduction du prologue, qui donne des informations sur l'aspect morphologique du Captorix, appartient à la perspective narrative auctoriale, de même qu'un paragraphe conçu en termes scientifiques trouvé après la présentation du protagoniste, dont le rôle est de faire connaître l'efficacité de l'antidépresseur de nouvelle génération. Le Captorix, présenté comme le meilleur remède contre la dépression, porte un titre de médicament calqué d'après les produits pharmacologiques, inventé par l'auteur. Houellebecq propose ainsi l'entrée en fiction par un piège adressé à son lecteur pour le persuader du caractère authentique du réel.

¹ Dans ses romans Houellebecq pratique souvent cette structure, chargeant le prologue et l'épilogue de significations qui appuient la lecture et invitent à la relecture.

Le dernier bref paragraphe du prologue et la phrase finale appartiennent de nouveau à la perspective narrative du personnage qui constate : « Les effets secondaires indésirables les plus fréquemment observés du Captorix étaient les nausées, la disparition de la libido, l'impuissance ». Après une ligne blanche, il note : « Je n'avais jamais souffert de nausées » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 12). En fait, le narrateur nomme les domaines de la vie dans lesquels l'antidépresseur a des effets négatifs : la vie sexuelle et la relation avec le monde. Le contenu de la fiction nous est ainsi suggéré, notamment le récit que le narrateur se prépare à faire de sa vie, en sondant l'amour et la société.

La symétrie entre le prologue et l'épilogue est soutenue du point de vue formel par la phrase déjà citée, après laquelle, dans le premier paragraphe de l'épilogue, sont présentés dans une perspective narrative qui englobe celle du personnage et celle de l'auteur, les effets du remède sur la relation de l'homme avec son monde et avec soi-même. Le sens du Captorix comme symbole (Todorov, 1977 : 239)¹ du regard narratif houellebecquien sur le monde est déchiffrable dès l'énumération des fonctions du comprimé : « Il ne crée, ni ne transforme ; il interprète. » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 346). La suite des trois verbes résume la démarche artistique de Houellebecq. Ainsi qu'on peut le voir dans tous ses romans, il ne désire pas créer une réalité autre que la réalité objective, il se propose de : « découvrir [et retranscrire] la réalité par ses propres voies, purement intuitives, sans passer par le filtre d'une reconstruction intellectuelle du monde. » (Houellebecq, 2016 : 25). À la manière du Captorix, l'écrivain « fournit une nouvelle interprétation de la vie » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 346)², mais conformément aux effets de l'antidépresseur, il est conscient de la guérison improbable du désir de réconciliation de l'être avec le monde : « Il ne donne aucune forme de bonheur, ni même de réel soulagement, son action est d'un autre ordre : transformer la vie en une succession de formalités, il permet de donner le change. » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 346). Cet « autre ordre » de l'action de l'antidépresseur fait penser au but du regard créateur houellebecquien de présenter la vie comme une « succession de formalités », tout en se proposant « de donner le change », d'en faire voir les fausses pistes. Il ne veut pas changer le monde, il se contente de l'interpréter. Par le truchement de l'inefficacité de l'antidépresseur dans la réconciliation avec le monde, Houellebecq suggère la réserve de l'individu de dire et d'agir, résultat du confort de se conformer à « l'esprit du temps », ce qui le conduit à oublier sa vie sensible : « Ces élans d'amour qui affluent dans nos poitrines jusqu'à nous couper le souffle, ces illuminations, ces extases, inexplicables si l'on considère notre nature biologique, notre statut de simples primates, sont des signes extrêmement clairs. » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 347). Avant de commencer l'écriture romanesque, Houellebecq a organisé d'ailleurs son essai « Rester vivant, méthode »³ sur l'idée que dans

¹ Nous prenons le symbole dans le sens que lui attribue Todorov. Pour le distinguer de l'allégorie, il considère que le symbole comporte une surprise : que la chose n'est pas la simplement pour elle-même, qu'elle a un sens. Todorov, T., *Théories du symbole*, Paris, Seuil, 1977, p. 239.

² Dominique Viart signale cette tendance existante dans le roman de l'extrême contemporain : « Ainsi le projet romanesque se transforme-t-il : il ne s'agit plus seulement de raconter une histoire, mais aussi, et parfois plus encore, d'interpréter l'homme et le monde. » Viart, D., *Le roman français au XXe siècle*, Paris, Hachette, 1999, p.8.

³ L'essai *Rester vivant, méthode* a paru en 1991 aux éditions La Différence.

l'univers hostile où il y a une rupture entre l'individu et le monde la seule modalité d'exprimer la vérité est le lyrisme.

Si le prologue introduit le signe sous lequel se trouve l'attitude réticente du personnage, l'épilogue en explique le contenu : l'absence des réponses de la vie sensible dans ses rapports avec le monde. La réticence confirme ainsi son rôle de procédé constitutif et révélateur du rapport du sujet au monde et à l'autre.

La réticence – une théorie de la communication

Dans tous ses livres, Houellebecq est préoccupé par l'absence de communication dans le monde social provenant de la vie que l'individu mène entre le libéralisme sexuel et le libéralisme du marché¹. Dans l'esprit des résultats auxquels nous a conduit l'examen du début et de la fin de *Sérotonine*, nous allons examiner la manière dont il pose cette problématique dans ce roman, tout en insistant sur l'examen de la vie sensible avec une attention particulière accordée à l'amour, sentiment qui lui semble le plus voué à l'anéantissement dans notre monde contemporain.²

Trouvé dans une relation basée uniquement sur le sexe, le narrateur commence son récit sous le signe du manque d'amour et de l'absence de communication avec son amante. Le dégoût provoqué par cette situation confirme son opinion sur la communication au sein du couple³, devenant emblématique pour la communication interhumaine :

Il est mauvais que des aimés parlent la même langue, il est mauvais qu'ils puissent réellement se comprendre, qu'ils puissent échanger par des mots, car la parole n'a pas pour vocation de créer l'amour, mais la division et la haine, la parole sépare à mesure qu'elle se produit, alors qu'un informe babillage amoureux, semi-linguistique, parler à sa femme ou à son homme comme l'on parlait à son chien, crée les conditions d'un amour inconditionnel et durable. (Houellebecq, 2019 : 96)

À travers la remarque de son personnage, Houellebecq constate que l'absence de communication entre les individus provient de la mauvaise fonction dont les gens chargent la parole : le remplacement de la parole affective par la parole agressive et haineuse,

¹ Cette idée se retrouve dans plusieurs études sur l'œuvre de Michel Houellebecq. Voir par exemple Ajavon, F.-X., « Michel Houellebecq et la notion de 'sélection sexuelle' » 2002, *Le Philosophoire* no 18, p. 171.

² Houellebecq n'a jamais cessé d'être confiant dans la survivance de l'amour : « Compte tenu des caractéristiques de l'époque moderne, l'amour ne peut plus guère se manifester ; mais l'idéal de l'amour n'a pas diminué. Etant, comme tout idéal, fondamentalement situé hors du temps, il ne saurait ni diminuer, ni disparaître. » Houellebecq, M., « Rester Vivant. Méthode » in *Rester vivant et autres textes*, Paris, Librio, 2016, p.10.

³ Les études sur l'œuvre de Michel Houellebecq qui s'intéressent à la question du couple montrent l'impossibilité de l'amour. Pour en citer quelques-unes : Clément, M. L., *Sperme et sang*, Paris, l'Harmattan, 2003; certains articles du volume Van Wesemael, S., Viard, B., (éd.), *L'Unité de l'œuvre de Michel Houellebecq*, Paris, Classiques Garnier, 2014.

dépourvue de toute sensibilité. La parole devient réticente envers l'expression de la vie affective, de l'amour et du bonheur. Ce que Houellebecq montre, et ce qui est valable pour toute la génération de nos jours, c'est que la réticence envers la parole affective illustre en réalité un manque qu'on devrait combler. Habitué à la parole agressive et haineuse dont le rôle est de briser la communication, l'individu est désarmé devant la parole qui exprime l'amour, le bonheur et l'entente. Dans notre monde social, ce genre de parole manque à la communication. Mais dans les cas où elle est conçue pour s'adresser directement à l'âme avec tendresse, constate le personnage de Houellebecq, elle peut devenir active. L'écrivain souligne cette idée par le plaisir qu'éprouve son héros en écoutant enregistrée sur le répondeur la voix de Kate, son premier amour, une étudiante danoise bénéficiant d'une bourse Erasmus en France : « et sa voix était si fraîche, c'était comme plonger sous une cascade à la fin d'une poussiéreuse après-midi d'été, on se sentait aussitôt lavé de toute souillure, de toute dérégulation, de tout mal » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 100). L'amoureux n'a pas besoin de voir sa bien-aimée, il lui suffit d'entendre sa voix pour recevoir le message du bonheur et se sentir à l'abri du mal. Mais, lui, il ne sait pas rendre ce message à son tour, bien qu'il le comprenne. Déformé par le monde social, il ne peut pas prononcer la parole qui réalise la vraie communication, celle de l'âme à l'âme. Son mal est un mal moral causé par un monde dans lequel l'entente et le bonheur étant éliminés par la rage de la vie matérielle et du sexe, on réprime les manifestations de la vie affective. Sur le quai de la gare, lorsqu'il accompagne Kate qui doit rentrer à Copenhague à la fin de sa bourse, le narrateur évite de l'assurer de son amour : « je n'ai pas bougé, je n'ai pas sauté sur le quai, j'ai attendu que les portes se referment » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 100). Cette attitude réticente envers l'expression du sentiment d'amour est déterminée par son projet de commencer une relation sexuelle avec une « immonde Brésilienne ».

Le protagoniste de *Sérotonine* se conduit de la même manière dans sa deuxième relation avec une femme où le sentiment d'amour trouve une place. Actrice à la recherche d'un engagement, Claire ne peut pas quitter Paris pour vivre avec lui dans la Basse-Normandie où il travaillait à ce moment-là. Il ne trouve aucun mot pour la déterminer à changer d'avis. À la place de la parole qui aurait pu confirmer son amour matérialisé dans une relation conjugale, il envoie à Claire des photos de la belle maison qu'il avait louée, symbole d'un bonheur possible dans la vie de famille : « Au fond de moi-même, je n'avais jamais renoncé à l'idée que Claire viendrait me rejoindre dans cette maison, qu'elle renoncerait à son improbable carrière d'actrice, qu'elle accepterait d'être simplement ma femme » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 116). Réticent envers la reconnaissance de son amour, le narrateur souligne aussi l'abolition du concept de famille, une des « formalités » imposées par la société contemporaine à laquelle il se soumet.

L'incapacité du héros houellebecquien de confirmer son sentiment d'amour en utilisant la parole est encore plus visible dans sa relation avec Camille, une jeune vétérinaire qui fait un stage dans l'entreprise où il travaille :

J'aurais pu lui proposer d'arrêter ses études, de devenir femme au foyer, enfin de devenir ma femme [...]. Mais je ne l'ai pas fait, et sans doute je ne pouvais pas le faire, je n'avais pas été *formaté* pour une telle proposition, ça ne faisait pas partie de mon *logiciel*, j'étais un moderne, et pour moi comme pour tous mes contemporains la carrière professionnelle des femmes était une chose qui devait être

avant toute autre respectée, c'était le critérium absolu, le dépassement de la barbarie, la sortie du Moyen âge. (Houellebecq, 2019 :172)

Se servant du langage de l'informatique et d'une ironie fine à l'adresse de l'émancipation de la femme, le narrateur explique le destin de l'individu soumis au programme conçu par la société. Les gens sont préparés à accepter le support des données imposées par le monde social, à détourner leur regard de la vie sensible, ce qui développe leur réticence à l'égard des manifestations affectives. Cette réticence va jusqu'à imposer le mensonge à la place de la communication des sentiments. C'est un stratagème auquel recourt le narrateur qui évoque des ambitions professionnelles pour rentrer à Paris avec Camille lorsqu'elle finit son stage, au lieu de reconnaître son amour, en réalité le vrai mobile de sa décision. Pourtant il comprend son incapacité de prononcer la parole affective, en essence l'impuissance d'affirmer la liberté de sa vie intérieure : « il était en effet regrettable que je n'aie pas le courage de lui dire simplement : 'Je veux revenir à Paris parce que je t'aime, et que je veux vivre avec toi' » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 177). En revanche, soumis au *logiciel* conçu par la société, il ne résiste pas à la tentation de tromper sa bien-aimée et lorsqu'elle se prépare à le quitter il ne trouve aucune parole pour la retenir : « Le lendemain elle continua à pleurer en rassemblant ses affaires, pendant que je me creusais la tête pour trouver une formule adéquate, à vrai dire j'ai passé les deux ou trois années qui suivirent à chercher une formule adéquate, probablement même est-ce que je n'ai jamais cessé de chercher » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 184). Le langage affectif n'est pas seulement omis du vocabulaire du narrateur, il n'existe même pas dans ses réflexions sur la vie.

Par cette absence de communication au niveau de la vie sensible, Houellebecq définit le mal de notre siècle, une forme moderne du vague des passions¹, tout en affirmant, par l'importance accordée au sentiment d'amour, son rapprochement du romantisme². Son héros éprouve de l'ennui comme le héros romantique, mais si chez celui-ci ce sentiment dit à la fois le mal de vivre et la recherche vaine d'une société capable de satisfaire ses désirs, chez Houellebecq l'ennui signifie vivre mal à cause de la société qui ne laisse satisfaire que les désirs matériels et sexuels. Si le mal des romantiques était causé par une surabondance affective qui ne trouvait pas l'objet de la vie réelle pour s'y ancrer, le mal de nos jours se caractérise, selon l'écrivain, par un vide affectif causé par la surabondance des appels de la vie sociale et matérielle qui ne trouvent pas d'écho dans l'âme. À la manière du héros romantique, le héros de Houellebecq a lui aussi la prise de conscience de l'inadaptation de

¹ François-René de Chateaubriand utilise ce terme dans son *Génie du christianisme* paru en 1802. Le vague des passions est selon lui un état d'âme qui précède le développement des passions mais qui ne trouve pas, dans le monde, d'objets pour se fixer. On vit dans un monde vide avec un cœur plein de passions et on arrive à être désabusé.

² Plusieurs études sur l'œuvre de Houellebecq se sont penchées sur le rapprochement de Houellebecq de la littérature romantique. Voir par exemple Carlson, J., « Les particules poétiques? » in Gavin Bowd (éd.), *Le monde de Houellebecq*, Glasgow, Universities' Design & Print, 2006 ; Bellanger, A., *Houellebecq écrivain romantique*, Paris, Éditions Léo Scheer, 2010 ; Grass D., « Michel Houellebecq et les préromantiques allemands : une lecture poétique du roman houellebecquien » in Clément, M., L., van Wesemael, S. (éd.), *Michel Houellebecq à la Une, op. cit.*, pp. 41-56 ; Lemasson, J., « Une poésie prosaïque » dans Clément, M., L., van Wesemael, S. (éd.), *Michel Houellebecq à la Une, op. cit.*, pp. 57-74.

l'être sensible à son environnement social, mais à la différence de celui-là il ne donne pas prééminence à sa vie intérieure, il la trahit consciemment par sa réticence qui lui est inculquée par la société lui refusant l'adhérence à la vérité : « au bout du compte on m'avait toujours donné tort (...) », constate-t-il (Houellebecq, 2019 : 251).

L'ennui romantique prend chez Houellebecq la forme de la dépression, l'expression suprême de l'absence de toute communication interhumaine. Son personnage la définit en lui prêtant l'une des « formules paradoxales et même absurdes », comme il l'appelle : « *espérer au-delà de toute espérance* » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 305), provenant de la Lettre aux Romains dans laquelle l'apôtre Paul rappelle l'espérance du vieux patriarche Abraham d'avoir le fils promis par Dieu. Ainsi que nous l'avons vu, Houellebecq conçoit le mal de notre siècle comme le désaccord entre le penchant naturel de l'homme d'espérer l'accomplissement des désirs, des rêves, de l'idéal, qui, se heurtant à l'impuissance de leur affirmation dans le monde où l'on vit, ne peut produire que la souffrance. Il le souligne à la fin du roman, expliquant le refus du souvenir comme le plus haut degré de manifestation du vide de la vie sensible. À la recherche d'un studio, son héros va dans le 5^e arrondissement en raison du réseau des thérapeutes qui surveillent son état de santé. Pourtant il doit y renoncer, car s'il allait dans cet endroit porteur des souvenirs de ses amours, le chemin « se transformait en chemin de croix » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 329). Houellebecq signale ainsi que la souffrance remplace à tel point la plénitude de la vie sensible que le souvenir même de l'amour et du bonheur n'y trouve pas de place. Pourtant, en recourant à la phrase de l'apôtre Paul pour définir le mal de notre siècle, l'écrivain laisse ouverte la voie de l'espérance, qu'il préfère nommer « incertitude » : « J'étais entré dans *une nuit sans fin*, pourtant il demeurait, tout au fond de moi il demeurait quelque chose, bien moins qu'une espérance, disons une incertitude » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 306). Par le truchement de son personnage, il formule l'idée de la possibilité de remplir le vide de la vie sensible : « j'ai l'impression que même lorsqu'on plonge dans la vraie nuit, la nuit polaire, celle qui dure six mois consécutifs, demeure le concept ou le souvenir du soleil » (Houellebecq, 2019 : 305). Le symbole du soleil placé dans le contexte du « concept » et du « souvenir » nous fait penser à la lumière de l'esprit, dans le contexte de la vie spirituelle et de la faculté remémorative. Houellebecq entrevoit ainsi, par une expression symbolique, le retour de la parole affective transgressant la réticence de son articulation en vue de rendre possible la communication.

Conclusion

Le récit que le personnage de *Sérotonine* fait de sa vie s'avère être moins une quête identitaire et une recherche des réponses que la prise de conscience d'une attitude hésitante et réticente à l'égard de cette quête même, confirmant la nature de la perspective narrative houellebecquienne d'interpréter le monde, suggérée, dans l'épilogue, par la fonction du Captorix. L'attitude réticente du personnage a une double connotation. D'une part elle constitue une manière d'accepter le mode de vie imposée par la société, un confort qui empêche toute affirmation de la vie intérieure. D'autre part, vu le risque de devenir une seconde nature, elle nuit à la pureté et à l'intégrité des manifestations de la vie sensible, dont l'amour est le plus menacé.

Il n'est pas déplacé de voir dans l'intérêt de l'écrivain pour la sexualité une satire virulente de la société contemporaine, un regard implicite vers la vie sensible et une invitation au dépassement de la réticence à l'égard de la parole affective. Il n'est pas déplacé non plus de voir l'intérêt de l'écrivain pour le romantisme dans la doctrine duquel il retrouve l'expression de la sensibilité, de la pureté et de la sincérité, la seule modalité d'exprimer la vérité, qui est un retour au lyrisme. L'écrivain lui-même signale l'intéférence de ces directions dans sa conception littéraire.¹

Ces principes de l'écriture houellebecquienne se retrouvent dans l'emploi de la réticence comme modalité d'expression du rapport de l'être au monde, dont le rôle est de laisser le non-dit transparaître sous l'agressivité du dire. Derrière l'ironie et le langage sexuel ouvert, on peut deviner les raisons de la dissimulation et de l'implicite. La perspective narrative de *Sérotonine*, cumulant celle auctoriale et celle du protagoniste, montre la position de Houellebecq entre le tout dire et le sous-entendu. Pour l'écrivain, l'emploi de la réticence s'avère être un projet d'écriture qui invite à un projet de lecture, montrant que dans notre monde, la littérature et l'expression artistique peuvent encore bénéficier de projets.

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¹ « Sur un plan plus littéraire, je ressens vivement la nécessité de deux approches complémentaires : le pathétique et le clinique. D'un côté la dissection, l'analyse à froid, l'humour ; de l'autre la participation émotive et lyrique, d'un lyrisme immédiat. » Houellebecq, M., *Interventions 2*, Paris, Éditions Flammarion, 2009, 61.

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THE TRANSLATOR'S RETICENCE, OR, GETTING LOST IN THE MAZE OF TRANSLATION

Emil SÎRBULESCU*

Abstract: Any reading of the translated text in its diachronic relationship with previous and subsequent translations is limited to measuring the distance between this text and the original text compared to other translations. Instead of this reductive approach to reading the history of translation, which ultimately concludes with normative provisions that reduce the complexity of the phenomenon of translation to mere linguistic action, the socio-cultural reading approach of history offers the possibility of understanding translation as a complex social and cultural phenomenon. Our contribution is an approach to the translatability of a literary text, with insistence on the translator's reticence in rendering Shakespeare's bawdy puns, with examples from different translations of *Hamlet* into Romanian, Polish, and Arabic¹.

Keywords: adaptation, Shakespeare, translation.

1. Introduction: On translatability

Translation is a specific form. To understand it as a form, we must return to the original, because the original establishes the rules of translation, in the form of its own translatability. Furthermore, the question of the translatability of a literary work is ambiguous. It can either mean that the work will ever find a competent translator among all its readers, or that the work in its essence allows translation. In principle, the first question can be answered only polemically, and the second only apodictically. Only a superficial mind, denying the independence of the other, will identify both issues... That is why it is important to emphasize that certain relational concepts retain their valid, and perhaps the best meaning if they are not brought into an exclusive relationship with man from the very beginning. The translatability of linguistic creations should also be considered, even when they are untranslatable to humans. And if we understand translation in a strict sense, aren't linguistic creations to some extent really untranslatable? In that sense, it is worth asking whether we should insist on translating certain linguistic works at all: namely, if translation is a form, then we start from the fact that translatability is essentially inherent in certain works. It does not mean that their translation is essentially inherent in them, but means that a certain meaning, inherent in the originals, is manifested in their translatability. It is clear that the translation, no matter how good it may be, cannot have any significance for the original, but, with, thanks to its translatability, it is still in the closest relationship. Translations that are more than mediation when a work, during its further life, reaches the

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¹ For the accuracy of the back-translation of the Polish and Arabic renderings of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, I dutifully acknowledge the invaluable advice of Dr. Paweł Jędrzejko, of University of Silesia in Katowice, Poland (for Polish), and Dr. Margaret Litvin, of Boston University (for Arabic).

age of its glory. That is why they do not serve so much that further life, as bad translators know how to claim for their work, as much as they owe their existence to it. In them, the life of the original reaches its always renewed most mature and most comprehensive stage of development.

Until recently, the theoreticians of translation have consistently placed the translated text in relation to the original text in a hierarchical pattern with which the translation becomes a dependent secondary act conditionally linked to the original which imposes, according to the discourse from which this literature is based, and the conditions for producing and receiving the translation. This hierarchical view is not evidenced by the representations of “translation” in the language. However, the original text is the only reason for the translation to exist, and the condition for its fulfillment. This hierarchical view of translation resulted in a paradigm research model that has extended its influence over translation studies for a long time. This model restricted the task of the translation student to tracing the line between the original and the translation, according to a standardized conception that is most concerned with calculating the degree of “sincerity” of the translation to the original, or rather the extent of its “entering into obedience to him”. However, this model which gained its merits from linguistics in its traditional form has lately given way to another model in translation studies that benefited from the principles and approaches of the sociology of culture. This latter paradigm has replaced an approach based on the “idolatry of the original” with another method in which translation is read as a product of sociocultural genesis. Instead of viewing translation through an unilinear path that begins with and ends with the “original text”, the concept of morphology allows translation to be read as the product of a complex bundle of paths in which the social, cultural, political, aesthetic, subjective, and institutional intersect.

2. Translating Shakespeare, the “inveterate punster”

Especially in literary texts, it should be considered that source and target language equivalents have to entertain similar spirits, regardless of the verbal violation of the source text, and rarely does literary translation attain the stability of the original work (cf. Snell-Hornby 1988:114). The translator encounters great difficulties with what the target language may offer him/her of expressions that can hold similar spiritual or essential functions and convey features of beauty of which readers can be entertained and pleased.

Though similar cultural expressions may not often stand for identical spirits or essences, replacing them by expressions that may carry identical connotations can be recommended, provided that the conveyed material is propped up with enough considerations of their implications. In other words, the translator has to “situationalize” the text by relating it to its environment; both verbal and non-verbal (cf. Hatim, B. and Mason, 1990).

The current cultural essence differences of Shakespeare’s plays and their cultural translated essences seem to generate many translation problems. Thus, the translator should have a scrupulous cultural understanding and a telescopic vision of the source text (English) in order to find the appropriate cultural expressions that can sustain similar effects on the

target language (Arabic) readership and can thus be acclimatized in the new culture. This can be achieved due to the non-sensitivity of the text, on the one hand, and its goal of entertaining the reader more than mentally charging him/her with concrete material, on the other.

For each particular translation project, there will be some unique problems of lexical equivalence. However, there are also some matters which are likely to present special problems in any translation (Larson, 1998: 179). Unlike translating scientific texts, though they have their own translation challenges, for example, translating a literary text is complicated as it is open-ended, and can be understood differently by different individuals. In poetry translation, for instance, problems crop up from the fact that all poems have plurality of meaning. It is not easy to define “even the basic propositional meaning of a word or utterance with absolute certainty”.

3. Language matters

Naturally, in most cases, words have “blurred edges”, and their meanings are negotiable to a great extent (cf. Baker 1992: 17). This requires that the translator should select the equivalents that are unanimously acceptable and enjoy clear currency and frequency. There is an intimate relationship between what Venuti calls “the translator’s invisibility” (1995) and the faithfulness of the literary translator in conveying the beauty and pleasure of the original text with the use of the words and structures of the target language. For a translator to produce a similar or equivalent artistic essence of the original text in the target one, it might be necessary to free himself/herself from the language forms or expressions of the original one, i.e., to avoid literal rendering, and thus can select the target culture and language-specific expressions which are likely to produce a similar emotive effect on the target text readers as that produced on the source text readers.

Shakespeare’s use of puns endows and enriches these plays with secondary and even tertiary meanings. According to Baldick, the pun is “an expression that achieves emphasis or humor by contriving an ambiguity, two distinct meanings being suggested either by the same word (polysemy) or by two similar-sounding words (homophone).” (Baldick, 2001, p. 209). In *Hamlet*, this is a double entendre mechanism which Shakespeare uses as a defensive tactic for the characters. Hence, in many occasions a character may say something which seems straight forward on its face value only to imply a deeper meaning which is difficult to comprehend by his/her opponent (cf. al-Saidi, Salman, Khalaf). Shakespeare exploits the double meaning of the employed word or its sound or linguistic structure, conferring great dramatic significance to the development of the plot and to characterization.

In the translation process, TL readers, who depend exclusively on translation, will have an identical or similar comprehension of the playful effects of puns in the play, and care should be taken that they are not lost in translation. and here we touch upon by the specificity of each culture, which Delabastita explains:

[...] the semantic and pragmatic effects of source text wordplay find their origin in particular structural characteristics of the source language for which the target

language more often than not fails to produce a counterpart, such as the existence of certain homophones, nearhomophones, polysemic clusters, idioms, or grammatical rules. (Delabastita 1994: 223)

All along the process of translation, the new literary text in the target language is individually thought, and individually formed. Its creation is based upon the translator's experience and reaction towards certain events. In other words, the writer shows his intrinsic response and feedback in a transcribed manner, which very often differs from the manner of others, though sharing similar experiences. Not only this, but also the way the audience or reader comprehends the literary text differs from one person to another, which is also another literary translation complication. This requires that the translator should be deviant and extraneous to make cultural shifts in order to produce similar cultural influence on the reader of the target language.

The history of the reception of Shakespeare's works registers numerous attacks on the vulgarity of the language, obscenities and insults uttered by many of the characters of the Great Will. John Dryden, Voltaire, Samuel Johnson, and Lev Tolstoy are just a few of the great personalities who have accused the Bard of making concessions to the not-so-refined audience for which he wrote. And Shakespeare was not a singular case at the time. Although Elizabethan England had a well-developed system for censoring dramatic repertoire (both spoken and printed), Shakespeare's contemporaries competed in writing wild lyrics, filling their plays with obscenities, and swearing. It got to the point that in 1606 the sovereign himself, King James I, tried to stop the proliferation of obscenities by enacting a Law against swearing and blasphemy.

To Shakespeare and his audience, such a dialogue would not come as a surprise. Were they commoners, admitted to The Globe as groundlings, watching the play while standing, or members of the upper classes who could afford to pay for a seat? The theatre-goers were equally responsive to whatever they heard. Whether they were listening to one of Hamlet's soliloquies, to King Henry V's address to his armies before the battle, to the grave-diggers jokingly commenting on the brevity of life, the audience were happy. Shakespeare had everything for everyone present.

4. The translators' reticence

One of the problems the translators have been facing was to either provide a literal rendition of Shakespeare's text or an adaptation, to foreignize or to domesticate the text. When manifest, the translator's reticence responded to the moral standards of the time and of the audience. For our analysis we have selected a few translations belonging to the second half of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century. Whether the *Hamlet* was translated into French, Romanian, Polish, or Arabic, as the case may be, the difficulties the translators had to solve were similar. For our analysis we have selected an excerpt from *Hamlet* – the dialogue between Hamlet and Ophelia before the play-within-the-play begins, which is an example of Shakespeare's use of vulgar language, the sexual puns being well

understood and accepted by his audiences, but less acceptable by readers and theatre-goers in other centuries and cultural spaces.¹

4.1 Two early Romanian attempts

According to Romanian researchers Oana Tatu and Raluca Sinu, the translator's primary concern should be "to accurately decode the culture-bound function of the pun, and to re-encode it as closely as possible in the TL with a view to achieving the same effect on the TL audience" (2013: 42). Anca-Simina Martin discusses puns contextually and, after reviewing an impressive number of different translations, concludes:

The mere fact that the Shakespearean bawdy puns in the above-mentioned comparative analyses were translated, no matter the method opted for, breaks the myth of their untranslatability, while challenging the general belief according to which the communist censorship apparatus interfered with the process of translation. (2017: 185)

George Volceanov, an authority in Shakespeare's bawdy language and the general editor of the *Complete Works* in Romanian, is of the opinion that Shakespeare the playwright was, first of all, a creator of forced entertainment and, more than often, he made concessions to the dubious taste of the public or, in other words, to the economic pressure subject to any free enterprise. Regardless of historical epoch, political regime or geographical space, entertainment goes hand in hand with obscenity, and Shakespeare's art is no exception to this rule, and posterity has repeatedly tried to adapt, censor, or cover up the "delicate" aspects of Shakespearean texts and, in this historical process, Romanian culture has aligned itself with the universal bowdlerization of the Great Will (cf. Volceanov 2012: 230).

If this is true, then it all started in the late nineteenth century with the first translations of Shakespeare into Romanian, and the first stage adaptations of the plays, viewed as "entertainment" by the theatre-goers.

Leaving aside the previous translations and adaptations from German and French, we refer to the first two translations from English into Romanian, both published in Bucharest: Adolphe Stern's version, first published in 1877 and later revised in 1905, and

¹ HAMLET Lady, shall I lie in your lap?
OPHELIA No my lord. 100
HAMLET I mean, my head upon your lap?
OPHELIA Ay my lord.
HAMLET Do you think I meant country matters?
OPHELIA I think nothing my lord.
HAMLET That's a fair thought to lie between maids' legs. 105
OPHELIA What is, my lord?
HAMLET Nothing.
OPHELIA You are merry my lord.
HAMLET Who, I?
OPHELIA Ay my lord. (*Hamlet*, III.2.99-110)

Victor Anestin's translation (1908). Stern's aim was "to transfer into Romanian *Hamlet's* seventeenth-century Englishness". The translator's concern was to convey the exact meaning, atmosphere, and "the play's English specificity", and avoiding riding "the equivalent specificity of his target language" (Cinpoș 2010: 29). The result can be seen in the translation of the excerpt above (we are interested mostly in lines 1, 3, 5, and 7:

Hamlet: *Domnișoară să mă pui în poalele dumneavoastră? // . . // Voiesc să zic, cu capul în poalele dumneavoastră? // . . // Credeți că am avut vreun gând necuviincios? // . . // Este un gând plăcut, a fi culcat între picioarele unei fete. . .*

[Miss, shall I lie in your lap? // . . // I mean, with my head upon your lap? // . . // Do you think I had any improper thoughts? // . . // It is a pleasant thought to lie between the legs of a girl.]

Obviously, the translator wants his translation to be as accurate as possible; thus, though he finds an acceptable solution for Hamlet's "country matters" which he understands very well, he has no other choice than an *ad litteram* translation of Hamlet's "fair thought", which he considers "pleasant", which is not the case with Victor Anestin's 1908 rendering of the same text:

Hamlet: *Doamnă, pot să stau pe sânul D-tale? // . . // Vreau să zic cu capul pe sânul D-tale. . . // Crezi oare că am avut gândul unui om rău crescut?*

[Hamlet: Ma'am, can I lie on your bosom? // . . // I mean, with my head upon your bosom. // . . // Do you think I had the thought of an ill-bred man?]

In this case, the translator's reticence is obvious: he prefers "bosom" instead of "lap", thus avoiding any sexual allusion, paraphrases the "country matters" and simply deletes Hamlet's comments on the "maid's legs". It is actually one of the many liberties assumed by the translator whose Romanian rendering is cut off from the immediate meaning and coherence of the English original, with very limited concern for the play's complexity. Anestin himself admitted that he couldn't always overcome the difficulties of the original, because "it is impossible to translate Shakespeare's puns [...] which bring the conscientious translator to despair" (in Cinpoș, op. cit., 44). Such a confession not only acknowledges the linguistic differences between the source language (English) and the target language (Romanian), but also betrays his rather limited view of the translator's task: "conscientious craft rather than creative work" (Ibidem).

4.2 The Polish renderings in the popular language

In the nineteenth century, as many as twenty-seven Polish translators confronted the original text of Bard's plays and published a translation of at least one play. Some of them were content with one work, some attempted to create a series of translations, and only one, Leon Ulrich, managed to translate the entirety of Shakespeare's canon. The collection and compilation of the biographies of these almost thirty daredevils lead to surprising conclusions: a large part of the translations were written not in the present-day Republic of Poland, but in emigration or precisely in lands that no longer constitute part of Polish territory. Their translation projects are to a large extent pioneering initiative – the first

chronological translations of Shakespeare's works into Polish. One example in support of our demonstration is the translation of *Hamlet* into Polish by Józef Paszkowski:

Hamlet to Ophelia: *Mogę, o pani, leć na twoim łonie? // . . . // To jest na twoim łonie głowę wsparłszy? // . . . // Sądziś-li, żem miał w myśli co innego? // . . . // To by był pomysł nie lada położyć się między nogami dziewczyny.*

[Hamlet to Ophelia: Might I, Milady, lie on thy lap? // . . . // That is, to rest my head on your lap? // . . . // Do you think I meant something else? // . . . // It would be a real idea to lie down between a girl's legs.]

"Łon", however, means both "lap" and "womb" and for this reason the allusion is rather strong, which is why Hamlet, as a Prince of blood, may afford such impertinence with respect to someone of inferior social standing. Perhaps a more acceptable translation would be: "Might I, Milady, lie on thy bosom?" (if we were to find a rough functional equivalent, which would make a shy girl shrink at the proposal, if made in public). Without referring directly to the vulgar meaning of "country matters", he prefers a veiled allusion, "something else", a form of reticence which is practically useless, considering that he is very explicit in his following comment. In most cases, if the translated word-play might sound unnatural in the 19th century Polish, in Paszkowski's translation it is usually camouflaged in the airs of flowery language. According to Paweł Jędrzejko, "Although initially redone, reinterpreted and adapted to meet the requirements of poetic diction and classical principles of drama, in the period of Romanticism, which it had presaged, the play finally received due appreciation all over Europe" (Jędrzejko 1995: 80).

Paszkowski's intention was to render *Hamlet* in Polish in such a way as to retain the play's value as a great literary work. *Hamlet*, at that time considered a part of the European literary heritage and, for socio-historical reasons, having a particularly significant meaning for the Poles, could not have been treated in any other way. Because Shakespeare's name enjoyed enormous esteem among the literary spheres of Poland, reverence, as Paszkowski understood it, was a necessity.

Jędrzejko asserts that passages from Paszkowski's translation have become "stock expressions" in popular language, other translators resorting to Paszkowski's translational solutions. He underlines its vanguard character, both from a scholar's philological/linguistic perspective and from the perspective of a non-academic reader (owing to the fact that his „unadorned" translation was different than the earlier ones by, among others, uncovering the senses of the original absent from the former translations).

4.3 The challenge of Tanyus 'Abdu, "the icon of infidelity"

The translation of Shakespeare from English into Arabic was a complex process which followed three phases: adaptation, Arabization, and translation proper. The first attempts at translating Shakespeare into Arabic were done for the stage, and took the form of mere adaptations of the original texts. To bring the Shakespearean texts closer to the Arab audience, translators dealt with them flexibly introducing various changes to their main components and features including the plot, setting, characterization, etc. In his volume, *An*

Overview of Hamlet Studies (2019), Manpreet Kaur Anand mentions that the first staging of *Hamlet* in Arabic happened in Cairo, Egypt, in 1893. The translation was the work of Tanyus 'Abdu who also directed the performance. He cites Al-Shetawi, who explains that it was a shortened and revised version, in which whole scenes and major passages were omitted. To respond to the taste of the audience, he added songs and Arabic love poetry. What interests us most is the solution he found for the "Lady, shall I lie in your lap?" scene which 'Abdu revised as follows: "Allow me, O Lady to sit at your feet, for I am afraid that the arrows of your eyes might smite me". In the end 'Abdu's Hamlet gains victory over his enemies (cf. Anand 2019: 107).

On the title page of the second edition (1902), we read: "The story of HAMLET a play in five acts composed by Shakespeare the renowned English poet. Arabized by the skilled writer Tanyus Effendi Abdu, Owner of the well-reputed al-Sharq Newspaper". The word "Arabized" explains all the liberties taken by the translator who does his best to make Hamlet palatable to his audience. His indebtedness to the French Hamlet by Alexandre Dumas *père*. Margaret Litvin explains:

A textual comparison (with Dumas' Hamlet, this time, not Shakespeare's) shows that Abdu followed his source fairly closely, with some minor revisions. Only Abdu's songs create a major difference in effect from Dumas' play. They abandon Dumas' highly fluid and enjambed alexandrines for jinglelike Arabic verse. This makes Hamlet's speeches less interesting to read but more singable for the musical star playing Hamlet s. (Litvin 2011: 139)

'Abdu's adaptation had a remarkable impact on the Egyptian stage, becoming the second most popular Shakespeare adaptation after Najib al-Haddad's 1890s *Martyrs of Love*, based on *Romeo and Juliet*.

The next examples are two more recent translations published by Muhammad Awad Muhammad and Jabra Ibrahim Jabra in the 1970s. It is again interesting to note how the translators managed the controversial lines of the scene. First, both translate *ad litteram* Hamlet's "Lady, shall I lie in your lap?", but Muhammad Awad Muhammad thinks it necessary to add one footnote, explaining Ophelia's answer to Hamlet's request: "Ophelia denounced his sitting on her lap, but she allows him to put his head on her lap because the prevailing custom allowed it". As to the "country matters" reference, he translates it as: "Have you thought or considered that I wanted to behave like (with the behaviour of) a country boor?" and again adds a justifying footnote: "A reference to the misbehaviour of rural people with their women. There is no doubt that this reference was understandable to the listeners in Shakespeare's era, yet we do not understand its content now". As if to make things worse, this Arab Hamlet says: "Preferably the remedy is in young ladies' legs (!)". It is another instance of the translator's reticence and care not to offend the morals of his Arab, predominantly Muslim audience. Similarly, Jabra Ibrahim Jabra avoids the explicit vulgarity of Hamlet's "country matters" and has him innocently explain: "I think I mean sleep. What did you think?" and, as Ophelia answers "Nothing", Jabra's Hamlet exclaims: "How beautiful it is to think about lying between the girls' legs!", which brings the text close to Shakespeare's original.

Jabra Ibrahim Jabra's was the first authoritative translation of Shakespeare which triggered a movement towards accurate translations as close to the original as possible. As a

result, the translations published as of the second half of the twentieth century were considered competent scholarly achievements because they did not deal with the text freely and were committed to translating it as closely as possible without changing anything in its structure, plot, characterization, sequence of events, or linguistic content.

5. Conclusion

Translation is ultimately purposeful for expressing the deepest relationship between languages and cultures. It can in no way manifest this hidden relationship, nor establish it, but it can certainly present it by making it in hints or intensively realizing it. More precisely, translation is a very specific mode of representation that is difficult to find in the domain of non-linguistic life, because non-linguistic life has analogies and signs as different types of pointing than the intense realization that anticipates and indicates.

However, the presumed, deep relationship of languages and cultures is a relationship of a very specific convergence, because languages are not foreign to each other, but are a priori and beyond all historical relations related in terms of what they want to say. Translation proves the affinity of languages much more deeply and definitively than the superficial and indefinable similarity of two literary works can. Translation would not even exist if in its final essentially striving for similarities with the original, because the original changes during its further life, and words mature even after they are written down. What may have been the main feature of his poetic language during the writer's life may later be unimportant, just as immanent features can be revived from an already existing form. What was once new can become worn out over time, what was once common can later sound archaic. Just as the tone and meaning of great poetic works have completely changed over the centuries, so has the translator's mother tongue. Moreover, while the writer's word persists in his language, every translation, even the greatest one, is destined to participate in the development of his language, that is, to disappear in a new translation. Far from being a mere mirror of two extinct languages, translation differs from all other forms in that it has the task of considering the subsequent maturation of another's word as much as the birth pangs of one's own. This is what the examples above have hopefully demonstrated.

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LA RÉTICENCE SEXUELLE ET ARTISTIQUE DANS LE ROMAN VERS LA BEAUTÉ DE DAVID FOENKINOS

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Abstract: *In most cases the artistic creation is associated with a favorable optimistic context, allowing the artist to express his ideas. The novel, proposed by the French writer David Foenkinos, offers another perspective concerning the art. The sufferings of the female character, who becomes a victim, leave a mark on the tone used by the author to build the content of the novel, but also on his conception of art, according to which suffering is incredibly favorable to its evolution.*

Keywords: *the reticence, the artist, David Foenkinos*

Introduction

Le roman *Vers la beauté*, paru en 2018, écrit par David Foenkinos, écrivain français et grand admirateur de l'art, est une ode à l'art et aux artistes. Ce roman actuel, qui porte sur les vertus thérapeutiques de l'art, raconte, dans la troisième partie, le destin de Camille Perrotin, une adolescente très talentueuse, qui a une grande passion pour la peinture et pour le dessin.

L'histoire de vie de Camille Perrotin est racontée à partir de l'âge de seize ans et jusqu'à son suicide, après peu de temps, avec minutie, en vue d'identifier dès les premières lignes le côté sensible de la jeune et son goût pour la peinture jusqu'à un moment où la jeune est hantée par un drame : le viol, à l'occasion d'un cours particulier avec son professeur de dessin. De ce point de vue, nous nous intéressons sur le parcours de la jeune Camille, en analysant deux types de réticences : la réticence d'ordre sexuel et la réticence d'ordre artistique, qui nous servent comme point d'appui, en vue d'identifier le rapport du personnage féminin avec l'art.

La réticence sexuelle

L'analyse de la vie de Camille, adolescente passionnée par le dessin et la peinture, nous permet d'identifier une première étape liée aux troubles intérieurs de la jeune, qui la déterminent de s'éloigner de tout ce qui l'entoure. Agée de seize ans, Camille découvre ses premiers sentiments envers un jeune garçon, Jérémie Balesteros, mais après trois mois de beaux moments partagés ensemble, il la quitte. La raison de leur séparation c'est le refus de la jeune de ne pas avoir des relations intimes avec lui. Nous constatons que l'adolescente fait preuve d'une certaine réticence sexuelle, même avant la séparation de Jérémie, mais cette rupture amoureuse représente le moment où Camille « avait basculé de la beauté à la laideur » (Foenkinos 2018 : 122). La jeune, déçue, ne veut plus aller à l'école et ne veut parler à personne.

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Quelques mois avant cette séparation, Camille commence à peindre et « un nouveau monde s'offrait » (Foenkinos 2018 : 121) à cette adolescente introvertie, qui « n'aimait pas se dévoiler » (Foenkinos 2018 : 121). Mais, l'évènement qui la sépare de son premier amoureux bouleverse totalement la vie de Camille, qui ne se manifeste plus comme avant. La jeune a plongé « dans une sorte de léthargie » (Foenkinos 2018 : 115). Nous comprenons cette léthargie, premièrement comme un sentiment d'impuissance : « je sens en moi un poids impossible à soulever » (Foenkinos 2018 : 116). Camille ne veut plus quitter sa chambre, elle ne veut plus aller au lycée et la jeune ne veut rencontrer personne. Deuxièmement, Camille veut être seule, « plongée dans le noir » (Foenkinos 2018 : 116). Les sentiments qu'elle éprouve se transforment dans une immense douleur, qui devient insupportable. Nous constatons que cette étape est comprise par les autres comme une crise d'adolescente. La jeune Camille ne dévoile pas ses problèmes et elle ne demande pas d'aide.

La deuxième étape joue un rôle important pour le premier type de réticence, que nous analysons et trouve la jeune Camille victime d'un viol. Le coupable de cet épisode affreux est Yvan, le professeur de dessin de l'adolescente, qu'elle connaît à l'occasion d'une rencontre en famille. Yvan est la personne qui découvre le talent de Camille. Il observe une certaine réticence chez son élève : « Il me semble que tu te contrôles un peu trop » (Foenkinos 2018 : 132), mais il lui offre des conseils et lui propose de continuer les cours de dessin. Nous pouvons constater que cet homme dessine le destin artistique de la jeune, mais aussi son destin de vie.

Les rencontres entre les deux se font régulièrement et Yvan développe une sorte d'obsession pour Camille. Pendant le temps passé ensemble, l'homme a la chance d'analyser la jeune et arrive à se rendre compte qu'il aime tout d'elle. En se rappelant Camille « une orgie de détails » (Foenkinos 2018 : 141) lui passent dans la tête. De cette manière, lors d'une de leur rencontre Yvan n'arrive plus à se contrôler et réussit à immobiliser la jeune dans son atelier et la violer finalement.

Cet épisode transforme radicalement l'adolescente incapable de « stopper la folie » (Foenkinos 2018 : 143) de son professeur. La victimisation sexuelle du personnage féminin se manifeste de différentes façons. D'un côté, le viol, face auquel la jeune n'a pu rien faire, représente la perte de l'identité de Camille : « à cet instant elle ne s'appelait plus Camille » (Foenkinos 2018 : 143). La jeune a la sensation de s'échapper du monde où elle vit : « Elle disparaissait de la surface du monde » (Foenkinos 2018 : 143). D'un autre côté, le choc qu'elle a subi se ressent au niveau de son corps et la jeune a la sensation d'être comme morte : « Elle voulait se lever, fuir, mais elle n'y arrivait pas, elle avait l'impression de ne plus avoir des jambes » (Foenkinos 2018 : 145). De même, Camille, menacée par Yvan, cache la vérité et ne parle à personne de ce qu'elle a vécu : « elle gardait le silence, car elle voulait le protéger » (Foenkinos 2018 : 145). En plus, la jeune Camille considère que la seule solution pour oublier et pour « faire taire la réalité » (Foenkinos 2018 : 150) c'est de dormir. Toutes ces manifestations, accompagnées par les mensonges pour masquer la souffrance, font de la jeune femme un être qui souhaite mourir. Nous constatons que la relation au monde, qui est défavorable pour Camille, instaure le mutisme du personnage féminin, selon l'auteur :

Le plus inquiétant, finalement, c'était le mutisme de Camille. [...] Pas un mot. De temps en temps, elle chuchotait qu'il ne fallait pas s'inquiéter, c'était une question de quelques jours encore. Mais il était évident que ces mots étaient prononcés dans l'unique but de rassurer l'autre, il n'y avait la moindre conviction dans leur énonciation. (Foenkinos 2018 : 152).

Les étapes qui définissent la réticence sexuelle de Camille arrivent à un moment donné à s'intersecter. Après une bonne période de temps, la jeune rencontre Jérémie. Camille, qui n'est plus la même qu'avant, l'embrasse en souhaitant « diluer la potion du viol » (Foenkinos 2018 : 156) par ce baiser. Elle se donne une deuxième chance et, insensible aux jugements des autres, se laisse menée par l'appétit sexuel. C'est important de noter que le personnage féminin se comporte comme un objet. Nous constatons une dépersonnalisation de la femme, qui n'a plus des sentiments et qui ne tient plus compte de rien. : « personne ne peut blesser un mort » (Foenkinos 2018 : 158).

D'autre part, la rencontre de Camille avec Yvan, après quelque temps, lui provoque une crise, après laquelle le jeune reste au lit pendant un mois. L'intensité du choc est si grande que la seule solution trouvée par Camille est de disparaître. La jeune veut se noyer dans la mer pour s'échapper à cette réalité cruelle : « Elle avait eu besoin de se perdre, se regarder la mort en face, (...), de pouvoir vivre à nouveau » (Foenkinos 2018 : 171). Après quelque temps a lieu une deuxième rencontre entre les deux. Cette fois, Camille n'a presque aucune réaction.

La réticence artistique

Le destin du personnage féminin touche aussi le côté artistique de la jeune Camille. Nous considérons intéressant de noter comment ses sentiments négatifs l'aident à construire un monde esthétique

La première étape qui correspond à ce type de réticence est celle qui présente le parcours de Camille en tant qu'élève au lycée. Son grand désir de peindre est, pourtant, limité par sa raison, qui la détermine de contrôler ses idées et ses gestes. Avant de commencer les cours de dessin, l'adolescente est allée au Musée des Beaux-Arts de Lyon et cette visite représente le tournant dans la vie de Camille, car « un monde de beauté s'offrait à elle » (Foenkinos 2018 : 123). Grâce à cette visite, Camille s'identifie très bien avec un tableau du musée : *La Monomane de l'envie* de Théodore Géricault. Ce tableau, qui présente un étrange portrait d'une malade anonyme, attire l'attention vers le visage, partie du corps sur laquelle le trouble psychique de la femme est visible. Ce détail conduit notre analyse vers une histoire de vie chargée d'émotions négatives, qui touchent le psychique du personnage. La contemplation du tableau la fait s'identifier avec les couleurs froides utilisées par le peintre.

La souffrance de Camille contribue, pourtant, à la création. La jeune continue ses visites aux musées, elle achète des livres d'art, en vue de peindre et d'extérioriser ses idées. Camille vit une révélation en découvrant la peinture. Dans ce sens, nous identifions la valeur thérapeutique de l'art. Son grand désir de peindre, même limité par la raison, la détermine

de peindre. Sa grande ambition, même contrôlée, fait Camille réussir son examen d'admission aux Beaux-Arts.

Cette deuxième étape, qui parle toujours de la réticence artistique, décrit comment la vie du personnage féminin s'ouvre vers de nouveaux horizons. L'adolescente, qui avait avant un autocontrôle de son imagination, de ses idées et de ce qu'elle dévoilait à travers ses dessins a maintenant un désir « organique » (Foenkinos 2018 : 124), un désir « plus fort que l'inspiration » (Foenkinos 2018 : 125). La jeune fille ne souhaite que peindre et vivre « comme une artiste »². Cette effervescence de l'inspiration devient de plus en plus riche après la rencontre de Camille avec Yvan, son professeur de dessin. À l'occasion de ces cours, l'adolescente développe le goût de l'autoportrait et la seule chose importante pour Camille c'est qu'elle « voulait peindre, elle voulait peindre, elle voulait peindre » (Foenkinos 2018 : 133). Camille, encouragée par son professeur, part à Paris pour trois jours visiter des musées.

De même, lors d'un nouveau voyage à Paris, Camille arrive à comprendre « la puissance cicatrisante de la beauté » (Foenkinos 2018 : 172). En plus, l'admission aux Beaux-Arts offre à Camille la chance de connaître Antoine Duris, son professeur, dont les cours sont indispensables pour l'évolution de la jeune étudiante. Cet homme est la personne qui fait que la peinture soit interprétée comme une « narration interrompue » (Foenkinos 2018 : 176) et inspire beaucoup Camille. Nous constatons que la vie de Camille, remplie de déceptions et d'échecs, change grâce à la peinture. Selon le concept freudien de *sublimation*, les frustrations intérieures du personnage féminin sont favorables à la création artistique.

Conclusion

L'analyse de ce roman nous permet d'analyser en détail « le territoire problématique de l'art » (Borillo 2005 : 8) et de voir que la souffrance est la composante essentielle de la création artistique. Malgré tout le malheur, la jeune trouve la force et l'envie de peindre de nouveau. Le mutisme, qui s'est instauré aussi au niveau des idées et la tentative de suicide, qui a été la meilleure solution pour Camille de s'échapper à ce monde arrivent d'être finalement remplacés par une grande force créatrice. La jeune étudiante aux Beaux-Arts exploite la peinture. Toutes les angoisses et son mal-être, qui ont caractérisé son histoire de vie et qui ont contribué à la destruction du soi-même sont favorables pour la reconstruction du personnage par la beauté. Les éléments qui ont décrit le mal non-dit de Camille donnent vie à un autre type d'inspiration. L'art pictural, dans le cas de notre roman d'analyse, est vu comme une mosaïque, qui regroupe les problèmes du personnage de Camille. Donc, L'activité créatrice est comprise dans notre roman d'analyse comme le résultat des contraintes intérieures.

La jeune étudiante, qui utilisait avant « des couleurs sans agressivité » (Foenkinos 2018 : 125), peint son autoportrait en nuances de mauve, « couleur de la mélancolie

² Ses tableaux étaient souvent assez doux, des couleurs sans agressivité ; on aurait dit une peinture qui vous tend à la main. (Foenkinos 2018 : 125).

joyeuse » (Foenkinos 2018 : 185), selon l’auteur¹. L’autoportrait est la somme de toutes les sensations multipolaires vécues par le personnage féminin, qui arrive à cesser de se culpabiliser. Les nuances utilisées par Camille pour l’autoportrait sont justifiables et dévoilent la peur, la tristesse, mais aussi le contentement d’avoir réussi à réaliser une peinture originale, qui résume son destin, selon aussi les constats de Borillo, dans son livre critique *Approches cognitives de la création artistique* :

Enfin, ce n’est pas parce que ces fluctuations de notre expérience affective montrent qu’elle est simplement un mode d’accès à la beauté (ou à d’autres valeurs esthétiques) que ni devons ni réduire la beauté à l’émotion ni tenter de séparer la beauté de l’émotion, puisque la beauté semble bien liée sinon aux émotions de surface du moins à leurs fondements dynamiques. (Borillo 2005 : 30).

Nous insistons à mentionner que ce tableau unifie le trauma du viol, le blocage de Camille, mais aussi son potentiel artistique. Camille admet qu’elle n’a aucune responsabilité pour ce qui s’est passé. En plus, elle donne le titre « Fin de la culpabilité » à l’un de ses dessins. Mais, le personnage n’arrive pas à se débarrasser de ses symptômes morbides et n’accepte pas son destin. La névrose du personnage féminin est plus forte que son travail artistique. La jeune se considère « plus un ombre qu’une vie » (Foenkinos 2018 : 201) et finit par se jeter par la fenêtre. Le suicide semble être la seule solution aux problèmes de Camille.

Nous considérons intéressant que derrière tout ce qui est raconté dans le roman se trouve le potentiel créateur de Camille. Ainsi, l’histoire de vie du personnage féminin, qui penche entre les deux types de réticences, présente la manière dont la peinture offre la chance à Camille de découvrir la jouissance artistique. De ce point de vue, l’autoportrait représente l’œuvre qui met en scène la réticence, qui relève le mal non-dit. De cette façon, nous pouvons affirmer que le trauma est extériorisé par l’art pictural et la réticence, de tout type qu’elle soit, est finalement l’atout de la jeune Camille, qui transfigure le mal en beauté.

Corpus

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¹ Le visage affichait une expression neutre, mais le regard semblait clairement dirigé vers celui ou celle qui observait le tableau. (...) Mais la force de l’expression s’atténuait par un contour mauve tout en douceur. (Foenkinos 2018 : 185).

TEXTE ET MISE EN SCÈNE. CONSTRUIRE L'ATTENTE DANS LA PIÈCE DE THÉÂTRE « QUI EST CE IONESCO ? »

Bogdan CIOABĂ*
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Abstract: *Our paper is a two-part analysis of a dramatic text - Who is this Ionesco?, by Richard Letendre - and its stage version in Romanian, signed by Bogdan Cioaba. The aim is to observe and analyse the construction of suspense and expectation by means specific to each art: the theatre and the literature. We start from the stated purpose of the play, which is a journey in search of a certain Ionesco, a journey that is built on waiting, on suspension, on the gradual, sometimes reluctant discovery of the identity of the designed person. We therefore want to highlight the textual and staging strategies on which this gradual discovery is based, until the final unveiling.*

Keywords: *suspension techniques, gradual discovery, stage strategies, literary strategies*

Préambule

Auteur incontournable du théâtre de l'absurde, Eugène Ionesco laisse une postérité dramatique inépuisable, imposant un humour tout personnel : des techniques de détournement de la logique commune par l'utilisation du langage qui touche au dérèglement, des techniques encore de dé-sémantisation et de dé-sémiotisation des objets. En effet, les pièces ionesciennes sont construites sur un schéma récurrent, qui consiste dans une succession d'actes absurdes et d'objets incongrus. L'héritage de Ionesco va bien au-delà la vie de l'auteur : le texte *Qui est ce Ionesco?*, du Québécois Richard Letendre en est un bon exemple.

20 ans après la disparition physique du dramaturge franco-roumain, Letendre publie chez Nemesis, maison d'édition canadienne, un texte dramatique dans la tradition ionescienne, « en hommage à la mémoire d'Eugène Ionesco qui nous quittait il y a 20 ans »¹ (Letendre, 2014)

Texte et mise en scène – construction de l'attente

Notre approche, dans le présent travail, est doublement ciblée : vers le texte dramatique et vers la mise en scène en roumain, proposée par Bogdan Cioabă. Le but est d'observer et d'analyser la construction du suspense et de l'attente par les moyens spécifiques à chaque art : le théâtre et la littérature. Nous partons du but déclaré de la pièce, qui se fait clair dès le titre : un voyage à la recherche d'un certain Ionesco, un voyage qui se

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¹ Texte sur la couverture intérieure de l'édition bilingue, française et roumaine, parue en 2014.

construit sur l'attente, sur la suspension¹, sur la découverte progressive, parfois réticente, de l'identité de la personne cherchée. Nous voulons donc mettre en évidence les stratégies textuelles et de mise en scène sur lesquelles repose cette découverte progressive, jusqu'au dévoilement final.

La première version scénique du texte, en français, a été créée en 2011, au Théâtre Effet V, à Montréal, dans la mise en scène de Thérèse Perrault, avec l'auteur, Richard Letendre, dans le rôle de l'inspecteur-enquêteur. Il s'agit d'une version scénique en trois acteurs – la didascalie initiale précise : « Pièce pour 3 ou 4 comédiens à multiples personnages) – focalisée sur le rôle de Choubert, qui est le pilon de la représentation.

La mise en scène en roumain appartient à Bogdan Cioabă, au Théâtre « Alexandru Davila » de Pitesti, en 2012. Il s'agit cette fois d'une version en quatre acteurs – deux hommes et deux femmes – ce qui respecte aussi la didascalie initiale, mais anticipe une vision différente : c'est un seul acteur qui incarne sur la scène l'inspecteur, tandis que les autres rôles sont assumés par les trois autres acteurs, qui s'identifient par des éléments vestimentaires : un tablier pour Marie, la bonne, un chapeau pour l'administrateur etc. Il est donc clair que le metteur en scène a voulu centrer sa représentation sur le personnage de l'inspecteur, vu que l'acteur qui assume ce rôle n'en fait aucun autre. De plus, le metteur en scène réinterprète de façon originelle – actualisée dans les vêtements et dans l'attitude du personnage – certaines parties du texte, tout en le conservant : il crée l'image d'une instance suprême, une sorte de juge ou divinité de rang supérieur qui évalue et qui pèse les faits.

Le texte de Letendre, dont la veine biographique est évidente, propose un voyage / quête à la recherche d'un certain Ionesco, dont le nom se « construit » au début de la pièce, par la technique de l'anagramme. Une fois le nom dévoilé, il faut en trouver le référent, un homme dont on annonce déjà, paradoxalement, le décès :

Choubert : Tiens ! Eugène Ionesco est mort...

Madeleine : Ah Non !!! C'est terrible ! Quand ?

Choubert : Le 28 mars 1994 chez lui à paris Boulevard du Montparnasse... (Letendre 2014 : 9)

Même si la date du décès peut déjà représenter un indice, l'identité de Ionesco se construit dans le texte progressivement, par la technique de la suspension qui suscite, évidemment, curiosité et attente. Vaïs remarque de manière très pertinente :

Ici, l'étrangeté, l'émerveillement occupent toujours la première place. Le texte de Letendre expose l'étonnement devant le fonctionnement de la langue française, mise avec délices sur les jeux de mots, s'enfonce à ravir dans le quiproquo. (Vaïs, 2011 : 11).

L'anagramme instaure, évidemment, une certaine suspension, l'attente du nom complet du personnage que l'on cherche et qui se construit pas à pas, jusqu'à arriver à la forme IONESCO.

¹ Nous entendons le concept de *suspension* dans la lignée de Fontanier : « consiste à faire attendre jusqu'à la fin d'une phrase ou d'une période, au lieu de présenter tout de suite un trait par lequel on veut produire une grande surprise ou une forte impression ». (Fontanier, 1977 : 364).

Au niveau scénique, l'attente est construite par le décor et par l'apparition inopinée d'une boîte en carton. L'idée du metteur en scène a été d'imaginer et de suggérer une sorte de paradis, un espace du jugement, où arrivent des boîtes en carton représentant le parcours de vie des décédés. L'espace du jeu est en quelque sorte caché à la vue du public, par une sorte de mur fait en boîtes de carton qui ne laissent voir que deux personnages – un homme et une femme – vêtus de blanc (ils seraient des anges) et qui jouent au tennis, très distraitemment.

L'apparente tranquillité du lieu est troublée par l'apparition de cette boîte en carton qui semble arriver de nulle part : le jeu de tennis est abandonné à ce point et les acteurs commencent à fouiller dans la boîte et à lire les documents qui s'y trouvaient. Une partie des boîtes s'écroulent, créant une brèche, une sorte de fenêtre dans le mur initial, laissant les spectateurs voir intégralement l'espace du jeu.

Toutefois, nul élément ne précise, pour le moment, ni le vrai rôle de ces personnages vêtus de blanc, ni le nom, ni l'identité contenus dans la boîte qui vient d'être envoyée. Par contre, la suspension est instaurée, à plusieurs niveaux : qui sont en vérité ces personnages vêtus de blanc, quel est le nom du nouvel arrivé, quelle est son identité. La suspension sur les personnages ne sera résolue que vers la fin de la représentation : bien qu'ils agissent comme des fonctionnaires aux archives, en rangeant des dossiers contenant le parcours de vie des décédés, ils sont en effet des anges dont le rôle était d'évaluer et de juger les vies de ceux qui quittaient le monde des vivants. Pour ce qui est de la découverte progressive du nom contenu dans la dernière boîte, les anges-fonctionnaires le construisent toujours par la technique de l'anagramme et, une fois trouvé, la boîte est rangée sur les étagères, portant cette fois le nom IONESCO.





Le texte et la représentation suivent donc cette logique de la suspension qui se construit sur deux niveaux : l'un graphique – l'anagramme¹ – dans le deuxième tableau et l'autre narratif, par le développement progressif des faits biographiques et littéraires qui forment le portrait du personnage cherché. De plus, il y a une double logique qui régit le texte : l'angoisse de la mort (il y a un paradoxe ici, selon nous, puisque la certitude de la mort, déjà advenue, annule partiellement l'attente), la mort certaine crée une autre suspension, celle d'en trouver les circonstances et la quête, avec ses multiples volets : quête de soi-même et de ses racines, quête du père, quête de l'auteur dramatique. Cette quête acquiert des dimensions psychologiques, voire mythiques, par l'obsession de trouver le lien entre le commencement et la fin, en effet le cercle qui retrace la vie et le parcours créateur.

L'enquête est menée par Choubert, qui n'est pas sans rappeler le personnage ionescien des *Victimes du devoir*, lui-même sujet d'une quête qui mène inévitablement à la mort, un accusé impuissant qui doit expier une faute passée. Ainsi, on peut le voir comme un Œdipe enquêteur des ressorts de l'existence humaine. C'est une investigation qui se déroule sur deux plans : celui biographique – trouver l'identité de Ionesco l'être social – et l'identité de Ionesco l'auteur dramatique : « nous essayons de connaître l'auteur qui nous a fait naître » (Letendre, 2014 : 14). Mais, encore une fois, c'est une recherche à double sens : connaître l'auteur signifie, pour les personnages, comprendre qui ils sont : « En sachant qui il est, nous saurons peut-être qui nous sommes » (Letendre, 2014 : 14).

Pour la construction de l'être social, plusieurs indices s'enchaînent : la date de la mort, le premier détail, celui qui transforme l'enquête dans une démarche *a posteriori* ;

¹ L'anagramme est une figure par permutation, qui touche la forme (phonique ou graphique) des mots. Classée par Du Marsais et par Fontanier dans la catégorie des « figures de diction » qui consistent en une altération quelconque du matériel primitif des mots et par le Groupe μ dans celle des métaplasmes, affectant donc la forme des mots.

l'épisode de l'enfance qui déclenche l'angoisse de la mort¹, le nom de sa femme, Rodica, celui de sa fille, Marie-France, le nom de la mère, Marie Thérèse Ipcar.

Quant au dévoilement de Ionesco, l'auteur dramatique, la suspension se construit en deux étapes distinctes, ce qui fait accroître l'attente : le premier tableau introduit une liste des titres, accompagnés des années de parution et des lieux de leurs premières représentations. Cette liste est dramatisée sur la scène, où les acteurs lisent les titres en fouillant dans la boîte qui arrive dans leur espace. La notoriété de ces titres crée, certes, une attente justifiée, mais le dévoilement à partir du deuxième tableau ne la confirme pas immédiatement. Ensuite, des indices, dans le déroulement dramatique, construisent le puzzle du portrait d'un dramaturge qui ne devient complet qu'au 17^{ème} tableau : « il a inventé un nouveau langage théâtral » (Letendre, 2014 : 12) ; il a été élu à l'Académie française, « sa *Cantatrice chauve* est jouée sans interruption depuis 1957 au théâtre de la Huchette, à Paris » (Letendre, 2014 : 30) ; « Daisy : Ionesco refusait les idéologies, la vengeance, le fantaisisme. Le Policier : le fanatisme ». (Letendre, 2014 : 38).

Un point clé dans le déroulement dramatique, se constituant en péripétie, est le meurtre de Daisy, suivi par sa transformation dans la reine Marguerite. C'est le même cercle entre la vie et la mort, la transformation et la survie, actualisée cette fois au niveau des personnages.



L'enquêteur tue Daisy parce qu'elle ne réussit pas, par ses réponses, l'arracher de ses cauchemars : ne pas pouvoir trouver une réponse aux cauchemars que faisait Ionesco sur le pourquoi de la vie, de l'existence. Dans la mise en scène, ce meurtre acquiert du dramatisme par l'utilisation particulière du décor : Choubert tue Daisy en renversant sur le corps de la femme des boîtes en cartons qui sont manipulées comme si elles étaient très pesantes, comme des blocs en pierre.

Mais Daisy, le personnage, ne meurt pas. Elle se transforme (actualisation, d'ailleurs, du mythe de Narcisse) et reçoit une nouvelle existence, devenant la reine

¹ « A quatre ans, il a pris conscience qu'il y avait une fin et toute sa vie il a refusé d'accepter la mort ». (Letendre, 2014 : 11).

Marguerite¹ parce que le personnage doit continuer et conserver la vie de Ionesco, son auteur :

La Reine Marguerite : Nous sommes tous des Ionesco.
La Reine Marie : Ce qu'il aurait voulu être. (Letendre, 2014 : 43)

C'est un moment où la suspension est de nouveau mise à l'œuvre : on s'attend à ce que l'inspecteur trouve son Ionesco mais, on découvre que, comme tous les autres, il n'est qu'un personnage, donc une projection de son auteur, des angoisses de celui-ci.

Conclusions

Le long des différents épisodes, avec les personnes et les personnages qui se laissent découvrir par la technique de la suspension, l'enquête atteint son but : une fois l'auteur découvert, son angoisse de l'enfance est dissipée. La conservation de sa mémoire, l'empreinte qu'il a laissée sur le théâtre et sur le langage dramatique, sa projection dans les personnages, tout cela confirme que Ionesco a réussi à vaincre la mort : « Et il y aura toujours son théâtre » (Letendre, 2014 : 14).

Ainsi, le dénouement assouvit l'attente : Ionesco est découvert et rendu immortel par ses personnages. D'autre part, l'on découvre que tout s'était passé dans un monde des êtres de papier, des personnages ionesciens, en quête de leur auteur :

Voix off : Je suis... Jean Marie, Mme. Smith, Mme. Martin [...] Bartholoméus III. (Les prénoms se mélangent jusqu'à...)
Et nous ne mourrons jamais !!! (Noir) (Letendre, 2014 : 49).

Quant à la mise en scène, elle propose un coup de théâtre, correspondant à une quatrième modification du décor : le mur en boîtes de carton est reconstruit, mais cette fois les spectateurs peuvent voir que sur chaque boîte est inscrit le nom d'un grand auteur dramatique. Le spectacle porte donc encore plus loin l'idée du texte. Le premier s'arrête à la solution de la suspension, en dévoilant le portrait complet de Ionesco, l'homme et l'auteur. Le deuxième dévoile aussi quel est cet espace habité de « fonctionnaires » habillés en blanc : une sorte de paradis de la dramaturgie et des dramaturges.

¹ Jeu sur le sens du nom propre Daisy, dont le correspondant en français est Marguerite.



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« LE POISSON-SCORPION » SOUS LE SIGNE DE LA RÉTICENCE

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Abstract: The Fish-Scorpion by Nicolas Bouvier is a literary work that allows the study of the concept of reluctance in different forms. The title of this book invites the reader to make assumptions and offers him the opportunity to imagine himself, to have expectations regarding the content of the novel, to try to find the explanation of the title in the novel. Reluctance is introduced into the work through intertextuality with both direct and indirect references. Direct and indirect references give readers the opportunity to reflect, think and interpret things as they wish, to enrich the meaning from their own readings, to see and imagine themselves beyond the actual text of the work. The implication appears beyond the microcosm and this lends to different interpretations. Reticence is a process which enriches and nuances a literary work.

Keywords: reluctance, interpretation, meaning.

La réticence

Le dictionnaire Le Petit Robert propose comme synonymes pour le mot *réticence* : « dissimulation, sous-entendu, difficulté, hésitation » (Le dictionnaire le Petit Robert, Paul Robert, 1993 : 2202 – 2203). Si on se rapporte à la littérature, aux œuvres littéraires, on se permettrait d'affirmer que la réticence est le procédé littéraire qui se trouve au point d'interaction entre les idées et les pensées exprimées d'une manière exacte, directe (pour que le lecteur comprenne seulement ce que le narrateur veut transmettre) et les idées, les pensées, les réflexions exprimées d'une manière voilée, dissimulée (pour que le lecteur puisse lire derrière les mots et puisse s'imaginer des choses, des actions, des suites).

La réticence est un concept qui offre l'opportunité aux lecteurs de tisser au-dessus du texte, de s'imaginer, d'interpréter, de rêver, de proposer une suite, d'adapter la lecture à son désir, à ses attentes. La réticence est un concept littéraire qui fait apparaître au niveau d'une œuvre littéraire les notions d'ambiguïté, on peut parler de la pluralité d'une œuvre littéraire, c'est à dire la liberté laissée au lecteur de s'imaginer le monde d'un certain ouvrage au-delà des mots écrits sur la feuille de papier, des idées précisées, clairement exprimées.

La réticence laisse les lecteurs : - sous-entendre, c'est-à-dire créer un monde parallèle à celui présenté par le narrateur ; - soupçonner, chercher le non-dit ; - donner un sens particulier, propre à un énoncé ; construire ou s'imaginer une situation finale, une fin pour une œuvre pour laquelle le narrateur a laissé une fin ouverte, même s'imaginer une suite à son gré.

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La réticence peut être également interprétée comme une hésitation, dans cette situation, on peut penser que le narrateur ne veut pas dire directement ce qu'il a à dire, parce qu'il veut que son lecteur reste tout le temps connecté à l'histoire racontée, il veut stimuler l'imagination, la créativité et l'intelligence émotionnelle de son récepteur, le narrateur hésite à nommer directement parce qu'il veut avoir toute l'attention, la fidélité, voire la loyauté de son lecteur.

Qu'on parle du non-dit, du sous-entendu, de l'hésitation ou de la dissimulation, on est dans le même champ sémantique de la réticence qui favorise durant l'étude d'un texte littéraire l'apparition d'autres concepts tels : l'ambiguïté, la pluralité, la polyphonie, le symbole.

Les romans de voyage laissent toujours certains aspects qui donnent la possibilité au lecteur d'avoir ses propres jugements, d'apporter ses propres interprétations, ses propres conclusions. Sauf les impressions, les idées clairement exprimées par le narrateur, il y a toujours quelque chose qui comporte également d'autres connotations, d'autres valeurs et significations.

Nicolas Bouvier, lui-même, a affirmé en différentes situations que : « Il y a beaucoup de non-dit dans ce que j'écris et je cherche à faire en sorte que la partie émergente de l'iceberg permette de deviner la partie immergée »¹.

L'ouvrage *Le Poisson-Scorpion* de Nicolas Bouvier se prête à une étude approfondie en ce qui concerne la réticence et offre une multitude de possibilités à exploiter. Même le titre de ce roman invite le lecteur à faire des suppositions et lui offre la possibilité de s'imaginer, d'avoir des attentes en ce qui concerne le contenu du roman, d'essayer à trouver dans le roman l'explication de ce titre.

Le titre suggère une certaine dualité et suscite ainsi la curiosité du lecteur qui est invité à se poser des questions. A une première vue, au sens dénotatif des mots qui composent le titre, on peut s'attendre à découvrir l'histoire d'un poisson et d'un scorpion.

Mais, au fur et à mesure de la lecture, on découvre qu'il s'agit de l'histoire d'un voyageur qui pendant son périple sur une île, a des expériences diverses, étranges, même fantastiques et initiatiques.

Pour ce qui est du titre de l'œuvre *Le Poisson-Scorpion*, dans le premier chapitre, on apprend que c'est l'anniversaire du narrateur qui est né sous le signe du poisson ; dans le dixième chapitre, on apprend à la rupture amoureuse entre le narrateur et sa bien-aimée, autrement dit, on apprend à la rupture entre le poisson – le narrateur et sa bien-aimée qui était née sous le signe du scorpion ; dans le vingtième chapitre, on apprend à la naissance de la petite fille de l'aubergiste sous le signe du scorpion. Dans cette situation, on peut parler d'une dimension, d'une valeur symbolique du poisson et du scorpion.

Le motif du poisson-scorpion est en fait partagé en deux identités différentes, le poisson qui représente le narrateur et le scorpion qui représente la bien-aimée du narrateur.

Certains critiques ont souligné l'aspect hybride du roman, lequel abonde, d'une part des éléments concrets, de descriptions réelles et détaillées, de descriptions de lieux, et, d'une autre part d'éléments symboliques qui réclament un effort d'interprétation et

¹ Plattner P., Nicolas Bouvier, *Le Hibou et la baleine*, Genève, Light Night Production Genève : Télévision suisse romande, 1992.

d'imagination de la part du lecteur. Le rationnel occidental se rencontre avec l'irrationnel d'une autre mentalité, la mentalité orientale difficile à être comprise par les occidentaux.

Dans la culture orientale, la magie, les astres occupent une place essentielle, tandis qu'en Europe, elle est presque manquée d'importance, de sens.

L'action se passe sur une île, l'île elle-même par sa propre définition est un lieu spécial, distingué qui présente ses propres caractéristiques, particularités et qui offre aux voyageurs des conditions de vie toutes différentes d'un lieu commun.

Puisqu'il s'agit d'un roman de voyage, le lecteur s'attend à participer au périple du narrateur sur cette île particulière, à participer à la présentation des lieux, des monuments emblématiques de cet espace-là, mais en fait, dans cette œuvre le déplacement est réduit au minimum et l'action de l'œuvre est axée sur les expériences vécues par le narrateur, des expériences bizarres, étranges.

On remarque que l'action n'est pas centrée sur le voyage physique, bien qu'on parle d'un roman de voyage, l'action est centrée sur le voyage psychologique, sur les angoisses, les sentiments et les souffrances du narrateur. Bien qu'on s'attende au mouvement, à l'action, nous découvrons et assistons à un état de lenteur, d'inertie du narrateur.

Le sous-entendu à travers l'intertextualité

L'intertextualité est un procédé littéraire pleinement employé par Nicolas Bouvier dans l'ouvrage mis en discussion. A partir des œuvres littéraires et des noms d'écrivains insérés dans cet ouvrage, le narrateur offre la possibilité aux lecteurs de faire des suppositions, d'enrichir le message transmis par le narrateur, de le nuancer, d'en donner des significations multiples et différentes en fonction de leurs connaissances culturelles.

Dans *Le Poisson-Scorpion*, on remarque la présence des *références directes*, en tête des chapitres I, VI, IX, X, XI, XIII et XVI, le narrateur a mis des épigraphes et des citations qui ont un rôle sémantique bien important au niveau du récit. Outre le rôle sémantique, on remarque également la polyphonie qui apparaît entre la voix du narrateur et la voix de l'écrivain. Ces références directes introduites dans l'ouvrage sont en liaison directe avec le contenu du chapitre et nous permettent en même temps de comprendre, de saisir le sens du chapitre et d'apporter des significations en fonction de notre culture générale.

L'introduction d'un texte connu ou bien connu dans le texte d'une autre œuvre lui apporte quelque chose de plus, le narrateur enrichit le texte et lui ajoute de significations.

Par exemple au début du chapitre IX : « Quatre grains d'ellébore », on trouve une citation de R. Kipling :

« Eloignez-vous à un jet de pierre sur la gauche de cette route bien entretenue sur laquelle nous marchons, et aussitôt l'univers prend un air farouche, étrange [...] ». (Bouvier N., 1996 : 79)

Le narrateur emploie cette citation pour introduire le thème de la magie qui est en fait le thème abordé dans le neuvième chapitre. Cette citation permet au narrateur de faire le passage de la réalité vers le fantastique, vers la fiction. Le narrateur ne dit pas directement

que le sujet principal du chapitre sera la magie noire, il offre à ses lecteurs cette information d'une manière indirecte, voilée.

Tout au long de cette œuvre, on rencontre *des références indirectes* qui apportent des significations importantes au niveau du texte et qui réussissent à enrichir le sens du message transmis.

L'emploi des références indirectes par l'insertion, dans le texte du roman, des écrivains célèbres, des personnages renommés et des titres d'ouvrages bien connus, introduit en même temps la polyphonie et l'allusion. Par l'appel aux références indirectes, le narrateur n'insère plus une citation édicatrice, il se résume à nommer le personnage, le titre de l'ouvrage ou le nom de l'écrivain.

Prenons l'exemple de la phrase « Une île est comme un doigt posé sur une bouche invisible et l'on sait depuis Ulysse que le temps n'y passe pas comme ailleurs » (Bouvier N., 1996 : 79) Par cette phrase, le narrateur introduit dans son œuvre *L'Odyssée* d'Homère ; cette référence, nous fait premièrement penser à Homère, le fondateur du récit de voyage et par le rappel du nom du personnage central Ulysse, le lecteur, en fonction de sa culture et de ses connaissances peut penser à Ulysse qui est resté une année avec ses compagnons sur une île magique sans s'en rendre compte.

Pour ce qui est de l'île, dans l'œuvre de Bouvier, on remarque aussi d'autres références, notamment : Robinson Crusoé et Paul et Virginie.

Le narrateur ne fait pas une présentation détaillée de l'île en disant tout ce qu'il voit, tout ce qu'il perçoit et tout ce qu'il croit, le narrateur choisit d'introduire ces références indirectes pour rajouter des significations à son récit. On peut s'imaginer l'île comme elle a été décrite par Nicolas Bouvier comme une prison, on ajoute l'île d'Homère qui était un lieu maléfique où le temps est suspendu, l'île de Daniel Defoe qui représente la solitude et le désert et l'île de Bernardin de Saint-Pierre qui signifie le paradis perdu, dans ce contexte on peut interpréter l'île de Bouvier comme une île particulière. On ne peut plus donner une seule interprétation à l'île de cet ouvrage, par l'introduction des références, elle en reçoit plusieurs.

Cette référence indirecte peut apporter ou non des significations nouvelles à l'œuvre de Bouvier, en fonction du bagage culturel de chaque lecteur. Derrière les affirmations de Bouvier, il y a tout un tissu qui peut apparaître parce que le sens donné aux références indirectes, aux allusions faites, sont plus ou moins riches de sens en fonction des connaissances du lecteur.

Ces références indirectes donnent l'opportunité au lecteur de réfléchir, de penser, d'interpréter les choses à son gré, d'enrichir le sens à partir de ses propres lectures, de voir et de s'imaginer au-delà du texte proprement-dit de l'œuvre.

L'intertextualité est un procédé qui par l'entremêlement des voix, réussit à rendre le lecteur actif et l'aide à découvrir une œuvre originale et captivante.

La présence de l'intertextualité et des références culturelles dans l'œuvre de Bouvier oblige d'une certaine manière l'insertion des citations. Les citations incluses dans une œuvre littéraire favorisent l'apparition des allusions et invite le lecteur à se rappeler le contenu, à penser au message transmis par les œuvres citées.

Tenant compte des références littéraires et culturelles qu'on rencontre dans l'ouvrage étudié, on peut penser à un hommage que Nicolas Bouvier décide de rendre au

monde littéraire (aux écrivains qui l'accompagnent) et au monde culturel. Par les procédés de la réticence, du non-dit, du sous-entendu l'œuvre littéraire instaure un rapport dynamique avec son lecteur, lequel est appelé à construire un sens de l'œuvre à partir de brins de sens. Mais chaque lecteur construit son sens à lui, son interprétation à lui, en fonction de ses propres connaissances et de ses propres expériences littéraires.

Le sous-entendu au-delà du monde des insectes

Le monde des insectes, le microcosme occupe une place bien importante dans l'œuvre de Bouvier. Sauf le fait qu'on se trouve devant une œuvre énigmatique au sens que le narrateur ne dit jamais à travers le récit son nom, le nom de l'île sur laquelle il se trouve, le nom de la ville où se trouvait le sorcier ce qui incite le narrateur à faire des suppositions et même des recherches, on remarque l'invasion étrangère des insectes dès les premières pages du livre, dès la découverte de l'île par le narrateur. Au premier chapitre le narrateur définit l'île comme « Un paradis pour les entomologues » (N. Bouvier, 1996 : 16) et la petite rivière « c'est un canal d'eau morte entre deux bergers de terre noire et friable où des milliers de crabes dressés devant leur trou balaient l'air de leur pince droite dans un geste racoleur et douteux » (Bouvier N., *op.cit* : 28). Même si au début l'île est un paradis pour les insectes, elle ne s'avère pas l'être pour ses citoyens, les voyageurs qui y vivent / arrivent.

L'importance que le narrateur accorde aux insectes est annoncée dès le début avec l'achat du livre *Insect life of India* écrit par G. Th. Leffroy, en plus le narrateur affirme : « j'aurai plus souvent affaire aux insectes qu'aux hommes » (N. Bouvier, 1996 : 47). On peut attribuer l'importance accordée par le narrateur au microcosme à la solitude croissante du narrateur, à son isolement, à son impuissance de s'adapter aux conditions climatiques, sociales, à la lenteur de la vie sur l'île, à l'abandon de sa mère et de sa bien-aimée, etc. Le monde microscopique (insectes, arachnides crustacés) semble être étudié et mis en discussion plus que la vie des habitants de l'île, le narrateur prête plus d'attention à la vie des petits êtres et parfois il semble comprendre ce monde, être fasciné par leurs habitudes, leur mode de vie et même examiner leurs comportements.

Après avoir étudié attentivement le microcosme, le lecteur peut comprendre que ces petites créatures sont les seules compagnies du narrateur ce qui justifie la personnification de ce microcosme. Peu à peu on remarque que les petites créatures que le narrateur a examinées minutieusement commencent à acquérir des traits, des caractéristiques humaines.

La personnification des insectes nous fait nous poser de différentes questions : Est-ce que nous nous retrouvons devant un texte fantastique ? Quelle est la réalité ? C'est un récit de voyage ? Est-ce que le narrateur rêve ? Le narrateur vit dans la même époque que le lecteur ?

Toutes ces suppositions, toutes ces questions qu'on peut se poser durant la lecture de ce roman donnent la possibilité au lecteur de s'imaginer, d'ajouter ses sens, des connotations au texte proprement dit. Tout au long de l'ouvrage on remarque des transformations, des métamorphoses qui nous invitent à nous questionner sans cesse sur la véracité des choses racontées, sur la réalité que le narrateur dévoile devant nous, sur le type de texte qu'on lit – on est devant un récit fantastique ou devant un récit de voyage, quelle est la fiction et quelle est la réalité de cette île-là.

Le narrateur ne dit pas clairement les aspects qui ne lui conviennent pas, il ne dit jamais qu'il a des problèmes d'adaptation, qu'il ne peut pas vivre sur cette île-là, il n'évoque pas des problèmes mentaux, mais il y a des situations, des contextes qui font le lecteur penser à ce genre des problèmes.

La place croissante que le narrateur offre au microcosme, aux insectes est en étroite liaison avec l'état mental et émotionnel du narrateur. D'autres éléments qui nous offrent des informations sur l'état spirituel du narrateur sont : la personnification des insectes et la métamorphose des gens en insectes, les gens acquièrent les traits de différents insectes, le narrateur, lui-aussi acquiert de telles caractéristiques.

Les forces de la nature ont une forte influence sur les conditions de vie et favorisent dans ce contexte la métamorphose des habitants de l'île, les gens deviennent protéiformes à cause de la chaleur qui affecte leur corps et qui les transforme. L'île que le narrateur ne nomme jamais est un espace particulier qui enferme des forces étranges, surnaturelles pour lesquelles le lecteur ne peut pas trouver une explication logique. Sur cette île tout habitant ou voyageur est obligé à vivre des expériences extrêmes qui favorisent un questionnement permanent sur tout ce qui l'entoure. Ces conditions offertes par l'île représentent le milieu idéal pour les métamorphoses que les habitants subissent, en ce contexte on s'interroge si la transformation est le résultat de la capacité humaine de s'adapter à tout circonstance ou si elle est le résultat des forces étranges, surnaturelles qui existent sur cette île.

Le narrateur nous annonce sur la singularité de cet espace en écrivant : « Ce soir j'étais dans une île. Je n'avais pas l'expérience des îles qui posent et résolvent les problèmes à leur façon. Ce qu'on apporte dans une île est sujet à métamorphoses ». (N. Bouvier, 1996 : 24)

Le narrateur lui-même est soumis à ce phénomène de transformation : « Je n'ai pas encore de pinces mais je commence à avoir des antennes ». (N. Bouvier, 1996 : 95)

Que l'on parle de la réticence au niveau de la structure ou que l'on parle de la réticence au niveau du contenu, ce roman nous offre l'opportunité d'analyser ce concept sous différentes formes, étant une œuvre qui stimule l'imagination et la créativité du lecteur.

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LE NON-DIT DANS LES PIÈCES GIRALDUCIENNES

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Abstract: *The reason why we chose the theme of the unspoken in the Giralducian plays is the plurality of meanings which gives the reluctance to theatrical staging and which we find in the work of the dramaturg in each letter. To complete this analysis, we will consider the unspoken message of its characters, which could hide from the eyes of the reader at the first interpretation because it must be mentioned that the unspoken in the theater is defined in relation to the spoken and manifested in the scenic movements of the dramatic text. We will analyze, on one hand, a perceptible unspoken and, on the other hand, an unspoken which stimulates the reader's imagination, leaving room for interpretation. There are always in the theater strategies of scenic exploration from which we can take the transition from the word to the speech or backwards, these are the answers to the underlying questions found in all types of literature. To achieve the analysis, we take as an example some very representative pieces by Giraudoux: Siegfried, Electre, Judith. The staging, the body language, the gestures and mimic, the words and all the meaning that we can perceive in the Giralducian tragedy and which creates reluctance, will be the main objective of this analysis. The research will be carried out using two critical investigative instruments: the mythocriticism and the myth analysis.*

Keywords: *unspoken, meaning, reluctance, speech.*

Préambule

Le thème de la réticence dans les pièces de Giraudoux joue un rôle important parce que l'auteur laisse ses personnages prendre leur espace et leur temps, se découvrir en utilisant le manque de mots, les didascalies, le silence, le non-dit. Même si le théâtre de Giraudoux n'est pas très riche de ce point de vue, comme l'on peut voir dans les écrits critiques dramaturgiques, il est assez riche pour laisser le manque du mot exprimer ce qu'il y a à dire entre les personnages, ce que le destin leur a préparé, même la marque de l'amour, de la fatalité, de la vie, de leur caractère et leur comportement. Le théâtre existe même quand les mots n'existent pas, la réticence peut être exprimée sans l'aide des mots, c'est le grand avantage du théâtre.

La première pièce sur laquelle nous nous arrêtons est *Siegfried*, une pièce qui se déroule en quatre actes. L'action se passe en Allemagne après la guerre, mais la situation politique présentée est tout à fait imaginaire. L'histoire commence le 12 janvier 1921 et dure cinq jours. Les trois premiers actes ont lieu à Gotha, dans la maison du Conseiller Siegfried et le quatrième acte se passe à la gare frontière entre Allemagne et France.

Dès le début, on connaît l'histoire de Siegfried, un homme amnésique qui cherche à dénouer l'énigme de son identité perdue. Comme dans toutes les pièces de Giraudoux, il y a un conflit : d'une part, la révolution de Zelten, d'autre part, l'intervention surprise des généraux allemands pour retarder le moment où Siegfried découvrira sa vraie identité.

Le décor de la pièce *Siegfried* a sa propre signification ; le silence est évocateur dans l'histoire, son expression révèle une situation conflictuelle dominante. Il met en

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évidence la structure psychologique de l'amnésique, en répondant au thème principal de la pièce pour envisager les idées de l'auteur sur l'Allemagne et sur la France. Ayant un aspect ironique, l'indication spatiale suggère la division par de simples objets qui paraissent être destinés à disparaître un jour : « *une planche à bagages et un portillon* ». Ces objets séparent les deux pays et imposent éventuellement divers conflits. De ce point de vue, il faut mentionner que Giraudoux a pensé à une possible alliance entre Allemagne et France, prenant en compte le fait qu'il se sentait Allemand aussi bien que Français et il trouvait que les deux pays sont complémentaires.

On peut observer que l'écrivain décrit la gare-frontière comme entre deux états. On peut interpréter qu'il met l'accent sur l'état conflictuel du héros qui se rencontre entre deux univers distincts. C'est le décor créé par l'auteur pour situer le plan tragique dans lequel se trouve Siegfried. Le rapport espace-temps devient en *Siegfried* une coordonnée de la réticence par ses différentes formes, soulignées dans les descriptions temporelles et spatiales, dans les didascalies représentées par un langage silencieux : on voit le bureau d'attente luxueux et moderne, l'escalier en marbre blanc, avec tapis rouge à droite de la baie, la gare-frontière, divisée en deux parties par une planche à bagages et un portillon, puis la gare allemande luxueuse et propre comme une banque et enfin, la gare française typique, avec un poêle et un guichet de prison.

En ce qui concerne les différents espaces temporels, aussi comme coordonnées de la réticence, on observe d'une part, le temps présent spécifique au théâtre et d'autre part, le passé et le futur. Ces différents espaces temporels ont le pouvoir de créer un dialogue permanent. Même si le personnage principal vit au présent, son passé fait sentir sa présence en s'imposant comme une nouvelle réalité future. Il y a un temps qui peut définir la réticence, dans le cas de Siegfried, ce temps existe, c'est le moment où les personnages échappent à la réalité et vivent leur passé et leur futur dans le même temps.

La deuxième pièce sur laquelle nous nous arrêtons dans cette analyse est *Judith*. L'histoire renvoie à une figure biblique célèbre : la veuve de Béthulie qui a sauvé sa ville en séduisant et puis en tuant sous sa tente, Holopherne. L'histoire de Giraudoux se passe pendant trois jours : la nuit de marche à travers le champ de bataille, celle de l'amour et du meurtre. L'action a lieu dans une ville juive assiégée.

En résumé, dans le premier acte, on voit Judith entre le refus orgueilleux et l'acceptation frénétique. Personne ne réussit à la convaincre qu'elle est la seule qui puisse sauver son peuple, en se rendant à Holopherne. Jusqu'à la fin du premier acte, elle accepte son rôle. Le deuxième acte met en scène l'action, ce qu'on appelle l'épreuve. On voit Sarah, entremetteuse juive au rôle d'agent double qui précipite la jeune fille dans un piège. Bernée et injuriée, celle-ci appelle à son secours Holopherne. Elle se laisse séduite par le général ennemi. Le dernier acte met en scène la récupération de Judith. Elle essaie d'expliquer à Jean qu'elle a tué pour empêcher la routine du quotidien. En fin, résignée, Judith, la putain, accepte de devenir Judith la sainte.

Giraudoux considère cette pièce comme étant la seule qui a les caractéristiques d'une tragédie grâce aux éléments comme : l'action, le langage, les personnages, le conflit, mais aussi le décor, la musique, des éléments constitutifs pour la présence de la réticence dans le théâtre.

Le non-dit dans la pièce *Judith* devient un acte de théâtre, les désirs et les plaisirs se brouillent. On voit deux corps qui se trouvent tout à coup dans une expression éloquente d'une logique fatale, d'une fin tragique : la mort. De cette façon, on découvre des caractéristiques de la réticence dans le non-dit des personnages, dans leur silence et leurs signes non-verbaux. On observe en Judith une mise en scène qui marque la problématique de la réticence plus que dans d'autres pièces girauduciennes grâce au silence qui est utilisé par l'auteur pour caractériser le comportement des personnages, leurs sentiments, leurs actions, leurs pensées. Ce n'est pas du tout difficile parce que Giraudoux utilise un grand thème dans ses pièces de théâtre, le thème de l'amour qui passe par les différentes étapes de la vie, de l'esprit, qui amène la fatalité sur leur chemin, mais c'est le seul thème capable d'être exprimé à travers la réticence. On peut observer cela dans chacune des pièces présentées, le non-dit est le mieux exprimé là où l'amour existe.

La dernière pièce analysée est *Electre*, une pièce qui se déroule en deux parties et un interlude. L'histoire d'Electre se passe dans un seul décor, la cour du palais, en douze heures : du soir des noces d'Electre au matin de ses noces. Le crime, l'adultère, l'aspect policier de la pièce, la découverte progressive du crime, la guerre, toutes ces choses contribuent à souligner l'humour et l'ironie d'Electre.

Il s'agit d'un mythe bien connu : Electre, la fille d'Agamemnon et de Clytemnestre, se trouve dans la situation de haïr sa mère qui a tué son père avec l'aide de son amant Égisthe, qui est désormais régent du trône. Elle attend la venue d'Oreste pour se venger, bien qu'au début, elle ignore qui a tué son père. Agamemnon, le Roi des Rois, a sacrifié sa fille aux dieux.

Sur ce grand mythe de l'Antiquité, Jean Giraudoux a écrit une pièce d'une grande force tragique sans jamais perdre cet esprit étincelant, cet humour qui ont fait de Jean Giraudoux l'un des plus grands écrivains du XXe siècle.

La pièce *Électre* apparaît comme la réécriture de la réécriture d'un mythe. Avec de nombreuses modifications anachroniques, on observe la présence du couple bourgeois comme un mirage burlesque du couple tragique, mais il est important de souligner que la pièce *Électre* est une des nombreuses preuves de l'intemporalité de la tragédie. Écrite en 1937, il s'agirait en effet d'une « tragédie bourgeoise », selon Jean Giraudoux lui-même.

Le non-dit dans la pièce *Electre* prend naissance du thème de la justice, de la vérité, du tragique spécifique au théâtre de Giraudoux. Mais aussi du thème de l'amour comme on a mentionné avant, dans les autres deux pièces. Le non-dit marque l'évolution du tragique et apparaît dans deux situations : celui de la danse des Euménides et celui du monologue du mendiant.

Le tragique émane d'une vérité non dite qui sera divulguée sur scène par des figures énigmatiques. Du point de vue dramaturgique, la représentation du fatal s'effectue à travers des personnages inconnus voire étrangers dont l'origine est mystérieuse et dont l'identité et la nature sont tenues secrètes. De cette manière, les Euménides qui sont les déesses grecques de la vengeance deviennent la personnification scénique du tragique. Leur danse, leurs gestes, leurs mouvements envoient le lecteur au fatal du destin des personnages et cela se manifeste surtout à travers la réticence qu'à travers les mots. En fait, leur danse en rond et leurs gestes significatifs montrent un monologue joué, sans mots. Il y a une

communication entre les Euménides et les autres personnages qui s'établit par le langage gestuel, par un type de monologue mimé.

C'est l'effet de la réticence sur le destin des personnages. Les Euménides privilégient le mouvement aux dépens de la parole. Ayant ses mots dans la musique et les images, le langage des Euménides est doté d'une véritable valeur illocutoire et d'une éloquence particulière qui accroît le jeu de la fantaisie. Mais ce n'est pas tout, on le sait : non seulement les Euménides disent quelque chose et favorisent la perception d'une réalité fatale, mais elles font fonction de chœur tragique. Elles s'imposent en tant que témoins, observatrices des malheurs et des désastres des protagonistes. La présence d'un chœur est souvent susceptible de donner au dialogue théâtral l'aspect d'un accroissement en insérant le spectateur dans l'action même et en lui offrant sa propre image. Procédé du théâtre antique grec, le chœur a une fonction importante dans la pièce. Considéré comme un acteur ou un interlocuteur, il chante et danse en harmonie avec l'action tragique. Son rôle évolue à mesure que l'action progresse dans Électre.

Les procédés scéniques tels que le décor, les objets, la musique, l'espace-temps, accompagnent l'énonciation des gestes, de la mimique du visage et de la position des personnages. On peut envisager une interaction entre le jeu et le langage, d'une part, et entre le non-dit et le langage, d'autre part. Il existe, en effet, tout un dit qui peut s'exprimer dans le silence disert du non-dit.

Conclusions

Henri Gouhier a affirmé :

L'œuvre dramatique n'est elle-même qu'une fois réalisée sur la scène ; là, un geste, un regard, un silence peuvent être dramatiquement plus significatifs que la parole ; là, décors, costumes, éclairages, musique, mouvements peuvent suggérer ce qui reste dans les lignes du texte.

Giraudoux établit un lien entre le dit et le non-dit dans ses pièces, il utilise la réticence pour souligner le thème de son histoire, les réactions de ses personnages, leurs sentiments et leur chemin dans la vie. Le rôle de la réticence a donc une grande importance, le non-dit est toujours un jeu de scène dans le théâtre, il parle dans sa manière et prend corps quand le mot manque de sens, en attribuant au non-dit tout le sens.

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REPRÉSENTATIONS DE LA RÉTICENCE CHEZ MARTHE BIBESCO

Adelina-Maria MARICA*

Abstract: *In the attempt to integrate into the community of Isvor, princess Marie, the owner of the Isvor estate, comes up against the manifestly reticent attitude of this rural society. Her desire to connect with her people and to discover the Other, the indigenous villager, in its authenticity, will generate reluctance and fear among the inhabitants of this land. As the mistress of the estate, she represents an instance. Far from being seen as a person, she embodies authority and power in the eyes of the villagers. Although she becomes aware of her otherness in the perspective of "Aenea's contemporaries", the princess seeks to penetrate the mystery of their existence, an existence filled with rituals and customs. The dialectic of I and the Other, of Identity and Otherness, of Self and Non-Self, highlights in Isvor. The Country of Willows reticence as an attitude towards the Other.*

Keywords: *otherness, reticence, silence.*

Préambule

Dans l'une de ses plus appréciées œuvres, *Isvor, le pays de saules*, dont Rainer Maria Rilke écrivait : « Comment ne pas aimer la Roumanie après *Isvor* ? », Marthe Bibesco réalise un vrai travail d'anthropologue, observant de façon participative la vie des paysans roumains. Parue en 1923 chez Plon, *Isvor* est une œuvre difficile à encadrer dans les limites d'un seul genre. Alliant des éléments autobiographiques aux éléments fictifs, le livre révèle au public étranger un monde inconnu, celui de l'univers du paysan roumain avec toutes ses coutumes, toutes ses croyances religieuses ou païennes. Parmi les nombreuses critiques suscitées par le livre à l'époque, l'article de Jacques Boulanger nous témoigne :

Isvor, le pays des saules n'est pas un roman... Le livre qui porte ce nom est un recueil de paysages, d'anecdotes, de portraits, de notes de folklore, de légendes, de souvenirs, de réflexions, d'où naît la plus vive image, le plus ravissant tableau d'un peuple harmonieux de paysans. (Boulanger 1923 : 423)

Quant à l'écrivaine, elle avoue dans *La Vie d'une amitié* :

Isvor m'avait été inspiré par la vie quotidienne des villages, par les rites traditionnels observés dans leur existence millénaire, par les paysans de ce domaine forestier de la montagne où j'étais venue vivre, pour toujours croyais-je alors, aussitôt après mon mariage. Ce livre était fait de notes prises au jour le jour ; il ne contenait pas une seule histoire qui ne fût vraie, pas un seul épisode inventé. Tout ce qui s'y trouvait d'expérience m'était réellement arrivé ; je m'étais profondément attachée à ces gens, à cette nature où ils vivaient aussi singulièrement isolés dans le temps que je l'étais moi-même dans l'espace. (Bibesco 1955 : 72)

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Il s'agit donc de ses notes prises à Posada, près de Comarnic, où la Princesse Bibesco a vécu avec son époux, le prince Georges Valentin Bibesco et sa belle-mère, Valentine de Riquet de Caraman-Chimay. Le livre signé Princesse Bibesco révèle les impressions d'une princesse roumaine, sous le nom de Marie, établie à Paris, qui choisit de revoir son pays natal avant de se marier avec un prince étranger. Même si les similitudes entre les références réelles et le contenu fictif abondent, le prénom du personnage ainsi que le récit qui décrit son histoire créent une identité de l'héroïne distincte de l'identité réelle de l'auteure. L'identité n'étant pas assumée par l'auteure, nous pouvons du moins nous engager vers un pacte romanesque (sinon le pacte autobiographique proposé par Philippe Lejeune), où l'identité du narrateur coïncide avec l'identité du personnage.

La réticence comme attitude envers l'Autre

Notre attention porte sur la relation du Je – narrateur, qui est aussi le Je – personnage, la princesse, la propriétaire du domaine d'Isvor, l'étrangère venue d'ailleurs, avec l'Autre, le paysan autochtone. Nous nous intéresserons donc à la dialectique du Je et de l'Autre, de l'Identité et de l'Altérité, du Soi et du Non Soi, afin de mettre en lumière la réticence comme attitude envers l'Autre. Il s'agit donc de voir comment dans la tentative de connaître l'Autre, de s'intégrer et d'appartenir au peuple, la princesse se heurte à l'attitude manifestement réticente des gens d'Isvor.

En tant que maîtresse du domaine, elle incarne dans les yeux des paysans l'autorité et le pouvoir. Loin d'être vue comme une personne, elle représente une instance. Consciente de son altérité aux yeux de ce peuple, la princesse sait que sa personne est réduite à son statut. Dans un dialogue qu'elle entretient avec sa belle-mère, elle l'éclaire sur le fait qu'elle ne risque aucun danger si elle sort seule dans la rue, puisque pour eux elle n'est qu'un être étrange :

– Et s'il t'arrivait de rencontrer un ivrogne sur la route, quand tu rentres seule, le soir ?

– J'emmène mon chien, j'ai ma canne, et je sais bien que, même ivres, ces hommes ne me prendront jamais pour une femme. Mon chapeau de feutre et la forme de mes vêtements sombres suffisent à les éloigner de moi. Pour des paysans qui ne m'ont jamais vue, il est certain que je ressemble plutôt à quelque prêtre étranger, au curé catholiques des Hongrois, qu'à ce qu'ils nomment une femme ; et pour les paysans qui me connaissent, du plus loin qu'ils m'aperçoivent, suis-je autre chose que leur maître, c'est-à-dire l'être unique, sans sexe et sans âge ? (Bibesco 1923 : 181)

La promenade est l'occasion de la rencontre de l'Autre, ainsi que de son regard aliénant. Devant les paysans d'Isvor toute caractéristique, tout trait dominant s'efface. Elle est réduite à ses fonctions de maître. Pour eux, elle n'est ni femme, ni homme, ni voisine, ni amie, elle est un être neutre qui détient le pouvoir de modifier leur destin selon son bon gré. Tout la sépare de ces gens : son statut, ses vêtements, sa façon de vivre, son éducation ainsi que sa culture, autre que la leur. Et pourtant, elle est dans un permanent mouvement vers l'Autre, cherchant à l'observer, à le regarder sans condamner, à le découvrir dans son authenticité.

Elle se heurtera quand même à la réticence de celui-ci. Malgré tous ses efforts pour s'intégrer dans la communauté, malgré tous ses tentatives de participer aux événements de la vie de ce peuple, elle reste pour eux l'intrus, l'étranger, le non ami troublant par son altérité la paix du village. Elle se retrouve seule, mise à l'écart par cette société rurale qui se méfie d'elle et la marginalise. Face-à-face avec la différence de l'Autre, la seule réponse qui lui reste, c'est le silence.

En tant que maîtresse, la princesse ne peut pas rester indifférente face aux besoins et aux malheurs de son peuple. Elle se montre soucieuse du destin de ses paysans et elle est prête à partager ses biens avec eux. Pleine de bonté, de compassion et d'amour pour son peuple, la princesse essaye de les aider par tous les moyens dont elle dispose, oubliant qu'elle risque de gâcher sa fortune de la sorte, ainsi que de perturber par ses actions l'ordre ancestral du village roumain. Par ses tentatives de les aider, elle ne fait qu'éveiller la méfiance de ces villageois qui se sentent mal à l'aise chaque fois que le visiteur envahissant entre dans leurs maisons. Pour eux, elle est l'étranger, le voyageur, le monde extérieur, l'inconnu.

Selon son aveu, elle sent que les paysans préféreraient que ce soient eux qui viennent chez elle pour demander l'aumône au lieu qu'elle vienne chez eux où sa visite blesse leur dignité ayant l'air d'une « inspection », d'une « visite domiciliaire » qu'elle, en tant que maîtresse, fait pour s'assurer qu'ils ne meurent pas de faim ou de froid. Ils se sentent envahis dans leur intimité et dans leurs foyers modestes et ils voient d'un mauvais œil la présence de l'étrangère, comme représentante des riches, dans cet espace à eux où la pauvreté se révèle dans toute sa plénitude. Il y a donc un refus de l'Autre, un non-désir de l'Autre, manifesté par le paysan autochtone, auquel s'oppose le désir de la princesse de pénétrer dans leur vie privée. Un désir qui s'explique par sa soif de communion avec le peuple, d'une part, parce qu'elle est une sorte de mère de son peuple, douce, généreuse et bienveillante, et d'autre part, parce qu'elle est curieuse de découvrir cet univers caché, mystérieux et fascinant de la vie de ses paysans.

Un épisode illustratif pour leur réticence est celui du lavage du linge dans la rivière accompagné du chant des femmes. Ravie de leur chant et curieuse de les entendre et de les regarder de plus près, la maîtresse s'y approche mais le chant cesse aussitôt et les paysannes continuent leur travail en silence. On retrouve la même attitude réticente chez le berger jouant de la flûte, qui, une fois surpris, refuse de céder aux prières de la princesse de continuer sa mélodie. Par son rapprochement à l'Autre, tout ce qu'elle obtient, c'est le recul de son peuple. Cette attitude trahit à la fois une certaine retenue, une résistance et parfois même une hostilité, mais aussi une certaine pudeur lorsqu'ils se trouvent devant une personne appartenant à un rang social supérieur. Les gens d'Isvor ne se montrent pas du tout expansifs dans leurs rapports avec les personnes étrangères. Essayant de les découvrir dans leur authenticité, se trouvant toujours dans un permanent mouvement vers l'Autre, vers le paysan ou la paysanne roumaine, la princesse se trouve face-à-face avec un peuple soupçonneux et méfiant envers les étrangers. Plus ses efforts s'accroissent, plus l'écart et leur résistance augmentent.

À propos de cet écart qu'elle ressent à chaque tentative de rapprochement, la maîtresse d'Isvor avoue :

Ces gens m'échappent sans cesse. Je n'ose entrer chez personne de ma propre initiative. Il me semblerait que je triche ; aucun d'eux ne m'a demandé. Savent-ils seulement que me voilà de retour ? Je suis comme un pêcheur qui retire ses filets et qui trouve qu'il n'a pris que l'humidité de l'eau dans ses nasses. (Bibesco 1923 : 11)

Cette comparaison traduit une prise de conscience de la part du personnage narrateur qui comprend le refus de cette société rurale d'accepter son rapprochement, mais qui a « soif de les connaître ». Elle reste donc le pêcheur que tous fuient, « un loup parmi les moutons », « un chat parmi les souris », « un épouvantail » ou une « tête de Méduse », dont la présence trouble les consciences des villageois. Toute cette série de représentations qu'elle se donne, c'est le résultat du regard de l'Autre qu'elle ressent comme aliénant.

Il y a aussi une inversion des rôles lorsque la princesse devient celle qui manifeste de la réticence, choisissant de se taire, alors que les villageois deviennent ceux qui ont réponse à tout. Consciente de l'inutilité de ses arguments devant l'obstination d'une paysanne de continuer à travailler malgré sa mauvaise santé, la maîtresse d'Isvor avoue :

Comme toujours, je n'ai rien à répondre. Dans ce pays, où de la plus jeune femme à la plus vieille et du vieillard à l'enfant chacun a réponse à tout, seule, je reste court, et me suis dénommée moi-même 'interloquée' ? J'aimerais lui dire, mais je n'ose pas :
– Reste tranquille. Ne te donne plus aucune peine. Ce que tu as encore à faire n'a pas d'importance... Bientôt, ton ouvrage, tout l'ouvrage du monde se fera sans toi. (Bibesco 1923 : 43)

L'incapacité de la femme simple de comprendre les raisonnements philosophiques de sa maîtresse détermine la décision de celle-ci de se taire. La princesse prend conscience de l'inutilité de son discours et, par le sens de la mesure et par une prise de distance censée être parfois salutaire, elle choisit le silence et le repli sur soi. Bien qu'elle soit la propriétaire du domaine, elle sait qu'elle ne peut pas s'immiscer dans la vie des villageois. Elle constate une fois de plus les limites de son intervention à une autre occasion, lorsqu'elle essaie d'aider une femme enceinte en lui envoyant du lait et de la nourriture. Mais la femme les jette et ne veut pas renoncer au carême provoquant de cette façon la mort de son bébé par malnutrition. À cette occasion, la princesse se demande : « Quand donc comprendrai-je que ces gens ne veulent pas de mon ingérence, et qu'à peine manifeste, ma sympathie leur suffit ? [...] Ne plus intervenir, laisser faire, ne pas me commettre et surtout ne pas m'imaginer qu'ils ont des torts envers moi. » (Bibesco 1923 : 31)

Dans sa tentative de se rapprocher de cette société villageoise, cet objet de désir, la princesse réussit à percer leur mystère partiellement. Malgré tous les efforts de la princesse, les gens d'Isvor ne sont manifestement pas enthousiasmés par la perspective de dialoguer avec elle, la réticence apparaît donc comme une manifestation du refus de l'Autre, de la résistance à l'altérité. Nous avons vu comment cette réticence s'est manifestée à la fois par le silence que par des comportements empreints de réserve et de méfiance. La maîtresse d'Isvor a connu la solitude, la marginalisation, les frustrations d'être mise à l'écart de la communauté, et pourtant, rien ne l'empêche de conclure : « Ce pays serait semblable à beaucoup d'autres, n'étaient les gens qui l'habitent et qui lui donnent son prix. Je n'ai découvert le sens de ses paysages et ce qu'ils ont de rare, qu'à travers eux. » (Bibesco 1923 : 135)

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SILENCE DU DEDANS ET DU DEHORS DANS « HÔPITAL SILENCE » DE NICOLE MALINCONI

Ema-Violeta MISTRIANU*

Abstract: *Humans use words to communicate (themselves), to establish identity-otherness links of contiguity. The words, delivered on white sheets, squeeze the soul out of the oppression of everyday life. The word, a favorite instrument of writing, translates the multi-layered perspective that both inhabits and possesses (this is a fundamental difference between “inhabiting” and “owning”) both human beings. But would the dialogue only consist of words? We have put forward the thesmerare hypothesis of a negative answer There is also the metaphorical dialogue of reticence, of silence. Something unspoken out of reluctance. In our contribution we will focus our attention on the novel Hôpital silence (Hospital Silence) by Nicole Malinconi. We will consider the spatial and temporal premises of language that fails in its attempt to express wholeness. This will be an unexpected and momentary step forward that will force the individual to reconfigure his or her identity path in relation to this lack. We will show how the characters, deprived of a self-sufficient language, make their reluctance. This analysis will trace the modalities by which the actants suspend their words while the unspoken put in a relentless possession of identity modeling. We will then measure the psychoanalytic consequences of this (self) imposed reluctance.*

Keywords: *silence, psychoanalysis, power.*

Préliminaires

Le domaine que nous avons choisi comme champ d’investigations, à savoir, le silence (avec toutes ses manifestations : réticence, non-dits) se laisse décomposer en relation antinomique avec la communication. Par voie de conséquence, pour pouvoir pivoter autour du silence – en tant qu’élément négatif ou démuné de certains attributs – il faut comprendre ce que signifie la communication et mesurer les conséquences de sa présence ou de son absence.

Pour Lucien Sfez la communication est « porteuse du progrès humain, productrice du bonheur, de l’égalité et de la convivialité. »¹. Le lien identité-altérité, le déploiement et l’accomplissement identitaires, la vie en général, tout est indéfectiblement lié à la communication. Les observations courantes ont conclu sur l’idée qu’elle ne peut pas exister en dehors d’un socle commun de traits inhérents : perspective en train de se produire, acteurs de la communication, message, canal pour transmettre le message, le code du message. De même, la communication a trois formes de manifestation, chacune d’entre elles possédant des éléments qui lui assurent l’originalité et la viabilité : verbale (renvoyant au

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¹ Le collectif de la revue *MEI « Médias Et Information »*, n° 4, 1996 choisit de grands noms qui ont fait autorité dans le domaine de la communication pour répondre à des questions qui envisagent justement le sujet mentionné auparavant. Parmi eux, Lucien Sfez, Professeur à l’Université Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne.

langage articulé), non verbale (désignée par le langage du corps) et para verbale (repérable par intonation, volume de la voix, débit, pauses, respirations, silences).

Au-delà de la pluristratification et de la richesse de la communication, le silence existe et se manifeste sous des formes diverses touchant les contextes socio-spatio-temporels les plus inédits.

Dans son œuvre, Nicole Malinconi choisit de rendre service aux mots et aux silences à la fois. Ce n'est pas elle qui les cherche, ce sont eux qui la touchent dès qu'elle commence à travailler dans le milieu hospitalier. Les mots et les silences s'attachent à elle justement pour qu'ils prennent vie, pour exprimer la réalité contiguë, l'altérité parfois ignorée et restée dans l'anonymat ou mal comprise.

Silence et réticence institutionnelle

L'hôpital est une institution publique ou privée qui a pour but la santé des gens. Par ses représentants il cherche les moyens pour mettre les choses aux mieux. En général, l'hôpital se veut être un endroit, un cadre officiel très bien organisé où des spécialistes qui respectent des règles très strictes soignent les malades, guérissent leurs affections organiques. Il est vrai que les recherches de date récente affirment à haute voix que la source de toute déviation corporelle doit être mise en liaison directe avec l'énergie spirituelle de la personne en cause. De ce point de vue, il serait désirable d'exister un point de nouage entre la partie visible (le corps) et celle invisible (l'âme) du patient.

À une première vue, le titre *Hôpital silence*¹ semble être une union étrange entre deux noms : *hôpital* (« établissement, public ou privé, où sont effectués des soins médicaux ou chirurgicaux ») (Merlet, Berès *et alii*, 2002 : 516) et *silence* (« absence de bruit, fait de se taire ») (*Ibidem*, 2002 : 940). Cette singularité résulte du fait que le deuxième terme devrait se sous-entendre du premier, il devrait faire corps commun avec le premier. Par définition et par norme habituelle, l'hôpital est un cadre formel où le rythme et le bruit de la vie quotidienne sont annulés justement pour laisser lieu à une reconfiguration organique et identitaire du malade. Le temps semble perdre lui-même son référentialité. À la spécialisation médicale du personnel de l'hôpital doit s'ajouter leur compétence d'être des présences-absentes dans la vie des patients. Ceux derniers peuvent choisir de vivre de manière intime ce qui leur arrive ou ils peuvent solliciter d'établir une connexion très proche avec le personnel qui les soigne. Dans un cas comme dans l'autre, le personnel médical doit s'approprier son rôle.

À une seconde approche – celle de la lecture du texte – une nouvelle perspective s'ouvre au lecteur demeurant sidéré. L'hôpital n'est plus la solution salvatrice pour le sujet parlant, mais une institution autarcique qui montre ses dents et évince l'altérité. Son autorité est repérable à plusieurs niveaux.

La légitimité de l'hôpital réside dans son personnel médical (médecins, infirmières) et administratif (secrétaire, comptable, juriste). Les deux catégories rassemblent des gens ayant des objectifs communs et communiquant un langage de spécialité. Ce dialogue qui

¹ Nicole Malinconi, *Hôpital silence* [désormais abrégé *HS*], Bruxelles, Éd. Labor, coll. « Espace Nord » 1996. Toutes les citations seront tirées de cette édition.

s'établit entre les membres de cette communauté professionnelle est tout à fait normal et impérieux, mais il doit être doublé d'un autre dialogue qui cette fois-ci a pour émetteur le cadre médical et pour récepteur le patient et vice-versa. Si ce deuxième type de communication n'existe pas, alors le premier est ressenti comme une barrière sémantique. Sans un vocabulaire mis en commun aucune communication ne peut surgir.

C'est ce canevas communicationnel qui nous intéresse au plus haut degré. Nous avons affirmé auparavant que la légitimité de la communication réside dans l'existence d'un point de nouage qui dessine la valeur commune appartenant aux participants au dialogue. Ce croisement identitaire n'est pas subit par les personnages quasi fictionnels de Nicole Malinconi. Il en résulte de ce qui précède que l'institution hospitalière devient froide, impersonnelle, élitiste et éclectique : « Ils amenaient avec eux cette odeur tenace des étales et de la ferme qui imprègne jusqu'à leurs habits de dimanche. C'était une odeur discordante avec le propre et le neutre de l'hôpital. Ça ne passait pas inaperçu. » (HS, 1996 : 16).

Vu la multitude des cas qui exigent l'examen de spécialité de la part du médecin, nous pourrions nous attendre à ce qu'ils ne soient pas ouverts à la communication interpersonnelle. La trame narrative nous contredit en nous présentant des situations où les médecins adressent des paroles aux patientes : « Le médecin explique les précautions qu'il faut prendre. Il parle doucement. Il serre la main, avant de partir. » (HS, 1996 : 70). Nous y enregistrons une conduite éthique irréprochable (« le médecin explique »), un rapport identité-altérité caractérisé d'empathie (« parle doucement ») et de bonnes manières (« Il serre la main »).

La surprise négative envisage les infirmières, des femmes ayant à soigner d'autres femmes. La même identité sexuelle devrait impliquer les mêmes potentiels bonheurs (grossesses) et malheurs (avortements) à la fois. Il en découlera de ce qui précède qu'une femme pourrait mieux comprendre les états d'âme, les troubles identitaires d'une autre femme. Chez Nicole Malinconi, les infirmières sont de vrais Cerbères qui développent une modélisation identitaire sans aucune liaison avec le monde terrestre et une autorité effrayante. Leur pouvoir est saisissable au niveau de la communication verbale, non verbale et paraverbale. La communication verbale des infirmières est réduite aux verbes à nuance impérative : « Ne touchez pas la porte ! Le bras sous la couverture ! » (HS, 1996 : 15), « Ne vous plaignez pas : vous venez déjà l'allaiter tous les jours ! » (HS, 1996 : 45) ou aux cris : « Elle a crié : C'est une façon de tenir un enfant, ça ? Mettez-vous autrement, croisez les jambes, enlevez votre bras ! Et, comme le geste ne suivait pas immédiatement : Vous savez obéir, vous ? » (HS, 1996 : 47).

Dans bien des cas, les infirmières soit gardent le silence, soit offrent des réponses sans contenu sémantique qui inquiètent d'avantages les patientes : « L'infirmière ne dit rien. » (HS, 1996 : 67), « Vous demandiez l'avis de tout le monde, et vous receviez ainsi une quantité de réponses que vous auriez voulu faire se rejoindre, comme des affluents, mais dont vous débutez, à la place, les contradictions, et les insuffisances. C'était des réponses pour bien faire ; pour vous calmer. » (HS, 1996 : 31).

Les seuls moments où elles semblent engager une conversation en s'adressant à leur interlocuteur, les infirmières mettent en épingle leur pouvoir institutionnel par la manière de parler, par les gestes faits automatiquement, par leur attitude d'êtres supérieurs :

« Vous le retenez ; vous ne voulez pas qu'il vienne cet enfant. Est-ce que vous le voulez, oui ou non ? » (HS, 1996 : 49).

La communication non verbale ajoute un plus de frustration à la destinée de la patiente qui se trouve devant une présence qui devrait la renseigner, mais qui n'est pas prête à un tel compromis. Des gestes de l'infirmière résulte sa réticence d'engager une conversation avec la bénéficiaire de l'acte de santé. L'infirmière exécute mécaniquement ses devoirs, occupe son esprit en pensant à la multitude de choses à résoudre, invoque l'excuse de la hâte sans se préoccuper à initier la patiente à ce que signifie la maternité : « Après, l'infirmière reprend l'enfant pour le changer. Elle ne propose pas à la mère de s'occuper de lui ; elle fait cela machinalement ; elle n'y pense pas. Elle dit : J'ai beaucoup d'enfants, cette semaine. » (HS, 1996 : 44).

Dans le même ordre des idées, il ne serait pas néanmoins réducteur de penser que les infirmières sont démunies de toute humanité et empathie. Leur rapport avec l'altérité est inexistant, elles parlent et agissent de leur angle de vue, sans s'interroger sur les états d'âmes éprouvés par les patientes : « L'infirmière vient, dit que ça pue, vérifie le contenu du récipient. » (HS, 1996 : 96). L'hôpital leur offre le cadre socio-professionnel parfait pour souligner leur autorité.

Les dialogues professionnels des infirmières se mélangent au dialogue normal de leur vie en produisant une atmosphère inappropriée pour une institution médicale : « Trois infirmières sont dans la pièce ; elles discutent de l'organisation de leur travail, car une quatrième est malade. » (HS, 1996 : 14), « Par la porte ouverte parviennent des éclats de voix, des bribes de discussions. Quelqu'un rit. Quelqu'un d'autre propose du café. La porte reste toujours ouverte. On n'est pas tranquille. » (HS, 1996 : 71).

Le niveau administratif est imprégné lui aussi d'une attitude neutre, mais écrasante par sa nuance impersonnelle. La secrétaire remplit son devoir machinalement, sans établir aucun contact avec l'autre et sans se préoccuper de ceux qui apparaissent devant elle. Sa conduite pourrait facilement être remplacée par un robot :

Au guichet on faisait la file. On devait donner : nom, adresse, carte de groupe sanguin et carnet de mutuelle ; et dire avec quel médecin on avait rendez-vous. La secrétaire ne regardait presque pas ceux qu'elle avait en face d'elle ; vérifiait le nom sur le dossier ; encaissait l'argent de la visite ; accrochait au dossier un bon de remboursement ; demandait : Pas de changement d'adresse, ni de mutuelle ? Pour les nouveaux, elle demandait la carte d'identité. (HS, 1996 : 16).

La communication institution-patient est inexistante, elle ne peut pas survenir entre deux entités diamétralement opposées : les médecins et les infirmières font autorité dans leur domaine, tandis que les patientes sont des êtres ayant commis des erreurs existentielles qui les poussent maintenant à se présenter à l'hôpital. Les deux catégories d'acteurs ne détiennent aucune valeur commune, ce qui fait la communication impossible. La communication du personnel médical peut passer pour silence, ou mieux pour réticence. Ils refusent tout contact avec les gens qu'ils dépersonnalisent pour les traiter en tant qu'objets :

Elles disent :
On va la camphrer.
On va la piquer.
On va la couper.

On va l'aspirer.
On va la sonder.
On va l'intuber.
On va la monter.
On va la descendre. (HS, 1996 : 38).

Mutisme et annulation identitaire

D'une part, la parole comme compétence linguistique et signe du pouvoir appartient aux professionnels de l'hôpital et de l'autre, le silence est mis au point bon gré mal gré par les patientes. Les femmes transformées en patientes sortent de chez elles pour : accoucher, subir des interventions chirurgicales impérieuses ou esthétiques ou avorter. Mais la plupart des personnages de Nicole Malinconi tournent autour de deux actions : accoucher ou avorter. Métaphoriquement, les deux actions sont réduites à la parole (les cris de l'accouchée et du nouveau-né), respectivement au silence (l'avortement ne se fait pas accompagner que d'une douleur sourde organique et spirituelle) :

Le cri de celles qui accouchent.
En été, lorsque les fenêtres sont ouvertes, à l'arrière du bâtiment, le cri s'échappe jusqu'à la cour de l'école d'infirmières. Le même à chaque fois. Aigu. Prolongé. Presque un miaulement. Infiniment répété. [...]
Juste en dessous, la salle des interruptions de grossesse. [...]
Pas de voix. Il est interdit de crier. (HS, 1996 : 57)

Le silence et ses formes de manifestations (réticence, non-dits) retiennent toute notre attention. Il faut ranger le silence en fonction de l'élément qui le détermine : le contexte spatial (la nature glaciale de l'hôpital invite à l'inconfort), le motif du rendez-vous (accouchement, interruption de grossesse), l'amputation identitaire subie lors d'une intervention chirurgicale, les rapports relationnels (membres de la famille, membres intergénérationnels).

Il semble que le silence demeure la caractéristique définitoire de la patiente, bien qu'elle ait une multitude de questions qui troublent son âme. C'est un silence de pluristratifié et à des causes multiples.

Le premier type de silence est dû aux dangers et aux inattendus encourus lorsqu'on pénètre dans un autre monde. Sortir de son cadre socio-culturel, de son anonymat pour venir à l'hôpital signifie entrer dans un anonymat institutionnel. La patiente, extraite involontairement de sa zone de confort – le contexte socio-spatial de la maison et les tâches qui en découlent – éprouve une errance identitaire dans un espace nouveau où elle ne connaît pas les règles à suivre : « Avant de venir à l'hôpital, elle a nettoyé et rangé sa maison. » (HS, 1996 : 13), « L'attente. Un couloir longé de sièges en plastique fixés au sol et, à nouveau, des portes et des bureaux de consultation. » (HS, 1996 : 19).

Personne ne lui explique les procédures qui s'imposent : « L'une d'entre elles lui fait un lavement sans lui expliquer ce qu'elle fait. » (HS, 1996 : 14), aspect qui la désoriente : « Elle n'a jamais eu de lavement ; elle ne sait pas qu'elle faut retenir l'eau. » (HS, 1996 : 14).

La longanimité de la femme devant le personnel médical est une véritable leçon de soumission, elle accepte l'absence de la parole comme une punition pour son action d'avorter. Les tourbillons du plaisir charnel ou un simple accident l'a transformée de femme

en femme enceinte. Ce nouveau statut identitaire crée une bataille sourde à l'intérieur de sa personnalité. Elle a l'impression d'avoir loupé sa vie, elle identifie beaucoup de contradictions entre ses plans et la réalité immédiate, l'anéantissement devient incommensurable lorsqu'elle pense aux dire de la famille. Sa charpente identitaire est mise en chantier, mais elle n'a ni le temps ni le cadre nécessaire pour une déliaison linguistique. Tout ce qu'on attend d'elle est d'agir.

L'avortement, un nœud événementiel que la femme subit seule et dont elle ne parlera jamais, est le deuxième type de silence qu'elle doit accepter. Cette fois-ci, il s'agit d'un silence mélangé à la douleur et à la perte identitaire. Inexplicablement, l'absence de la parole a laissé lieu au regard et d'un moment à l'autre la femme anonyme se trouve dépouillée par l'altérité : « On se lève, lourde de tous les regards, et on suit l'infirmière jusque dans l'ascenseur. » (HS, 1996 : 67).

Mais, outre la réticence langagière des infirmières et les regards des gens, elle voudrait embrasser le silence pendant l'arrachement d'une partie de son soi. C'est justement dans ce moment que le silence qui l'a accompagnée dans son parcours la quitte pour laisser lieu au bruit :

Ça fait un bruit de moteur. On a beau être prévenue., on sursaute. C'est un ronronnement soutenu, égal.

On voudrait que ça ne fasse pas de bruit. C'est indécent. Le bruit entre dans la tête, pénètre dans le corps. Avec la douleur, cette fois. [...]

On regarde le plafond. On ne crie pas. On serre les dents. (HS, 1996 : 68).

L'expérience de l'avortement les décompose à tous les niveaux de leur modélisation identitaire. D'acceptation à la négation, toute une gamme variée de sentiments habitent les femmes dans leur intimité et laissent jaillir une multitude de questions. Malgré leur contenu tonitruant, la plupart des interrogations n'arrivent pas à être prononcées à haute voix. Elles demeurent attachées de manière viscérale à l'identité féminine en mariant l(a) (in)décision d'agir contre la vie aux remords :

Est-ce qu'il est formé ? Est-ce qu'on le voit, après l'aspiration ? [...]

Donc, c'est déjà formé ? Il est déjà formé ! Moi qui pensais que, jusqu'à trois mois, c'était un œuf de sang. Je croyais qu'ils étaient formés au moment où ils bougent. Ce cœur qui bat, je l'aurai toujours devant les yeux. (HS, 1996 : 72).

L'interruption de grossesse a des causes qui passent au-delà du quotidien pour s'enraciner dans l'héritage intergénérationnel. Pour ne pas continuer le dysfonctionnement statutaire qui l'a hantée « pas de père pour l'enfant. Il l'avait quittée lorsqu'elle était enceinte et n'avait pas laissé d'adresse. Elle l'avait cherché en vain, car ils se connaissaient depuis très peu de temps. » (HS, 1996 : 75) et qui semble être un héritage familial « Elle disait qu'elle non plus n'avait pas eu de père. Il les avait quittés lorsqu'elle était gosse et sa mère s'était débrouillé avec les enfants » (HS, 1996 : 75), la femme choisit de devenir sauveur – elle n'accepte pas l'idée de ne pas pouvoir « lui assurer tout ce qu'elle offrait à la petite » (HS, 1996 : 76) – et bourreau de son troisième enfant : « Elle dit : À dix semaines, ce n'est pas un caillot de sang. Ça vit. Donc, je vais commettre un crime. » (HS, 1996 : 77). Mais elle veut se retrancher dans un silence total pour pouvoir être en proie à l'événement : « Elle dit à l'infirmière : Faites tout ce que vous voulez, mais ne dites rien. » (HS, 1996 : 77).

Les rapports familiaux normaux, au moins en apparence, n'annulent pas le pouvoir du silence apparu comme conséquence de la grossesse d'une fille âgée de dix-huit ans. Cette fois-ci l'attitude silencieuse de la fille rayonne de manière différente vers la mère et le père. La question épineuse du fœtus apporte des différends majeurs entre la vision de la fille : « Je ne me sens pas maternelle. Je n'ai pas envie d'avoir un enfant maintenant. » (HS, 1996 : 100) et celle de la mère prête à être mère suppléante pour que le maternage ne gâche pas le parcours existentiel de la jeune : « Je pourrais le lui garder jusqu'à la fin de ses études. Mère avec sa fille. Mère elles deux. » (HS, 1996 : 100).

Les non-dits de la fille sont contrebalancés par les paroles de la mère ayant la valeur effrayante des sentences existentielles : « Tu vas tuer un innocent. Tu le payeras un jour. » (HS, 1996 : 100).

L'omission, une autre facette du silence, est employée dans la relation avec la présence masculine de la maison qui joue le rôle de père et d'époux à la fois. C'est dans la tradition des familles que le père / l'époux soit une personne intransigeante qui n'accepte pas le rabat des règles. À la différence de la femme-mère qui a modifié tout son matériau identitaire pour accueillir un autre être au-dedans d'elle, en assurant le premier contact du bébé avec l'existence en dehors de l'espace intra-utérin, l'homme est plus pragmatique en envisageant le contact de l'enfant avec la vie sociale et en prêtant beaucoup d'importance à ce que les coutumes soient respectées. Par voie de conséquence, les phrases de la mère font la preuve de la connaissance des réactions de son partenaire :

On n'a rien dit au père.

Parce qu'il est colérique. Parce qu'il n'accepterait jamais qu'elle avorte. Parce que, s'il savait, la paix de la maison serait rompue. Parce que. Parce que. (HS, 1996 : 101).

L'action de garder le silence est une décision prise en désespoir de cause qui aura des conséquences sur le parcours existentiel de la famille : « Si je parle, ça fera sauter le couple de mes parents. » (HS, 1996 : 102). Ces résultantes à venir sont exprimées de manière métaphorique par un cycle d'événements connotés négativement : cauchemar, mort d'une tante qui réitère la mort du grand-père lorsqu'une cousine a accouché sans être mariée cousins restés orphelins. Culpabiliser l'autre (« Parce qu'il est colérique ») ne s'avère pas être la meilleure solution. Le problème prend des dimensions menaçantes lorsque le silence et implicitement le mensonge interviennent à l'intérieur de la famille. Cette fois-ci, le silence se bifurque de manière différente vers le couple parental. Quoique la fille parle à sa mère, nous identifions un silence qui les sépare. D'une part, la jeune affiche un silence négatif dans son attitude de refuser toute solution venue de la part de sa génitrice. D'autre part, le refus de la fille est le signe de son indépendance identitaire que la mère n'arrive pas à interioriser qu'avec tristesse : « La mère voulait tellement la préserver. Elle ne voulait pas que la vie l'entame. » (HS, 1996 : 101).

Conclusions

D'emblée, la communication avec toutes ses représentations s'avère être un constituant majeur de l'identité humaine, elle assure la complétude du sujet parlant. Sa forme la plus répandue est la communication orale frontale par laquelle les gens ramassent une multitude d'informations portant sur les éléments transmis, sur l'attitude de

l'interlocuteur, sur le contexte social et sur les conséquences enregistrées suite à la transmission du message.

L'absence de la communication est le signe qu'une incongruité est arrivée. À travers notre exploration, nous nous sommes donné pour but de mettre en évidence deux des figures de l'incommunication – la réticence et le non-dit. Les personnages féminins de Nicole Malinconi se roulent en boule sans pouvoir alléguer leur douleur par la communication. Nous avons identifié la réticence et le non-dit à tous les niveaux de l'existence humaine : parmi les membres de la famille, au niveau de l'institution hospitalière, au niveau de l'introspection du soi. Cette déstabilisation identitaire que l'incommunication opère est la conséquence de l'interruption de grossesse ou de la naissance inattendue d'un enfant. Les femmes démunies de la parole ou prononçant des messages que les autres refusent de décoder se transforment dans des marionnettes de l'espace glacial de l'hôpital. Le silence, les mots vides, les pensées inexprimées font que les femmes deviennent les prisonnières d'une réalité incompréhensible. La réticence langagière agace, renvoie à l'absurde de l'existence et assure un émiettement identitaire irréversible.

Hôpital silence présente magistralement le délitement féminin par le silence et le non-dit et transforme l'avortement dans une extinction identitaire de la femme qu'elle seule doit s'assumer. Mais la réticence peut aussi être mise en liaison directe avec la honte. Dans cette dernière optique l'incommunication arrive comme modalité pour ne pas mettre dans des situations inconfortables, voire pénibles, les femmes qui décident renoncer à leurs bébés innés. La réticence n'est ni rejet, ni jugement. Elle pourrait être du respect pour les moments difficiles des femmes. Voilà comment en changeant l'angle de vue, nous nous trouvons devant une autre voie qui se fraye et se laisse en proie à l'analyse littéraire.

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DE LA RETICENCE. ÉTUDE SUR « DES INCONNUES » DE PATRICK MODIANO

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Abstract: Classified by stylistics and neo rhetoric in the category of figures of thought, respectively of metalogisms, reticence exceeds these limiting frameworks, by the very fact of its discursive extension. It can go beyond the dimensions of the sentence to set itself up as a discursive / textual modality of saying or not saying one's thought. As expression of an absence, it hides more than it says out loud, thus opening the way to implicatures and to interpretations of the implicatures. As mark of a hesitation or a reservation, the reticence is itself diffuse, hidden between the folds of the speech / text. Its subtlety makes it a fairly widespread figure in literary texts, becoming sometimes a way of writing. Our study focuses on reticence as a textual modality; we aim at seeking its literary valences in three stories by Patrick Modiano, gathered under the title *Des Inconnues*.

Key words: reserve, incertitude, unuttered.

Classifiée par la stylistique et la néo rhétorique dans la catégorie des *figures de pensée*, respectivement des *métalogismes*, la réticence excède ces cadres limitatifs, du fait même de son extension discursive. Elle peut dépasser les dimensions de la phrase, pour s'instituer en tant que modalité discursive/textuelle de dire ou de ne pas dire sa pensée.

Expression d'une absence, la réticence cache plus qu'elle ne dit, ouvrant la voie au sous-entendu et aux interprétations que celui-ci suscite. Marque d'une hésitation ou d'une réserve, la réticence est elle-même diffuse, cachée entre les plis du discours/texte. Sa subtilité en fait une figure assez répandue dans les textes littéraires, représentant parfois même une manière d'écrire.

C'est dans ce sens que nous utilisons le terme et le concept de réticence dans notre analyse des trois récits de Patrick Modiano réunis sous le titre *Des Inconnues*, qui représentent, dans notre opinion, un cas exemplaire de mise en œuvre de cette modalité scripturale.

La première *inconnue* est une jeune fille de dix-huit ans, qui va quitter Lyon, sa ville natale, pour essayer à Paris une carrière de mannequin, conseillée dans ce sens par une femme mystérieuse, Mireille Maximoff, rencontrée à Torremolinos, en Espagne, durant les vacances de dactylo de l'héroïne narratrice. En fait celle-ci s'enfuit de chez ses parents, la nuit, par le train, dans le vague espoir qu'elle rencontrera Mireille, qui lui avait lancé l'invitation de lui rendre visite si, par hasard, elle viendrait dans la capitale. Elle sera hébergée par cette femme, qui l'entraînera dans le tumulte de la vie des artistes qu'elle fréquente et où la jeune fille rencontrera Guy Vincent, un individu tout aussi mystérieux, portant un faux nom et impliqué dans des affaires douteuses, avec lequel elle aura une courte histoire d'amour, avant que celui-ci ne disparaisse un jour sans la moindre trace.

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La trame narrative est assez mince, mais ce n'est pas là l'intérêt de cette courte histoire, qui semble se tresser de souvenirs hésitants, de flâneries à travers les rues de Paris et de Genève, de rencontres hasardeuses, d'attentes et d'incertitudes.

D'ailleurs, tout dans ce premier texte plane dans l'imprécis, d'où le mystère qui attise la curiosité du lecteur.

L'incipit place le récit dans un passé vague – *cette année-là*, indétermination significative pour l'évolution ultérieure des faits et des événements. Le choix de la saison n'est pas moins important, du fait qu'il est créateur d'atmosphère, sorte d'anticipation sur la tonalité mineure de l'histoire : « Cette année-là, l'automne est venu plus tôt que d'habitude, avec la pluie, les feuilles mortes, la brume sur les quais de la Saône. »¹ (p.9)

L'imprécision temporelle y est contrebalancée par la précision spatiale, confirmation du fait que l'espace occupe une place importante dans l'œuvre de Modiano.

Il y a des ruptures en flèche dans la narration, qui soulignent comme en passant, les soupçons et les incertitudes de l'héroïne. Ces ruptures font voir la coexistence de deux temporalités : le présent actuel de la narration, qui surgit parfois, plutôt rarement et qui signale le fait que l'héroïne narratrice a atteint un certain âge et qu'elle revit un bref moment de son existence de jeune fille qui se cherche, sans en être consciente, et le passé narré, usant le plus souvent de l'imparfait narratif, qui donne la sensation de flou, d'indétermination, d'écoulement uniforme d'un temps qui se replie sur lui-même, se dilatant pour occuper la scène.

L'emploi assez fréquent du discours indirect libre augmente la sensation de réticence, d'hésitation que le texte transmet. C'est un discours en pénombre, qui cache plus qu'il ne dévoile, augmentant l'incertitude, la confusion qui domine l'héroïne.

Réticente de par sa nature, elle n'ose pas poser des questions, mais la narration laisse planer un soupçon d'angoisse, en arrière-plan, comme une toile de fond, avec un jeu de lumières et d'ombres à l'avant-scène.

Tout se passe entre le non savoir et la réticence d'articuler verbalement ce qui n'est que deviné ou mis sous le signe du doute. Ce qui plus est, c'est que la narratrice ne verbalise pas en général le fait qu'elle aurait des doutes ou des interrogations. C'est un flux permanent de non-dits, ce qui est dit se résumant le plus souvent à des faits objectifs, relatés de manière plutôt neutre, sans commentaires. Le rapport entre le dit et le non-dit crée une tension et une attente, qui suggèrent indirectement la tension ressentie par le personnage narratrice.

Il y a dans le texte des éléments – objets, faits, états de choses, lieux ou moments à valeur symbolique, qui jalonnent le parcours émotionnel de l'héroïne, traduisant de manière poétique ce qui est dit entre les lignes.

Aussi le mur noir symbolique du pensionnat des Lazaristes, qui revient en leitmotive dans le texte, entretient-il la sensation d'angoisse et de tristesse foncière du personnage, sentiments jamais exprimés ouvertement :

Pour moi, Lyon de ce mois de septembre-là, c'est le mur des Lazaristes.
Un mur noir où se posaient quelquefois les rayons du soleil d'automne. Alors, ce

¹ Patrick Modiano, *Des Inconnues*, Editions Gallimard, Folio, Paris, 1999. Voir cette édition pour toutes les références de pages entre parenthèses dans le corpus du texte.

pensionnat semblait abandonné. Mais sous la pluie, le mur était celui d'une prison et j'avais l'impression qu'il me barrait l'avenir. (p.10).

Ce mur occupe les rêves de l'héroïne durant des années, comme l'affirme elle-même : « Puis je me suis retrouvée, près de chez moi, montée Saint-Barthélemy, devant le mur des Lazaristes, comme souvent dans mes rêves, les années suivantes. » (p.14).

Il devient même facteur de dissolution, de disparition dans le néant d'une existence terne, ressentie comme définitive : « On n'aurait pas pu me distinguer de ce mur. Il me recouvrait de son ombre et je prenais la même couleur que lui. Et personne, jamais, ne m'arracherait à cette ombre. » (p.14).

Rarement, dans les courtes prolepses sans conséquences narratives qui traversent de temps à autre le texte, il est protagoniste d'un tableau plus lumineux : « Toujours le même rêve. Au bout de quelques années, le mur des Lazaristes était moins sombre et, certaines nuits, un rayon de soleil couchant l'éclairait. » (p.14).

Le motif de la fugue, un autre élément récurrent, apparaît, dans ce contexte, comme conséquence naturelle du désir de s'échapper à la monotonie de ce mur existentiel : « Je n'avais même plus le courage de rentrer chez moi, de retrouver mes parents et l'armoire à glace de ma chambre. J'ai descendu les escaliers vers la ville comme si je prenais la fuite. [...] Le lendemain, j'ai pris un train de nuit à la gare de Perrache. » (p.15).

L'idée de s'enfuir d'un endroit ou d'un état de choses, revient aussi dans d'autres créations de Modiano, marquant le sentiment d'insatisfaction des personnages féminins, leur vague aspiration vers quelque chose de meilleur, qu'elles sont incapables de définir.

Toujours symbolique est la quête du consulat du Pérou à Genève par Guy Vincent, qui prétend être le fils du consul, abandonné par celui-ci pendant la guerre. Cette quête indéfinie, qui s'avère être vaine, revient obsessivement dans le souvenir de l'héroïne, marquant ses doutes concernant la vérité de l'histoire racontée par son amant mystérieux. La quête en elle-même renvoie à l'idée de labyrinthe physique, spatial, sans issue, dans les rues de Genève ou de Paris, et de labyrinthe de mensonges, d'incertitudes, que la narratrice ne veut ou ne peut élucider :

Apparemment, son père l'avait oublié puisqu'il n'avait plus jamais eu de ses nouvelles. Me disait-il la vérité ? [...] Consul du Pérou. [...] Des années plus tard, il m'arrivait de me réveiller en sursauts, la nuit, et de ne plus pouvoir dormir jusqu'au matin. Et je tournais et retournais ces détails douloureux dans ma tête. Je me disais : Il faudrait qu'un jour tu essayes de vérifier tout ce qu'il t'a raconté. Mais je finissais par me raisonner et par retrouver mon clame. C'était bien inutile. C'était trop tard. [...] Consul du Pérou. [...] Je ne lui en voulais pas s'il m'avait menti. Après tout, ses mensonges étaient une partie de lui-même. Tant pis s'ils ne cachaient que du vide. (pp. 44-45).

Tourner en rond, dans une boucle temporelle où l'avenir se retrouve dans le passé, sorte d'exercice préparatoire pour la disparition finale du protagoniste, c'est une manière discrète de conduire le lecteur vers la sortie indéfinie de l'histoire : « Je le trouvais mystérieux, insaisissable. On ne l'entendait pas venir quand il ouvrait une porte et qu'il entraînait dans la chambre. Et il pouvait disparaître d'un instant à l'autre lorsque vous marchiez à côté de lui. » (p.45).

Aussi l'évanouissement du héros à la fin de l'histoire n'est-il ressenti comme surprise, il s'inscrit plutôt dans la logique du texte, répondant à l'horizon d'attente d'un lecteur préparé à l'embrasser.

L'exipit marque le désespoir de l'héroïne, qui se sent perdue, s'identifiant aux filles noyées qui restent à jamais inconnues.

La glace reflétait mon visage – une tête de noyée [...] ... j'étais encore une blonde NON IDENTIFIÉE. Des filles que l'on repêche dans les eaux de la Saône ou de la Seine, on dit souvent qu'elles étaient inconnues ou non identifiées. Moi, j'espère bien le rester pour toujours. (p.53)

Aurait-elle peur de se connaître elle-même ? Pousse-t-elle sa réticence jusqu'au bout, là où il n'y a que néant et silence ?

L'incipit du deuxième récit est quelque peu différent, l'histoire débutant *in medias res* : « Je suis née à Annecy. Mon père est mort quand j'avais trois ans et ma mère est partie vivre avec un boucher des environs. Je ne suis pas restée en bons termes avec elle. » (p. 57).

La suite aura l'apparence d'un *bildungsroman*, racontant, toujours à la première personne, les mésaventures d'une jeune fille, véritable orpheline du sort, abandonnée aux soins d'une tante dépourvue de sentiments. Cependant le fil de l'histoire sera coupé court, s'arrêtant à l'époque de l'adolescence, sans les traditionnelles considérations du personnage arrivé à l'âge de maturité à même de réévaluer son passé aventureux.

« Les souvenirs que je garde de mon enfance ne sont ni bons ni mauvais. Je crois que si mon père avait vécu, je me serais bien entendue avec lui et que tout aurait été différent. » (p. 58), dit la narratrice, qui idéalise le parent absent, ce qui la poussera un peu plus tard à aller sur les traces de celui-ci, pour se découvrir elle-même.

Très bonne élève, elle n'aura pas la chance de continuer ses études dans un établissement approprié, malgré les recommandations des professeurs. Elle sera mise en pensionnat chez les bonnes sœurs, par sa tante, qui voulait se débarrasser d'elle.

L'héroïne narratrice suggère plutôt qu'elle ne relate la vie dure, les règles strictes, la vie collective grise, monotone du pensionnat ressenti comme prison. Le pensionnat revient donc comme symbole du manque de liberté, lieu de claustration qui brise les ailes des jeunes pensionnaires. Les seules saisons dont le personnage se souvient – l'automne et l'hiver, apparaissent comme la métonymie de cette existence terne. La lampe bleue du dortoir revient également en leitmotive en tant qu'indice matériel de l'angoisse qu'elle ressent. Une angoisse jamais expliquée, mais vécue de temps en temps jusqu'à la panique. C'est comme le pressentiment de quelque chose de mal qui lui arriverait inévitablement. Modiano crée une tension sourde qui fait surface de temps en temps, mais il le fait avec grande économie de moyens, avec une réticence au niveau scriptural. Tout baigne dans une sorte de brume qui efface les contours, pour ne laisser entrevoir que le soupçon de quelque chose de grave.

La réserve de cette jeune fille sans nom à exprimer ses sentiments se traduit en demi-mots, ce qu'elle relate en général ce sont des faits, le plus souvent sans qu'elle s'arrête sur leur importance ou sur leurs conséquences.

Elle restera en pension, avec l'intermezzo des vacances passées avec sa tante à faire le ménage chez les riches, jusqu'à l'âge de 16 ans. Pendant toute cette période, elle rêve de s'en enfuir :

... souvent, j'ai eu envie de m'enfuir. Il suffisait de faire demi-tour et d'attendre sur la place du village le car qui repartait à neuf heures du soir pour Annecy. La route, en chemin inverse. Je serais arrivée vers neuf heures et demie au terminus, à Annecy, place de la Gare. Mais après ? Évidemment [...] je ne serais pas restée à Annecy. Dès la descente du car, j'aurais pris un billet pour Paris et j'aurais attendu le train de nuit. Mais je n'osais pas encore faire le grand saut. (p.63)

Finalement elle le fera. Elle gagne Annecy, décidée à ne plus retourner chez les sœurs. Perdue, la nuit, dans le labyrinthe des rues, prise de panique, elle tombera sur des personnes qu'elle avait rencontrées dans ses escapades antérieures dans la ville, avec son amie Sylvie : leur ancienne collègue, Gaëlle, et deux jeunes hommes, Lafont et Orsini, ce dernier s'avérant être un des hommes abuseurs qu'elle rencontrera dans son existence d'adolescente.

Aidée par un ami de son père défunt, elle trouvera une place de serveuse dans un salon de thé et mènera pour un temps une vie solitaire, monotone, partagée entre le travail quotidien et les flâneries dans les rues de la ville et les salles obscures de cinéma, durant les soirs. Ses pas la portent toujours sur la place de la Gare, rêvant de Paris, et même d'un au-delà :

La nuit j'entrais dans le hall de la gare et je m'asseyais sur un banc du quai d'où partait le train pour Paris. Je me persuadais que j'allais le prendre et laisser derrière moi tout ce qui avait été ma vie jusque-là. Mais, [...] une fois arrivée à Paris, j'aurais voulu fuir encore plus loin, dans un pays où l'on ne parle pas français, pour couper définitivement les ponts. (p.95)

Mais elle n'y arrivera pas. Elle traversera toutes sortes de mésaventures, des expériences de nature sexuelle non explicites, sans intériorisation évidente, simples mentions, mais qui laissent néanmoins des traces qui la mèneront jusqu'à la fin au crime. Tout ce qui est d'ordre érotique n'est que suggéré, la réticence concernant tant le personnage-narrateur que l'écrivain lui-même.

Elle sera demoiselle de compagnie d'une riche vieille dame qui disparaîtra un beau jour sans l'en avertir, pour devenir ensuite baby sitter de deux enfants, dont le père, qui est sur le point de l'abuser sexuellement, deviendra lui-même victime de cette jeune fille qui le tue d'un coup de pistolet.

L'histoire s'arrête là ; la narratrice raconte tout simplement des faits, sans la moindre trace d'émotion et sans aucun renvoi à sa vie ultérieure : « Je suis entrée dans la chambre. Il m'attendait, assis dans le fauteuil, près de la coiffeuse. Il a sursauté. Il a soulevé ses paupières lourdes. Pour le tir, je devais avoir le même don que mon père puisque j'ai tué Monsieur du premier coup. » (p. 113)

Cet excipit, lacunaire lui-même, ne fait qu'augmenter le mystère qui se tresse autour du personnage, à mesure que le récit avance. On sait où commence son histoire et

comment finit ce dernier épisode relaté, mais la suite reste suspendue à jamais, l'auteur laissant au gré du lecteur à combler le silence de ses propres présuppositions.

La troisième *inconnue* est une jeune Française de dix-neuf ans qui va quitter Londres où elle travaillait, pour s'installer à Paris, près de la Porte de Vanves, dans l'atelier d'un Autrichien parti pour un long séjour à Majorque. Perdue dans le quartier qu'elle ne connaît pas, elle dort mal, réveillée tôt le matin par des bruits insolites de sabots. Quand elle va comprendre qu'il s'agit du trot des chevaux en route vers les abattoirs de Vaugirard, elle va se paniquer et prendra pour ses flâneries quotidiennes des trajets compliqués pour éviter la zone incriminée.

Un jour elle va rencontrer dans un café un professeur de philosophie, qui l'introduira dans son cercle d'adeptes de la vague New Age, ce qui lui donnera pour un temps, une autre vision sur le monde.

Le texte débute par la phrase « J'ai oublié sans doute beaucoup de détails, mais quand je pense à ce temps-là, j'entends encore le bruit des sabots. » (p.117), indiquant aux lecteurs qu'il s'agira encore une fois de la narration de faits passés, anticipant sur ce qui deviendra le déclencheur de l'histoire – le bruit des sabots, obsession qui sera la marque même de l'angoisse qui domine le personnage.

Car dans ce récit l'angoisse est beaucoup plus forte et plus manifeste que dans les deux autres.

Durant la journée, le personnage narratrice choisit la réclusion dans l'atelier, au milieu des livres et des cartes touristiques, rêvant de voyages exotiques, pour qu'elle sorte tous les soirs, envahie par la sensation de claustrophobie ; elle passe son temps entre les flâneries dans le Quartier Latin et les cinémas, lieux quelque peu sécurisants, essayant d'apaiser son angoisse croissante et le sentiment de solitude :

J'avais beau chercher à qui téléphoner, non décidément, il n'y avait personne. Rien ne viendrait troubler le cours de mes journées. Pourtant, à partir de six heures du soir, l'angoisse devenait si forte que j'en étais réduite à me dire : je peux toujours téléphoner à la femme qui m'a laissé son numéro. (p.119)

L'angoisse prend la forme de la panique, se manifestant comme sentiment de dissolution, de disparition, forme extrême d'effacement. Face à face avec le néant, le vide physique et psychique, la narratrice a l'impression de frôler la non existence. La peur de prendre le métro semble localiser, spatialiser ce sentiment qui devient de plus en plus fort :

J'ai éprouvé ma première vraie panique dans le métro. [...] J'étais prise dans la foule. [...] Le flot s'écoulait lentement. Nous étions serrés les uns contre les autres ; et le couloir devenait plus étroit à mesure que l'on approchait de l'escalier qui descendait sur le quai. Je ne pouvais plus faire marche arrière et, comme je me laissais entraîner, j'avais l'impression de me dissoudre dans cette foule. J'allais disparaître tout à fait, avant même d'être arrivée au bout du couloir. (p.122)

La temporalité dans ce troisième texte est plus complexe : à la narration de faits passés dans leur ordre chronologique, s'ajoute des ruptures temporelles, soit par des séquences où l'imparfait narratif, temps de base dans les trois récits que nous discutons, est

interrompu par le brusque surgissement d'un présent actuel ou encore d'une relation de faits au passé composé, ce qui leur offre une saillie particulière, comme dans le fragment ci-dessous : « La rame s'est arrêtée. Ils m'ont bousculée, mais j'ai pu me dégager en me laissant emporter par ceux qui sortaient des wagons. Je me suis retrouvée à l'air libre. De nouveau, j'étais vivante. » (p.122-123), soit par des analepses, ces retours en arrière par rapport aux faits passés qui constituent le premier plan de l'histoire.

Il s'agit, dans ce dernier cas, d'un épisode qui remonte au temps vécu à Londres et aux souvenirs d'un moment particulier passé avec René, ami ou amoureux, on ne nous le précise pas. Le déclencheur du souvenir est la chanson *Whiter Shade of Pale*, mise et remise par un homme dans le juke-box du café qu'elle fréquente chaque début d'après-midi : « Cette musique a fini par m'évoquer aussi l'après-midi où nous nous étions promenés, René et moi, avec le chien. » (p.133)

L'évocation s'étend sur plusieurs pages, relatant l'histoire de la photo des trois qu'un photographe ambulant prend dans la rue, juste avant le départ annoncé de René on ne sait pour quelle destination, pour combien de temps et pour quelle raison. Tout tourne autour de l'effort de la narratrice de récupérer la photo dans le magasin pour lequel travaillait le photographe, à l'aide d'un numéro inscrit sur une feuille de papier. Le fait qu'elle n'y parvient pas, à cause de la mauvaise humeur de l'employé chargé à s'occuper des clients en quête de leurs photos, transforme l'objet perdu en emblème d'un temps heureux qui probablement ne reviendra jamais et qui lui est ravi par la négligence de cet individu malveillant :

René n'était plus là. Il y avait peu de chance pour que je le revoie jamais.
Tous les moments que nous avons passés ensemble avaient basculé dans le vide.
On avait voulu supprimer la seule trace de notre existence, à René, à moi, au chien,
la seule image où nous étions réunis. (p.137).

La perte de la photo s'accompagne de la perte de confiance de la protagoniste en elle-même et de la découverte du fait que sans René elle est égarée dans un espace où elle ne trouve plus sa place et dans un temps qui n'a pas de présent.

Avec la disparition de René, ressuscité pour un instant par la chanson, pour être vite oublié dans le néant et la monotonie angoissante de la vie parisienne, la jeune fille semble ne plus se retrouver, son identité se dissout au milieu des gens inconnus qui l'entourent, augmentant sa solitude. Aussi l'apparition du professeur Michel Kérourédan, avec sa philosophie comprise dans un petit bouquin intitulé *Le Rappel de soi*, et du groupe d'amis promoteurs de l'idée du *travail sur soi* comme enseignement bon à semer à tout vent de l'énigmatique docteur Bode, est-elle reçue sinon avec joie, au moins avec le sentiment qu'« il suffisait de se laisser aller et de faire la planche ». (p 160).

Cette fois-ci, l'excipit ne ferme pas la porte, mais la laisse entr'ouverte, donnant à entendre qu'il y aurait une suite à l'histoire : « Si je voulais savoir davantage sur la vie, sur ses lumières et sur ses ombres – comme le disait le docteur Bode – il me faudrait rester quelque temps encore dans le quartier. » (p.171).

Un regard synthétique sur les trois récits est à même de révéler les raisons pour lesquelles Modiano les a réunis sous le même titre.

Les textes sont écrits à la première personne, le personnage narrateur étant toutes les fois une femme qui relate une courte période de sa première jeunesse, plus exactement sa sortie de l'adolescence, sans rapport évident avec le reste de son existence, sur lequel on n'apprend rien. Il s'agit de la focalisation sur un moment particulier, le présent de l'histoire étant tout au plus mentionné, sinon passé sous silence. Comme si le temps s'était arrêté pour tourner en rond de manière obsessive, d'un texte à l'autre, ajoutant avec chacun d'entre eux des touches sensibles, pour crayonner le portrait archétypal de l'inconnue en quête inconsciente d'elle-même. Dans les trois textes temps chronologique et temps subjectif alternent, temps de détresse et moments détendus, presque heureux aussi.

Les héroïnes se promènent dans des endroits repérables dans le monde non fictionnel, l'écrivain fournissant des informations précises sur des rues, des quartiers, des villes avec leur spécificité, des ancrages dans le réel qui viennent compenser les lacunes événementielles. Car les textes mettent en scène des espaces blancs, des silences, des absences qui laissent le lecteur sur sa faim, d'où l'invitation implicite qu'on lui adresse de combler ce vide. Les histoires n'en sont que plus étranges, laissant entendre que les *inconnues*, étrangères dans l'univers des choses habituelles, normales, font des promenades à fonction thérapeutique, afin de diminuer leur angoisse, de se trouver une place dans ce monde, de s'inscrire dans la normalité. Angoisse sans raison précise, état presque palpable dans son presque matérialité. Angoisse définitoire pour la typologie en question, créatrice de la tension qui sous-tend les textes de Modiano en général.

On peut parler, d'une part, d'une réticence intra textuelle, appartenant aux personnages féminins qui s'expriment à la première personne, réticence porteuse d'une sorte de « vague des passions » moderne ou de spleen teinté d'angoisse. Il s'agit plus exactement de la réticence dans l'expression des sentiments et des émotions. Comme si le bénéficiaire du discours, le narrataire implicite, jamais mentionné, devrait se contenter de ce qu'on lui dit, sans prétention d'en savoir plus. Au narrateur réticent correspondrait ainsi un narrataire attentif à la simple relation des faits ou des états, sans en chercher les ressorts intimes. Cependant, souvent ce qui n'est pas exprimé en toutes lettres est laissé au compte des éléments à valeur symbolique – objets, situations, saisons, couleurs, etc., qui disent plus et autrement que ne le ferait l'expression directe.

D'autre part la réticence est une macro figure de style de l'écrivain, une manière de voiler le tableau général, de diluer ce qui rendrait les choses trop directes, trop prosaïques. Et cette fois-ci le bénéficiaire, beaucoup plus exigeant, en est le lecteur lui-même, tel qu'il est construit par « l'auteur réel » (Eco, 1999), qui veut tout savoir et comprendre, pénétrant dans l'intimité du non-dit par la porte largement laissée ouverte par Modiano, pour en extraire les nuances cachées et les interpréter. L'effet de ce type de réticence scripturale est une écriture floue, mystérieuse, créatrice de tension dans le lecteur. On pourrait affirmer qu'avec Modiano on est en présence d'une écriture apparemment détendue, vu sa simplicité, en essence provocatrice de tension. Sorte de malaise que pourrait ressentir le lecteur, ne fût-ce le côté poétique des récits, à même de produire « le plaisir du texte » (Barthe, 1973).

Suivant quelques-unes des suggestions offertes par Jean-Yves Tadié (Tadié, 1978), qui propose un modèle d'analyse du texte narratif en six volets – le personnage, l'espace, le temps, la structure, le mythe, le style, on peut affirmer avec certitude que cette œuvre de Modiano s'inscrit parfaitement dans la catégorie du *récit poétique*.

La poésie discrète du texte est due à un certain type d'évanescence, de flou créateur d'atmosphère, qui est une étrange mixture de lumières et d'ombres, de légère pesanteur, presque immatérielle. Un soupçon d'angoisse, un frisson de peur, un vague désir d'un devenir quelconque, sans nom ni raison, sorte de bovarysme désuet teinté d'innocence, font des protagonistes presque sans contour et consistance, des êtres exceptionnels dans un univers apparemment banal ; en réalité c'est un monde chargé de mystère et d'imprécision, malgré les localisations spatiales précises et les chronologies suivies de près, qui créent l'illusion de la réalité. Évanescence, réticence, fugue vers l'inconnu de ces êtres qui se cherchent sans le savoir, voilà ce qui fait la matière de ces trois récits. Évanescence, réticence, discrétion à la limite de la fuite dans l'absence, dans la dissolution et dans le silence, voilà ce qui fait le style de l'auteur.

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RÉTICENCE ET SUSPENSION DANS LE ROMAN DJEBARIEN, « LE BLANC DE L'ALGÉRIE »

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Abstract : *Assia Djebbar's francophone literary work brings together autobiographical elements and events shaped in order to create a more specific kind of imaginary: the Djebarian one. Our paper dwells upon the way she realigns historical facts and episodes issued from her individual memory so that the process of writing holds within the expressed thoughts and the unsaid, the silence, "l'inachevé". Her novel, Le Blanc de l'Algérie, is a proof of this harmony between reticence, missing words and hints whose meaning is revealed along the narrative and contributes to the rhetorical process of suspension (lat. "sustentatio"). So we have the possibility to extrapolate new perspectives related to contextual elements introduced by the writer so as to challenge the reader to wonder and imagine. The permanent aim is to arouse curiosity and introduce the reader to events of the recalling past.*

Keywords: *reticence, suspension, Djebbar.*

Préambule

Le présent travail explore la multidimensionnalité du discours romanesque djebarien dont les directions convergent dans l'autobiographie et la réécriture du passé colonial et postcolonial de l'Algérie. Notre analyse se concentre sur la manière dont Assia Djebbar harmonise des données historiques et des épisodes de sa mémoire individuelle de sorte que l'écriture se situe entre le dit et le non-dit, le silence, *l'inachevé*. *Le Blanc de l'Algérie* (1995) témoigne de cette harmonie dont nous observons les enjeux de la réticence, des mots omis, mais indiqués de manière à plonger dans une autre dimension du discours : la suspension. Cela nous donne la possibilité d'extrapoler les directions de l'analyse qui s'oriente vers les éléments contextuels que l'écrivaine fait introduire dans la trame du roman et qu'elle reprend plus loin afin de clarifier une idée. Le but reste toujours le même : susciter la curiosité du lecteur et l'introduire dans *le blanc* du passé remémoré.

Les souvenirs de l'écrivaine et la manière dont elle perçoit les événements du passé collectif lui ouvrent deux directions afin de rendre hommage aux amis, aux confrères - victimes de la guerre d'Indépendance de l'Algérie et, plus tard, de la guerre civile. Il s'agit d'harmoniser les données exactes fournies par l'histoire et les enjeux de l'imaginaire, imprégné de forts accents autobiographiques. Ainsi, elle devient la témoin qui réécrit les événements dont l'impact lui a changé la vision du monde. Dans le *blanc* dont elle cherche l'essence, il y a tant d'épisodes et d'aspects passés sous silence et liés à la colonisation et à la guerre.

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L'oubli et le silence – marqueurs de la réticence dans *Le Blanc de l'Algérie*

Par la commémoration de ses confrères, l'écrivaine lutte contre l'oubli censé menacer l'immense héritage du passé et les circonstances infortunées de la mort des personnes évoquées. L'oubli devient ainsi une facette de la réticence puisqu'il entraîne le questionnement de sa propre mémoire sur les détails des événements du passé. Claude Lévi-Strauss (1983 : 253) voit dans *l'oubli – un défaut de communication avec soi-même*. Paul Ricoeur (2003 : 5) met en relation la mémoire et l'imagination : *La mémoire, réduite au rappel, opère ainsi dans le sillage de l'imagination*. Cela explique les épisodes où la narratrice construit de courts dialogues avec les absents de sorte qu'elle fait sentir leur présence dans le récit. Une autre perspective à ce sujet vise le rapport de l'oubli avec l'idée de temporalité :

l'« oubli » (nasouà, nissiyâne) est de son côté une antithèse du temps qui court. Comme la patience, il est une forme de temporalité ralentie ou arrêtée. L'oubli fige l'instant dans une perception inversée, à laquelle il faut ajouter l'éliision et la scotomisation psychiques. Oublier est l'acte par lequel nous mettons « hors scène », peut-être même « hors conscience », une durée, une pensée, un fait. (Chebel, Malek, 2013 : 33)

Le discours romanesque mise sur l'enjeu permanent « présence – absence, passé – présent, oubli – souvenir ». Finalement, cette dualité témoigne de la position de l'écrivaine par rapport aux événements : « protagoniste – témoin ». Elle retrace l'histoire personnelle de ses confrères par la parole écrite et place cette tranche de vie dans la galerie plus vaste de l'Histoire. Le « blanc » du drame personnel se dissout dans la mémoire collective ensanglantée.

En dépit de son auto-exil, loin de l'Algérie natale, Assia Djebar renoue avec ses origines à travers la littérature. La perspective narrative de l'écrivaine a été profondément marquée par les événements socio-politiques. La guerre d'Indépendance vient de mettre fin à la colonisation française (1962) et une nouvelle étape s'annonce dans l'organisation de la société algérienne. Cependant, le calme apparent est suivi par les massacres suite à la dissolution du FIS¹ après un coup d'État, en 1992. Cette résolution marque la période surnommée la *décennie noire* dominée par les attaques contre les opposants de l'idéologie islamique. Ainsi, l'auto-exil dans le pays du colonisateur offre à Assia la possibilité de s'exprimer librement et de confier à l'écriture ses pensées les plus intimes. C'est, d'ailleurs, le paradoxe qui domine l'intellectualité algérienne francophone à l'époque : rechercher de la protection au pays du colonisateur d'autrefois.

Assia Djebar renoue avec le passé en évoquant le souvenir des *chers disparus*, des confrères touchés prématurément par la mort. Le roman commence par l'hommage à trois amis intellectuels et continue par l'évocation d'écrivains, de martyrs qui ont lutté pour leurs idées jusqu'au dernier souffle. Le silence devant certains aspects socio-politiques relève de la révolte intérieure et de l'indignation envers le conflit qui commence à dominer l'espace algérien après l'Indépendance. La décision radicale de rompre à jamais avec le colonisateur fait surgir des conflits dont les victimes sont les intellectuels qui restent en contact avec la

¹ Formation politique en Algérie.

culture française. Ce sont des gens qu'Assia avait connus dans des circonstances diverses ou dont elle avait entendu parler : les écrivains Abdelkader Alloula, Malek Haddad, Jean Amrouche, Mouloud Mammeri, Kateb Yacine, le psychiatre Frantz Fanon, l'homme politique Abane Ramdane, et d'autres figures dont elle commémore la mort par des processions. Le silence qui touche le discours transmet souvent un message plus fort que les mots.

La dynamique *réticence – suspension*

Le discours romanesque se situe entre la réticence de tout avouer et la suspension dont le but est de marquer seulement des indices qui servent à exprimer une idée. Quant à la réticence, Paola Paissa (2012 : 174) affirme que cette figure rhétorique *oscille entre le fini du dit et l'infini du « faire entendre »*, son *“domaine d'existence” coïncidant avec le jeu dialectique de deux extrêmes : la présence et l'absence, le manque et l'excès, le retrait et l'ouverture, l'opacité du monde et l'illusoire transparence du dire.*

Dans le récit djebarien, les marqueurs de subjectivité jouent un rôle essentiel : les questions, les remarques, les opinions personnelles, les phrases inachevées, les passages où la narratrice imagine les pensées des personnalités qui deviennent les personnages du roman. Elle les fait intégrer dans son imaginaire à travers le souvenir et les émotions qu'elle éprouve en remémorant des moments du passé, des discussions, des événements qui les réunissent : *Ils n'ont pas disparu ; ils sont là ; ils m'approchent parfois, ensemble ou séparément... Ombres qui murmurent.* (Djebar, Assia, 1996 : 17)

La narratrice crée parfois un cadre propice à l'imagination du lecteur à travers les ellipses qui marquent sa réticence de croire aux événements : *On les a enterrés ? L'un après l'autre ? Avec des discours, des chants, des photographes, avec... ? Ils dorment vraiment là-bas ?* (ibidem)

Le roman est marqué par le dialogisme permanent *en langue des morts* (ibidem : 18). Le français, langue¹ imposée par la force colonisatrice, s'avère étrangère à l'esprit algérien des trépassés. À ce point, la réticence ne vise plus la forme, mais le choix personnel. Son acceptation est double : réticence de parler en français et réticence de parler en arabe. Les causes puisent toujours dans le même reniement du pouvoir conquérant : refus d'adopter la langue de l'Autre² et peur d'exprimer ouvertement le penchant pour la langue de son peuple. Assia Djebar met en question ce sujet à plusieurs reprises afin de souligner la réticence (à lire, dans ce cas particulier, le comportement humain) envers l'intrusion du conquérant. Cette intrusion entraîne une rupture au niveau des valeurs personnelles par rapport aux valeurs du groupe identifié à la figure de l'opresseur : *Ainsi, auparavant, chers amis, réussissons-nous si mal à dialoguer pleinement ? Notre français se faisait de parade, habit de cérémonie...* (ibidem : 18). Par conséquent, la réticence surgit de cette rupture que seulement l'écriture a le pouvoir de guérir : *Déplorer plutôt l'impossible du dialogue d'hier entre nous, le nœud invisible qui déviait notre parole entrecroisée (...)* (ibidem : 20).

¹La question de la langue ouvre une plaie parmi les écrivains francophones d'origine algérienne : écrire en arabo-berbère ou en français vise un choix lié directement au processus de la colonisation. On écrit en français, mais on est réticent envers ce choix qui se renferme dans un silence amer.

² L'Autre désigne le colon, le Français et, par extrapolation, son intrusion sur le territoire de l'Algérie.

L'emploi de la première et de la deuxième personne sert à créer un espace où il n'y a que le *je*, *nous*, *tu* et *vous*. Toutefois, les détails sont sélectionnés, les épisodes historiques sont triés de sorte que la parole écrite se concentre sur l'évocation des *chers disparus* et sur les impressions de la narratrice ou ses pensées sur les causes des meurtres : *je me souviens de tout, je ne dis que le dixième de ce que je garde* (ibidem : 47). Maria Gubinska (2012 : 145) affirme : (...) *Enfin, le rappel de ses absents est un acte de reconstruction de l'Algérie des temps anciens et d'aujourd'hui. Cette dernière est multiforme, plurielle et multilingue*. C'est également le message de l'intellectuelle privée de sa liberté d'expression dont le remède devient la spécificité même de son écriture. Assia Djébar se rallie à ses confrères lors de cet exil perpétuel qui la plonge dans un vide existentiel qu'elle fait plus supportable à l'aide de sa plume et de l'imagination.

Le message voilé par le procédé de la suspension

La suspension vise l'intention de déceler le sens de *la mort inachevée* annoncée dès le chapitre consacré au souvenir des trois amis tués. Nous considérons le procédé rhétorique dans son acception classique, reprise par Lise Charles (2018 : 74) dans sa démarche d'analyser la dichotomie *suspension-suspense* :

L'un comme l'autre [Aristote et Démétrios] recourent à l'idée de suspension pour désigner métaphoriquement l'effet d'une ignorance, et tous deux considèrent l'anticipation comme une procédure susceptible de sortir l'auditeur de cet état, mauvais ou souhaitable selon les contextes.

Aussi, ce procédé est-il lié aux multiples significations du *blanc de l'Algérie* qui hante la mémoire de l'écrivaine et, au niveau du texte, à la ponctuation qui dévoile l'intention de l'écrivaine. Les questions rhétoriques deviennent les marques de son (en)quête permanente sur les circonstances ténébreuses du passé et marquent également l'anticipation d'une explication.

Entre une mort blanche et l'autre, celle que provoque l'accident de hasard, ou pire, le meurtre avec son vomissement de haine – entre ces deux issus, où gît la différence, pour nous qui restons ? (...) La mort est-elle inachevée, parce que violente, parce que survenue sans s'être annoncée ?... (Djébar, Assia, *op. cit.* : 89, 90)

En d'autres termes, la narratrice invite le lecteur à s'imaginer chaque scène qu'elle reconstitue afin de trouver le sens de la *mort inachevée*, le sous-entendu, l'idée principale de telle ou telle évocation fragmentaire. L'interruption¹ joue ici un rôle important à côté de la suspension. Dans la plupart des cas, les personnalités évoquées ont été victimes des attaques meurtrières. Leur activité intellectuelle, leurs idées sont restées *inachevées*. Leur mort survenue prématurément est donc synonyme d'une perte pour les domaines où ces gens activaient et une perte pour le monde, en général. Assia Djébar cherche à remplir ce vide et leur rendre justice par son écriture qui lui donne la possibilité de s'imaginer que ses

¹ Dans son livre *Eros, logos, dialogos*, Principato Aurelio situe l'interruption à côté de la *réticence* et la *suspension* qui sont propres au *style entrecoupé*. (*Le style entrecoupé et sa relation à la rhétorique*, pp. 77-90)

confrères sont encore là, qu'elle peut leur parler, voire exposer leurs pensées. L'*inachevé* devient l'expression d'une quête incessante des origines, de l'effort ininterrompu de comprendre le destin collectif en vue de maîtriser son propre destin. Enfin, c'est l'expression littérale du refus et de la confiance au pouvoir de l'écriture de punir l'injustice : *J'écris et je sèche quelques larmes. Je ne crois pas en leur mort : en cela, pour moi, elle est inachevée.* (ibidem : 232)

Jusqu'au dernier chapitre, *Écrire le blanc de l'Algérie*, l'écrivaine lance des questions ou place des indices dont la fonction est de maintenir l'attention aux détails sous-entendus. Et à ce point de l'utilité du procédé rhétorique, nous identifions un trait exposée par Joseph Planché (1820 : 268) dans son *Traité des figures de rhétorique* : la suspension consiste à faire attendre ce que l'on va dire, à l'annoncer de loin, pour forcer l'esprit à s'y arrêter davantage. La chercheuse Lise Charles (op. cit. : 78) aboutit à une conclusion pareille : la suspension est certes une attente. Dans *Le Blanc de l'Algérie*, la narratrice peut faire référence à la lumière blanche d'une journée passée à Oran avec son ami, Kader ; à la paix (blanc infini) ; à la joie de visiter sa terre natale (*J'avais laissé le gris de l'Europe et je retrouvais cette lumière !* (Djebar, Assia, op. cit. : 148). Belhocine Mounya (2015 : 2) remarque la construction d'une *poétique de la mort* autour de la couleur blanche :

La convocation de ces « chers disparus », qui s'accompagne d'une relecture de l'Histoire, revêt un cachet particulier dans le texte de Djebar. En effet, la présence métaphorique de la couleur blanche, et ce dès le titre, et son apparition systématique à l'évocation de la mort de ses amis participent dans la mise en place d'une poétique de la mort.

Autant de représentations d'une non-couleur et de sens multiples dont le décodage vise des circonstances controversées, des moments historiques essentiels, des réactions, des émotions.

Aujourd'hui, en Algérie, à la suite de meurtres en série d'écrivains, de journalistes et d'intellectuels, auxquels répond une répression accrue (...), devant ces convulsions qui plongent mon pays dans une guerre qui ne dit pas son nom, qui à nouveau, est nommée « événements » dans ce retour de la violence et de son vocabulaire anesthésiant, qu'est-ce que le « blanc » (le blanc de la poussière, de la lumière sans soleil, de la dilution...), et pourquoi le dire ici ? (...) Le blanc de l'écriture, dans une Algérie non traduite ? Pour l'instant, l'Algérie de la douleur, sans écriture ; pour l'instant, une Algérie sang-écriture, hélas ! (Djebar, Assia, op. cit. : 241-245)

Conclusion

Finalement, l'écrivaine dépeint une image complexe dont les interprétations sont multiples. Le *blanc* du silence, du linceul, de la souffrance du peuple algérien, l'oubli, la tension et la sémence de la révolte, toutes ces facettes convergent dans le point le plus intime de l'écriture : « le blanc djebarien ».

Nous proposons ce syntagme afin de réunir ces variations de la même non-couleur et de résumer les perspectives multiples englobées par ce roman : écriture autobiographique, analyse biographique, œuvre de fiction, recherche historique. Le récit contient des détails fournis sur les décès que la narratrice présente à travers les processions, sur la guerre algéro-française et la guerre civile en Algérie, sur la vie de ses proches, de ses amis. Au-delà de ces

détails, il y a aussi le non-dit, le silence ou la suspension qui servent à compléter le message ample de son écriture dont on ressent l'écho au fil du temps.

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LES FORMES DU « NON DIT » DANS LA POÉSIE ITALIENNE DU XX^e SIÈCLE. LE CAS D'UMBERTO SABA

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Abstract: This article is a new chapter (and a digression) in the context of research into the obscurity of content in 20th-century Italian poetry. The author is not chosen at random: Umberto Saba is, by common opinion, the least obscure of the main representatives. But it's also one of the least difficult, if we understand the difficulty as such a particular type of obscurity identified for the first time by Fortini in Italian poetry of the twentieth century: "A feature of obscurity which does not act as constitutive but only as momentary and which can be resolved by a certain degree of competence of reader" because "it accepts, indeed, it requires interpretation and paraphrase". However, certain features of obscurity - or rather of difficulties in the Fortinian sense - it is also present in Saba.

Keywords: poetry, 20th century, Saba, taboo, self-censorship.

Introduction

Cet article est un nouveau chapitre (et une digression) dans le cadre d'une recherche sur l'obscurité du contenu dans la poésie italienne du XX^e siècle. L'auteur n'est pas choisi au hasard : Umberto Saba est, de l'avis commun, le moins obscur des principaux représentants. Mais c'est aussi l'un des moins difficiles, si nous entendons la difficulté comme tel type particulier d'obscurité identifié pour la première fois par Fortini dans la poésie italienne du XX^e siècle : « Un trait d'obscurité qui n'agit pas comme constitutif mais seulement comme momentané et qui peut être résolu par un certain degré de compétence de lecteur » parce que « il accepte, en effet, il nécessite l'interprétation et la paraphrase ». (Fortini, F., 1991 : 87, notre traduction).

Cependant, certains traits d'obscurité -ou plutôt de difficultés au sens fortinien- ils sont également présents chez Saba. Au niveau des significations profondes, des connotations liées aux images récurrentes, il faut tout d'abord se référer aux œuvres de Lavagetto (Lavagetto, M., 1989). Mais le sien est un discours général, qui concerne plus l'interprétation globale d'un auteur que l'exégèse ponctuelle des compositions. Dans ce deuxième domaine l'exemple le plus marqué de difficulté que je connaisse et qui à ma connaissance n'a jamais été identifié est contenu dans son œuvre *La Prima fuga (a due voci)*, qui commence par ces versets : (Saba, U., 1988 : 368-369).

La vita, la mia vita, ha la tristezza
del nero magazzino di carbone,
che vedo ancora in questa strada.
Io vedo, per oltre alle sue porte aperte,

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il cielo azzurro e il mare con le antenne
Nero come là dentro è nel mio cuore;
il cuore dell'uomo è un antro di castigo.

Tant que Saba était en vie, il n'y avait aucun moyen de comprendre l'image de l'entrepôt qui, à partir des premières lignes, traverse toute la poésie. Mais en 1953, quatre ans avant sa mort Saba a écrit *Ernesto*, un livre qui n'a été publié qu'en 1975. Où il « dit ce qu'il n'avait pas pu dire » (Lavagetto, M., 1989 : 202) dans les poèmes adolescents, c'est-à-dire l'histoire de son aventure homosexuelle avec un adulte, à 16 ans pendant qu'il était stagiaire dans une entreprise à Trieste.

L'histoire d'Ernesto se déroule dans un entrepôt de farine, pas de charbon : farine très blanche qui salit les vêtements de ceux qui y entrent. Mais le poème se termine sur l'image suivante :

[...] Anche tu taci,
voce che dalla mia sei nata, voce
d'altri tempi serena; se puoi, taci;
lasciami assomigliare la mia vita
– tetra cosa opprimente – a quella nera
volta, sotto alla quale un uomo siede,
fin che gli termini il giorno, e non vede
l'azzurro mare – oh, quanta in te provavi
nel dir dolcezza! – e il cielo che gli è sopra

L'entrepôt est une « nera / volta », sous lequel un homme est assis, jusqu'à la fin de la journée. Sur la première page d'*Ernesto*, l'homme avec lequel le protagoniste aura une relation ressemble à ceci : « L'homme était assis sur un tas de sacs de farine, dans un entrepôt de la Via ... » (Lavagetto, M., 2001 : 515) ; les mêmes sacs de farine blanche sur lesquels se déroule alors la relation.

La centralité de cette image dans les deux textes suffit pour conclure avec une certitude raisonnable que l'entrepôt de charbon est une transfiguration de l'entrepôt d'Ernesto, et que donc le charbon lui-même est une transfiguration anti-frénétique de la farine, avec une valeur symbolique transparente : « Nero / come là dentro è nel mio cuore ». Comme cela arrive souvent en cas de difficultés dues à l'autocensure, une telle exégèse est appropriée, car elle permet d'ajouter des connotations importantes aux images du poème. (Zuliani, L., 2012 : 413-428).

Il convient de signaler immédiatement que cet épisode biographique, pour Saba, était un secret qu'il fallait révéler. Certes, le livre a été publié à titre posthume mais d'un autre côté, Saba avait des doutes quant à l'opportunité de le publier principalement parce qu'il était resté inachevé (Lavagetto, M., 2001 : 1299.). De faire connaître l'histoire qu'il contient, à titre d'exemple le diplôme honorifique reçu à Rome en 1953. Saba a prononcé un discours conventionnel, mais a écrit plus tard à Bruno Pincherle :

Oh Dio, se invece di quel discorsetto avessi potuto leggere *Ernesto* chiudendo d'autorità gli ascoltatori nell'Aula Magna [...] credo che sarebbero tutti impazziti di gioia, compreso il Magnifico Rettore e Funaioli, che deve essere

sugli ottanta. La gente, Bruno mio, ha un bisogno, un bisogno urgente di “mettersi in libertà”, di essere insomma liberata dalle sue inibizioni. (Lavagetto, M., 2001 : 1294.).

D’une autre part, le projet de raconter cette histoire ne s’est pas réalisé sans préavis au cours des dernières années. Par exemple, déjà dans *Storia e cronistoria del Canzoniere* (1948) Saba fait allusion au fait qu’un livre en prose est destiné à arriver : il dit que *Scorciatoï* et *Raccontini* sont « pour l’instant » le seul travail de prose de Saba, et qu’avec des parenthèses importantes : « Saba vecchio avrà meno cose da narrare (au moins en vers) » (Lavagetto, M., 2001 : 279.).

Par conséquent, dans de tels cas, on ne peut parler de « non-dit » que dans un sens relatif. Pour *La Prima fuga*, il est peut-être préférable de recourir à une autre définition : la sublimation de l’expérience, sa transformation en images poétiques, et donc dans la poésie. Cette lyrique a été écrite plus ou moins en 1928, quand Saba était probablement déjà entrée en contact avec Freud (bien que l’analyse avec Weiss commencera en 1929). On peut donc douter que c’est une des premières applications de la psychanalyse à la poésie, sans oublier que Saba, selon la formule bien connue de Contini, « il est né psychanalytique avant la psychanalyse » (Contini, G., 1974 : 25-33). Cependant, il existe un autre type de suppression en Saba. Le meilleur exemple à ma connaissance est le dernier poème, avant de partir, de *Cose leggere e vaganti* (1920) :

Forse un giorno diranno

Far cattiverie, dir qualche sciocchezza,
nulla al mondo è più bello; quasi Dei
ci si sente. Ora m’odi, o mia dolcezza!
Forse un giorno diranno: «Ma chi era
questa Paolina, che le scrisse Saba
versi d’amore?» E penseranno ad una
strana creatura, assai da te diversa
fingendoti e da tutte. E tu, leggera
e vagante, che pensi tu che ai vivi
risponderei, se vivo io fossi? «Bella,
molto bella – direi – la Paolina;
ma, per quanto ricordo, poco all’altre
diversa che Trieste fan diletta.
E non aveva che la sua cosetta».

Dans l’édition originale de la collection, une petite plaquette auto-imprimée en 1920 à La Libreria Antica e Moderna, ce texte se retrouve comme le dernier poème suivi de l’adieu sous la forme d’un colophon. Mais le dernier verset a une leçon différente :

«E non aveva che la passeretta».

Saba est un libraire de trente-sept ans de Trieste, poète en herbe, « Perdu dans la province, doté d'une culture médiocre, incertain dans la manipulation des outils traditionnels » (Lavagetto, M., 1989 : 44), qui publie à ses frais une collection explicitement dédiée à la tentative réussie de séduire une vendeuse, une jeune fille encore adolescente. Et il le conclut d'une manière similaire. On peut comprendre à quel point la qualification de « petit poète » aurait pu sembler appropriée, qui a été souvent donné au premier Saba et qu'il n'a jamais accepté, car il était à la fois douloureusement conscient de ses limites et de sa grandeur. Précisément dans ces années, dans une introduction refusée plus tard au manuscrit *Canzoniere* du 1919, il a écrit qu'il avait pensé donner un titre controversé au livre, « *Il Canzoniere d'un petit poète* » (Saba, U., 1988 : 467). D'un autre côté, à l'apogée *Cose leggere e vaganti*, Saba avait déjà écrit la collection *Trieste e una donna* et plusieurs de ses grands poèmes. L'année suivante, toujours pour une jeune vendeuse dans sa boutique, il écrit le poème qui commence :

Sovrumana dolcezza
io so, che ti farà i begli occhi chiudere
come la morte.

L'une de ses plus grandes réalisations - lui-même, dans *Storia e cronistoria*, l'appelle « la meilleure de la collection » (Lavagetto, M., 1989 : 185). - et l'un des plus grands poèmes érotiques du XXe siècle italien. La leçon « *sua cosetta* » au lieu de « *passeretta* » « podium » pourrait être interprétée comme une dissimulation, même fade. Mais au début, la variante est également attestée : « E non aveva che la giovinezza » (1989 : 374), ce qui au lieu de cela élimine vraiment l'image jugée trop marquée. Le fait que Saba ait alors préféré « *passeretta* » (également dans l'édition de 1921 de *Il Canzoniere*) et qu'il ait finalement choisi la simple atténuation par « *cosetta* », montre bien comment le problème, enfin, était le registre stylistique, pas le contenu.

Pour parler plus correctement de « non-dit » servirait donc d'autres exemples proches de *La prima fuga*, c'est-à-dire des exemples de dissimulation recherchée de sa biographie. De plus, Saba lui-même est bien conscient de la façon dont les références à sa biographie peuvent être un problème :

Altro ostacolo al quale urtò, specialmente nei primi tempi, la fortuna del Nostro, fu il troppo insistere sui casi della vita. È il cosiddetto «autobiografismo di Saba». Ogni poeta è, in un certo senso, autobiografico; ma l'autobiografia di Saba presentava una difficoltà: quella di essere, per le ragioni esposte, ed altre ancora, troppo particolare. (Lavagetto, M., 1989 : 116).

Une liste sommaire de choses « trop particulières » est facile : la relation ambivalente avec ses origines juives, qui déborde parfois d'antisémitisme ; son homosexualité, qui tout au long de sa vie (à part l'épisode d'*Ernesto*) semble se matérialiser dans l'attrait des très jeunes enfants ; l'attirance spéculaire pour les très jeunes filles et d'autre part la misogynie ; puis, en conséquence de cette dernière, en citant toujours *Storia e cronistoria*, « l'ambivalence affective » (1989: p. 146) envers sa femme (et trahisons

systématiques); enfin, sa «neurasthénie», comme on disait à l'époque, et l'abus d'opium et de morphine qui en a résulté dans les dernières années de la vie.

On pourrait penser que tout cela provoque une série de stratégies de dissimulation. Au lieu de cela, il n'y a rien que Saba ne dise ; ou plutôt, il y a des éliminations et des atténuations, mais comme dans le cas de la *Cosetta* et de *Forse un giorno diranno* qu'ils sont dus à des facteurs plus stylistiques que thématiques. Par exemple, dans le manuscrit de l'un des poèmes militaires, vous pouvez trouver un passage comme celui-ci, dédié au soldat Picco: (Saba, U., 1991 : 312).

I soldati, a vederci sempre insieme –
che son talvolta peggio di puttane–
cose strane dicevan, cose strane;
ch'io t'amassi, non so, come una donna,
o da te mi piacesse farmi fare,
s'ingannavano invece, a quanto pare,
l'amore ch'io ti portavo
era più singolare

Ce n'est cependant un aveu d'aucune sorte : ce n'est qu'une étape particulièrement gracieuse. La passion sensuelle pour les « garçons de Saba » est plutôt évidente dans une infinité de poèmes et est souvent décrite en utilisant les termes amoureux et amour sans problème, à partir d'*Un ricordo* (titre original *Il primo amore*, probablement de 1914), dédié à un « garçon », l'ami Ugo Chiesa, connu en 1898:(1991 : 264 -501).

che un'amicizia (seppi poi)
non era, era quello un amore;
il primo; [...]

jusqu'au célèbre, *Vecchio e giovane*, dans Epigrafe (1947-48), qui commence « Un vieil homme aimait un garçon ». Il en va de même pour les points restants de la liste qui vient d'être faite. Très souvent, les cas les plus évidents se trouvent parmi les poèmes rejetés, c'est-à-dire parmi les poèmes que Saba a publiés, mais il décida alors d'exclure pendant la longue et fructueuse élaboration du *Il Canzoniere*. Cependant, beaucoup reste aussi dans la forme finale. Par exemple, en ce qui concerne ses origines juives, les triplés sonnet *Bersaglio* (dans *Versi militari*), suffisent, qui raconte un tutoriel :

Se qui l'occhio non falla e il colpo è certo,
egli è che nel bersaglio ognor figuro
l'orrore che i miei occhi hanno sofferto.
Tutto che di deforme hanno veduto,
di troppo ebraico, di troppo panciuto,
di troppo lamentosamente impuro.

Selon un mécanisme de correction qui a déjà été vu, Saba a d'abord pensé à la variante « ancien » au lieu de « hébreu » pour v. 13 (1991 : 148), mais finalement, il a été décidé pour la leçon plus explicite, qui a suscité la perplexité de Joachim Flescher, un

psychanalyste avec lequel Saba a eu une correspondance dans laquelle il a discuté en profondeur de son aversion pour le judaïsme (1991 : 39). Un discours similaire s'applique à l'attitude envers la femme : (« Una donna, una ben piccola cosa, / una cosa – Dio mio! – tanto meschina »)¹ et envers les femmes adultes en général²:

Cependant, il est facile de comparer ces versets avec les nombreux poèmes d'amour à sa femme, ou ceux dédiés à d'autres femmes ou même les belles et affectueuses lettres que Saba échangeait toujours avec sa femme Lina (Saba, 2004.). En ce qui concerne l'usage de drogues au cours des dernières années de la vie de Saba, les exemples se limitent à quelques indices, qui cependant, en raison de leur nature accessoire, montrent l'absence de censure. Voir, dans les poèmes suivants, respectivement vv. 4-5 et 5-6³:

UN ORIENTALE

Il racconto – una sfida al mio destino,
che incombe grave e minaccioso (è quello
di tutto il mondo) – un Orientale (ed io
lo sono, almeno in parte; e il falso oblio
dei mali è all'oppio che lo chiesi) in tempi
o migliori o diversi, egli l'avrebbe
per te favoleggiato un po' altrimenti.
STORIA sarebbe il suo nome DI UN
VECCHIO POETA E DI UN GIOVANE CANARINO.

I VECCHI

I vecchi dei villaggi hanno (se l'hanno)
il tabacco. Hanno il vino rosso. A pochi
passi il temuto cimitero. Ed io
(non quello temo, ai vinti unico pio)
avrei dovuto guarire, sottrarmi
un farmaco letale, caricarmi
di pesi sempre più gravi (ed è questa
– lo so – la legge della vita); darmi
promettevano in cambio, essi, una festa;
essi, i miei buoni amici. Perché tutto
ti concedono i buoni, e non la morte.

D'un autre côté, l'utilisation de « *farmaco letale* » (drogue mortelle) au lieu de morphine ou similaire semble se référer au goût pour la périphrase dans la langue poétique italienne et, par conséquent, au type d'atténuation sur une base stylistique déjà vu précédemment.

Ensuite, il y a un thème dont le traitement est particulièrement significatif : dans les poèmes de Saba, il y a souvent une séquence sadique associée à la sexualité. Comme d'habitude, un événement peut être trouvé dans *Ernesto*, où un jour l'ouvrier se présente

1 Du premier poème de la série *Nuovi versi alla Lina di Trieste e una donna*, vv. 5-6.

2 Vv. 1-10 du dernier poème de *Fanciulle* (1925).

3 Pris à partir de *Quasi un racconto* (1951) et *Sei poesie della vecchiaia* (1935-1954).

avec une tige de bouleau, non pas pour une punition, mais « pour évacuer sur le pauvre garçon le sadisme qui semble toujours accompagner ce genre d'amour » (Lavagetto, M., 1989 : 580).

Ernesto, cependant, saisit la tige et c'est lui qui frappe le travailleur aux mains. Parmi les poèmes, les références les plus explicites se trouvent parmi les textes rejetés : par exemple : *La poesia delle sculacciate* (qui apparaît dans l'édition 1920 de *Cose leggere e vaganti* et est ensuite intitulé *Tenerezze* dans *Canzoniere* del 1921) ou *Il castigo di Chiaretta* (du manuscrit *Varianti ed errata corrige al Canzoniere*, vendu à Luigi Banzi) (1989: p. 870-1141). En recherchant le texte en ligne, vous pouvez les trouver répertoriés sur des sites de *spanking*, avec des commentaires de la part d'utilisateurs agréablement surpris que Saba, l'un des poètes qui étudient à l'école, aurait pu écrire de telles choses. De même, il en va de même pour de nombreux poèmes et proses qui parlent d'homosexualité. Un exemple très gracieux est alors *Còttalo*, un poème du 1913 qui a été inclus dans le *Canzoniere* publié dans le 1921. (1989, p. 826).

C'est le remaniement d'un mimiambo d'Hérode (III siècle avant JC), intitulé *Il maestro di scuola*, que Pascoli avait déjà repris dans la *Civetta dei Poemi conviviali*. C'est l'histoire de la punition d'un garçon qui ne veut pas étudier et qui est donc pris par l'enseignant alors qu'il est détenu par ses compagnons. Saba, en racontant les errances de Còttalo quand il manque l'école, ajoute la description de certains pédérastes qui tentent - parfois avec succès - de le séduire (« Inorridisce Còttalo, s'infiamma / di vergogna... ma dopo anche chi sa, / se non lo vince il suono di una dramma »). Et conclut en s'adressant à lui-même:

O cuore offeso, sta un po' allegramente;
pensa Còttalo e l'isola di Còo.

Identification et chevauchement entre Saba et ses garçons. Cela se produit immédiatement, mais au fil des années, il se réfère de plus en plus au narcissisme et à l'auto-érotisme que Saba avait trouvé chez Freud comme caractéristique de l'homosexualité - et Saba, en fait, a des mots enthousiastes pour l'essai de Freud sur Léonard, qui en traitant ces thèmes les associe à la suppression de l'amour pour la mère. (1989 :147-8).

Enfin, si vous tirez les conclusions de cet aperçu, il était clair que le « non-dit » n'est pas retrouvé, malgré la difficulté du sujet. Les suppressions et les atténuations semblent répondre davantage aux besoins de style qu'à l'autocensure. Mais à y regarder de plus près, le « non-dit » dans Saba existe : paradoxalement, il réside dans des commentaires en prose, tels que *Storia e cronistoria del Canzoniere*, où tous ces thèmes ne sont presque jamais mentionnés. Saba note même que le célèbre *A mia moglie* « Elle est la seule à nous avoir causé un peu de scandale », (Lavagetto, M., 2001 :140) et il est difficile de comprendre s'il y a aussi de la malice (ou une ombre de déception) dans ce commentaire et dans d'autres commentaires similaires.

Le fait que cette sincérité se limite aux poèmes, ou plutôt à ce qui est écrit à des fins artistiques, est un élément fondamental. Dans *Ernesto* (qui est une œuvre en prose à part entière, pas un autocomentaire), il y a la déclaration de poétique la plus imprévisible que j'ai jamais rencontrée. Après les premières approches, l'ouvrier demande à Ernesto : « No se ricorda più de quel che gavemo parlà ieri? Che el me gà quasi promesso? Nol sa quel che

me piaseria tanto farghe?» (2001: 525). Ernesto répond le plus grossièrement possible: «Mettermelo in culo». Dit Ernesto avec une innocence tranquille. L'histoire continue de cette façon (notez comment la narration, ici comme ailleurs, est souvent centrée sur les pensées de l'homme, pas sur celles d'Ernesto).

Après ce que nous avons vu ici, sur l'importance pour Saba de dire aussi dans la poésie ce qui ne serait pas bon à dire, un tel jugement semble paradoxal et flou. Mais la raison est bien comprise. Les formes de la tradition étaient à la fois un outil et un obstacle pour Saba : la poésie ne pouvait être obtenue qu'en utilisant de telles formes pour écrire quelque chose qui ne peut pas être écrit d'une autre manière. La toujours apologétique œuvre *Storia e cronistoria del Canzoniere* décrit ainsi les raisons de la grandeur de l'auteur : (2001 : 329).

A quei vecchi metri, a quelle trite parole occorreva solo imprimere il suggello di una personalità nuova e ben definita, piegare gli uni e le altre a dire, col massimo di esattezza e di aderenza alla verità interiore, quel tanto di nuovo che ognuno porta in sé nascendo, e che Saba, per ragioni etniche od altre, portò in grado forse maggiore.

C'est dans ce « piegar » au deuxième rang on trouve la modernité de Saba : une modernité paradoxale, car un poème qui a l'ambition de révéler toutes les vérités cachées dans le cœur d'un homme, sans ironie ni médiation, il n'a pas sa place dans les années 1900. Ou plutôt, cela ressemble exactement à la poésie que les « *petits poètes* » essaient parfois, qu'en raison de la naïveté ou du manque de culture il leur manque une caractéristique des « *poètes les plus typiques et modernes* », la conscience que « la scission qui a irrémédiablement détruit l'unité de l'individu est compliquée et elle se projette dans une fracture tout aussi irrémédiable entre lui et le monde » (Mengaldo, P. V., 1978 : 193). À Saba également, cette tentative « d'unir la poésie et la vie est vouée à l'échec et au recommencement » (1978 : 194).

Le résultat est un travail profondément discontinu, qui doit cependant être lu tous ensemble, car, comme le répète souvent Saba, seul le projet global nous permet de comprendre, et parfois de sauvegarder, les textes et les versets individuels. L'unicité de Saba est donc très particulière, car il y en a sûrement beaucoup de similaires dans les niveaux inférieurs de la production en vers de la première moitié du XXe siècle : cependant, Saba sans nier ces prémisses, ou plutôt les pousser à l'extrême, il parvient à faire de la grande poésie. Cela fait également de lui un précurseur, car ce n'est que vers la fin du siècle que les institutions formelles se sont complètement divisées et que Saba avait du mal à maîtriser dans les années '10. Il fait de lui un grand poète moderne, mais seulement si nous donnons à la « poésie moderne » le sens large et un peu démodé dont nous parlions, ce qui a été affirmé avec le Romantisme.

Conclusion

D'une manière un peu oiseuse, on pourrait enfin se demander à quel point Saba, malgré ses liens étroits avec la tradition italienne, est un poète typiquement italien.

L'absence du « non-dit », son obstination l'interdirait à vouloir atteindre le cœur des choses, le centre de vie brulant, surmonter les résistances et les inhibitions, sans périphrase et tournures de mots inutiles. Ce sont des choses considérées comme basses et vulgaires (peut-être interdites) ou d'autres considérées comme « sublimes ». Cela signifiait renoncer à cette bonne dose de réticence que (il le savait bien aussi) la tradition poétique, et en particulier la tradition poétique italienne, lui aurait suggéré. D'autre part, Saba a essayé de recourir à ses liens avec la culture d'Europe centrale (ou Europe du Nord en général) Comme cela a été noté, ces influences ont souvent été exagérées : il y a certainement Weininger et Nietzsche (qui, cependant, ont largement circulé en Italie bien qu'ils aient peut-être été moins compris) puis Freud, mais seulement à partir de la fin des années '20. En revanche, il existe peu de littérature inhabituelle : Les connaissances souvent mentionnées de Heine sont également transmises par des traductions italiennes. Les auteurs sur lesquels il s'est formé sont les classiques de la tradition italienne, Dante et Leopardi en tête (Saba, U., 2004 : LXXV), et déjà en 1905 Saba était à Florence pour essayer (sans succès) de suivre la culture italienne moderne. Les raisons de la singularité de Saba, ou plutôt de son caractère étranger, il faut les chercher ailleurs.

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RETICENCIA DE GALDÓS ANTE EL AMOR CARNAL

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Abstract: *As a realist novelist, Galdós seeks to depict very faithfully the lives of his contemporaries. He observes all aspects of reality and he records them conscientiously for the generations to come. When entering the Royal Spanish Academy, Galdós himself confessed, during the reception speech, that for him “novels are the image of life”. It seems that he leaves nothing behind: historical events, environments, clothing, trades, concerns, entertainment, customs, traditions... Notwithstanding, in the face of carnal love, the illustrious novelist looks away and merely suggests or vaguely states that it has happened. In “Contemporary Novels” there are various carnal relationships, however none of them is thoroughly described.*

Keywords: *Galdós, contemporary novels, carnal love.*

Galdós, máximo representante del realismo español

Se considera comúnmente que las primeras manifestaciones del realismo se producen en la novela española en un momento en que en otros países esta corriente literaria está ya en sus postrimerías. Tal vez por eso, el realismo español es desde el principio más maduro y más pulcro, capaz de engendrar obras originalísimas y portentosas, que nunca pierden su interés, constituyendo, un siglo más tarde, verdaderos documentos históricos y antropológicos.

Francisco Caudet reflexiona sobre el singular y novedoso planteamiento de la novela decimonónica e infiere que “recrear estructuras socio-históricas, trazar el precario destino del individuo en unos medios degradados y, dicho en una palabra, desvelar en profundidad la realidad, ha sido la tarea que define a la novela decimonónica y, en particular, a la obra novelística de Galdós.” (Caudet, 1992: 11). Galdós mismo lo aclara en su discurso de recepción en la Real Academia, revelando que, para él, “imagen de la vida es la novela” (<http://www.biblioteca.org.ar/libros/130020.pdf>). 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...” (*ibidem*).

El jamás contestado maestro del realismo español es Benito Pérez Galdós.

Isabel González y Gabriel Sevilla remarcaban su ininterrumpido esfuerzo de pasar por la vida con los ojos abiertos y de narrar todo lo que viven sus contemporáneos: “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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Todos los críticos literarios, al unísono, han visto en Galdós al “verdadero creador de lo que entendemos por realismo moderno en la novela española” (Del Río, 1982: 295), puesto que “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, *ibidem*).

Se han cumplido ya cien años desde la muerte de Pérez Galdós, pero su obra conserva intacta su actualidad, ya que sus novelas crean una sensación inigualable de vida, sus personajes son o parecen ser personas reales de su época, que viven como vivían los contemporáneos del escritor, en las mismas calles, en las mismas casas, usan los mismos objetos, visten según la moda de sus tiempos, se comportan con naturalidad y tienen sentimientos y profundidad psicológica. Galdós revela pensamientos, experiencias afectivas, actitudes, que no cambian con la ropa y con la canción de moda; “Galdós llega hasta la entraña de sus criaturas, mostrando –como en el caso de Fortunata– las altas y bajas de su ánimo” (Menéndez Peláez; Arellano et alii, 2005: 336). En las novelas de Galdós pululan nobles, políticos, diputados, corredores de bolsa, abogados, médicos, farmacéuticos, usureros, pero también criados, jardineros, vendedores, prostitutas, cocineras, peinadoras... La gente desayuna en un café, va al teatro o a la corrida de toros, a las tiendas, al parque...

Galdós describe palacios, obras de arte y objetos de una delicadeza exquisita, pero no vuelve la mirada ante la miseria y el dolor.

Elementos naturalistas en las novelas de Galdós

En *Misericordia*, Galdós reseña a la manera naturalista la muchedumbre de mendigos que se amontonan delante de las puertas de la iglesia, para acosar a los creyentes:

Los que hacen la guardia por el Norte ocupan distintos puestos en el patinillo y en las dos entradas de este por las calles de las Huertas y San Sebastián, y es tan estratégica su colocación, que no puede escaparse ningún feligrés como no entre en la iglesia por el tejado. En rigurosos días de invierno, la lluvia o el frío glacial no permiten a los intrépidos soldados de la miseria destacarse al aire libre (aunque los hay constituidos milagrosamente para aguantar a pie firme las inclemencias de la atmósfera), y se repliegan con buen orden al túnel o pasadizo que sirve de ingreso al templo parroquial, formando en dos alas a derecha e izquierda (Galdós, 1994b: 64).

Los indigentes pertenecen a todas las edades, son perseverantes y forman un auténtico “ejército”, para que nadie se les escape sin darles una moneda:

Bien se comprende que con esta formidable ocupación del terreno y táctica exquisita, no se escapa un cristiano, y forzar el túnel no es menos difícil y glorioso que el memorable paso de las Termópilas. Entre ala derecha y ala izquierda, no baja de docena y media el aguerrido contingente, que componen ancianos audaces, indómitas viejas, ciegos machacones, reforzados por niños de una acometividad irresistible (entiéndase que se aplican estos términos al arte de la postulación)...(*ibidem*).

En *La desheredada*, Galdós describe de la misma manera naturalista el trabajo duro de un niño en una fábrica, sin escatimar los detalles penosos, que hoy provocan indignación. La hermana mayor lo vuelve a ver después de varios años y advierte las huellas que deja el esfuerzo diario en el cuerpo del niño:

La hora del descanso no se hizo esperar. Soltó el obrero el cáñamo, paróse la rueda, y el que la movía salió lentamente del fondo negro, plegando los ojos a medida que avanzaba hacia la luz. Era un muchacho hermoso y robusto, como de trece años. Isidora le abrazó y le besó tiernamente, admirándose del desarrollo y esbeltez de su cuerpo, de la fuerza de sus brazos, y afligiéndose mucho al notar su cansancio, el sudor de su rostro encendido, la aspereza de sus manos, la fatiga de su respiración (Galdós, 2018: 106).

En *Lo prohibido*, Galdós no duda en detallar los síntomas y la falta de fuerza más penosa del protagonista, que padece una hemiplejía y no puede valerse por sí mismo:

Administrábame revulsivos y enérgicos derivados; y para que mi semejanza con un perro fuera mayor, dábame la estricnina. Pensé decirle por escrito que me diera de una vez la morcilla, para hacerme reventar. ¡Terrible trance verme en tanta miseria, rodeado de todas las prosas de la vida humana, no pudiendo valerme sin ajeno auxilio! Ramón y Constantino me movían de aquí para allí, cargándome como a un leño, y haciendo conmigo lo que las madres de más abnegación hacen con un pobre niño sucio, incapacitado e irresponsable.”(Galdós, 2001: 594).

Está muy claro que Galdós quiere reflejar la vida tal como es, a la manera naturalista, sin omitir los aspectos grotescos. Nada le repugna, desea anotarlo todo. O casi todo. Veremos que hay algo que sí evita describir.

El sentimiento amoroso en las novelas contemporáneas de Galdós

Uno de los grandes méritos de Galdós es el de haber concedido a la mujer el papel que la sociedad decimonónica le negaba: un papel igual al del hombre. María Zambrano lo observaba:

Galdós es el primer escritor español que introduce a todo riesgo las mujeres en su mundo. Las mujeres, múltiples y diversas; las mujeres reales y distintas, «ontológicamente» iguales al varón. Y ésta es la novedad, ésta es la deslumbrante conquista. Existen como el hombre, tienen el mismo género de realidad (Zambrano, 1989: 188).

En sus novelas, Galdós crea numerosos retratos de mujeres, todos verosímiles e inolvidables. El escritor es buen conocedor del alma femenina, que explora larga y esmeradamente, dejando a sus lectores venideros testimonios fidedignos sobre la ropa, los gestos, las costumbres, los pensamientos, los sentimientos, las ocupaciones y preocupaciones de sus contemporáneas, mujeres humildes y mujeres nobles, criadas, vendedoras, nodrizas, burguesas, aristócratas... Todas muy reales, mezclándose en las calles de las novelas.

Un autor que otorga a la mujer un lugar tan importante no puede dejar de hablar de las relaciones entre hombres y mujeres, sobre todo del amor. Y Galdós lo hace sin cesar, en sus novelas aparecen todos los momentos de una pasión amorosa, desde el enamoramiento inocente y puro de Marianela, hasta el arrebato avasallador de Fortunata, tan diversos, pero tan verídicos hasta el final: cuando Pablo prefiere a Florentina, Marianela no desea más que morir y, efectivamente, se muere de dolor; cuando Juan Santa Cruz tiene amores con Aurora, Fortunata planea hacer asesinar a su amante y a su amiga.

Siempre hay amor en las novelas de Galdós, pero no siempre llega a buen puerto. En *Miau*, Abelarda está comprometida con un joven muy loable, trabajador y estudioso, “de esos que tienen novia como podrían tener un paraguas” (Galdós, 2019: 221). Ni Abelarda, ni Ponce están enamorados. El joven Ponce espera la muerte de un tío para recibir su herencia y después lleva hasta el final sus planes matrimoniales; aunque la boda no viene descrita en la novela, tiene una fecha establecida y al lector le queda claro que se celebrará. Abelarda tampoco está enamorada de su prometido, pero se quiere casar “por colocarse, por tener posición y nombre y salir de aquella estrechez insoportable de su hogar” (*ibidem*: 223). Para Abelarda, Ponce es “un recurso y apoyo probable en las vicisitudes de la suerte” (*ibidem*). Galdós destaca la “pasividad” de la mujer que cumple con la rutina de tener un prometido, con firme propósito de casarse, recibe a su prometido en su casa y charla con él. Pero hay momentos en que la boda está en peligro. Víctor, el cuñado de Abelarda, marido de su hermana muerta, se hospeda un tiempo en la misma casa. Víctor es un hombre apuesto y encantador, de manera que Abelarda se siente atraída irresistiblemente por su cuñado. Pero Víctor no la ama, sólo la ilusiona para divertirse y acaba confesándole que no desea tener nada con ella. A pesar de estar enamorada de Víctor, Abelarda sigue planeando su boda con Ponce. El autor dice que casarse con Ponce para ella es “tirarse por el Viaducto” (*ibidem*: 382), pero la actitud de Abelarda carece de dramatismo, denota más bien indiferencia. En el siglo XIX, la mayoría de las mujeres se casaban sin amor, con indiferencia, para que sus maridos las mantuvieran.

Por supuesto que los hombres también se enamoran en las novelas de Galdós. El héroe de *Lo prohibido* siente que su amor es imposible, puesto que la mujer amada, su prima Eloísa, está casada. Reflexiona sobre su pasión:

Eloísa pareciome obra maestra de la carne mortal, pues en su perfección física creí ver impresos los signos más hermosos del alma humana, sentimiento, piedad, querer y soñar. Desde que la vi me gustó mucho, y la tuve por mujer sin par, lo que todos soñamos y no poseemos nunca, el bien que encontramos tarde y cuando ya no podemos cogerlo, en una vuelta inesperada del camino. Cuando vi aquella fruta sabrosa, otro la tenía ya en la mano y le había hincado el diente (Galdós, 2001: 147).

José María y Eloísa viven su pasión, a pesar de la grave enfermedad del marido de ella, que acaba muriéndose. Galdós demuestra una vez más ser un profundo conocedor del alma humana: Eloísa libre ya no atrae a José María, el gran amor se ha venido apagando. El héroe reflexiona sobre sus propios sentimientos:

¿Qué me había pasado? ¿Qué era aquello? ¿Acaso las raíces de aquel amor no eran hondas? Sin duda no, y él mismo se me arrancaba sin remover lo íntimo de mi ser. Era pasión de sentidos, pasión de vanidad, pasión de fantasía la que me había tenido cautivo por espacio de dos años largos; y alimentada por la ilegalidad, se debilitaba desde que la ilegalidad desaparecía. ¿Es tan perversa la naturaleza humana que no desea sino lo que le niegan y desdeña lo que le permiten poseer? (*ibidem*: 341)

José María descubre que se está enamorando de Camila, la hermana de Eloísa, y tiene que admitir que le atrae lo prohibido. Cuando Eloísa se queda viuda, José María desea a Camila, la hermana felizmente casada.

Este tipo de hombre que se siente atraído por lo que no puede tener aparece también en *Fortunata y Jacinta*, donde se encarna en un personaje secundario, Moreno-Isla,

primo de Aurora Fenelón, con quien mantiene una relación secreta durante la vida del marido de ella. Pero Aurora se queda viuda y, de manera sorprendente, Moreno-Isla ya no está interesado en ella. Aurora sospecha más tarde que él está enamorado de Jacinta, la esposa de Juan Santa Cruz, y se lo cuenta con estas palabras a Fortunata:

Estos solterones vagabundos y ricos son así... Están viciosos, estragados, mimosos; y como se han acostumbrado a hacer su gusto, piden mediodía a catorce horas. [...] Y para mayor desgracia, se engolosina ahora con Jacinta. Lo que a él le enciende el amor es la resistencia; y las que tienen fama de honradas, le entusiasman, y las que sobre tener fama, lo son, le vuelven loco (Galdós, 1992: II 329).

En *El amigo Manso*, el escritor glosa los sentimientos encontrados y las dudas de un joven enamorado, que confiesa a su profesor que no sabe qué hacer; a pesar del amor que siente, no se decide a casarse:

Pues yo, querido maestro, si usted me pregunta lo que siento, le diré con toda franqueza que estoy como fuera de mí de enamorado y de ilusionado, pero si usted me pregunta si he hecho propósito de casarme, le contestaré con la misma franqueza que no he podido adquirir todavía una idea fija sobre esto. Es cosa grave. Por todas partes no se oye otra cosa que diatribas contra el matrimonio. Luego, tan jóvenes ambos... Hay que pensarlo y medirlo todo, amigo Manso (Galdós, 2008: 299).

Como era de esperar, en cada novela de Galdós hay alguna historia de amor, porque el escritor aspiraba a reflejar la vida de la manera más fiel, y el amor es el impulsor de la existencia humana.

Reticencia de Galdós ante el amor carnal

Si el sentimiento amoroso tiene un lugar preponderante en la obra del escritor español, el amor carnal no tiene ninguno, Galdós no se permite más que unas cuantas alusiones.

En *La de Bringas*, Rosalía es una burguesa que sueña con ser algo más, le encanta codearse con la aristocracia y vestir bien, nada le gusta más que los vestidos y los sombreros traídos de París. Su marido es un hombre ahorrador, modesto funcionario, que mantiene a su familia de su sueldo y desea conservar algo para el futuro de sus hijos. Rosalía consigue engañarle y le roba el dinero guardado con tanto celo. Pero ella no es capaz de enfrentar a su marido y desea devolver el dinero a la cajita donde estaba guardado. No logra obtener ninguna cantidad y se entrega a un admirador, hombre sin escrúpulos, que al día siguiente le escribe una carta llena de disculpas y se niega a darle el dinero que ella necesita. El adulterio de Rosalía ocupa muy poco lugar en la novela. El escritor se limita a apuntar que la mujer sale de casa:

En la mañana del día 8, Rosalía, vestida con pulcra sencillez, se despidió de su marido. Iba a misa, como lo demostraba el devocionario con tapas de nácar que llevara en la mano... Su marido no debía extrañar que tardase algo, pues iba a ver a la de Cucúrbitas que estaba en peligro de muerte (Galdós, 1994a: 267).

La curiosidad del lector aumenta y finalmente éste se tiene que contentar con la mera noticia de la llegada de la mujer, un poco más tarde de lo previsto: “Trascurrió toda la

mañana, y cansados de esperar a Rosalía, almorzaron. La señora llegó a eso de la una, un poco sofocada. «Muy malita la pobre» -dijo adelantándose a su marido, que ya tenía la boca abierta para preguntarle por la hermana de Cucúrbitas” (*ibidem*: 268). No hay ninguna información sobre lo ocurrido en el lapso, pero Galdós da alguna pista y el lector tiene que adivinarlo. En primer lugar, Rosalía mira con más respeto a su marido:

Bueno será decir que nunca, en tiempo alguno, había la Pipaón de la Barca tenido a su esposo por más respetable que aquel día... Le miraba y le oía con cierta veneración y se conceptuaba extraordinariamente inferior a él, pero tan inferior que casi casi no merecía fijar sus ojos en él (*ibidem*: 269).

Las dudas de la protagonista constituyen otro indicio. No sabe si su amante le enviará el dinero pedido. Además, Rosalía utiliza el verbo *venderse* y el lector comprende que lo ha hecho: “¡Oh, Virgen! Venderse y no cobrar nuestro precio, es tremenda cosa... Pero no; él hará un esfuerzo por no quedar conmigo en una situación desairada y ridícula...” (*ibidem*: 268). Por la noche, el arrepentimiento de la mujer adúltera crece y no la deja pegar ojo, mientras el marido duerme, sin sospechar nada. Después de glosar la carta del amante, Galdós disipa completamente las dudas del lector, puesto que la heroína afirma claramente que ha cometido adulterio y lo lamenta:

¡Qué hombres! Ella había tenido la ilusión de figurarse a algunos con proporciones caballerescas... ¡Qué error y qué desilusión! ¡Y para eso se había envilecido como se envileció! Merecía que alguien le diera de bofetadas y que su marido la echara de aquel honrado hogar... Ignominia grande era venderse, pero darse de balde...! Al llegar a esto, lágrimas de ira y dolor corrieron por sus mejillas. Eran las primeras que derramaba después de casada (*ibidem*: 273).

Nada más dice el autor sobre el encuentro sexual de Rosalía con Pez.

En *Fortunata y Jacinta*, tampoco hay detalles sobre el amor carnal. El autor relata el primer encuentro de Juan Santa Cruz con Fortunata, después la inquietud de la madre del joven por las ausencias y las extravagancias de éste. La madre es la que arregla un matrimonio decente para Juan Santa Cruz y él lo acepta. Se casa con Jacinta. Durante la luna de miel, Jacinta, que había sabido algo de la aventura de su marido, le pide que se la cuente. Juan accede y resume en unas cuantas frases las ilusiones y el amargo desengaño de la pobre chica: “Un día le dije: «Si quieres probarme que me quieres, huye de tu casa conmigo». Yo pensé que me iba a decir que no. [...] La respuesta fue coger el mantón, y decirme «vamos»” (Galdós, 1992: 207). Pero una noche toma una copa de más y acaba confesándole a su esposa la historia con Fortunata y sus remordimientos:

¿No ves que lloro? Compadécete de este infeliz... He sido un perverso... Porque la Pitusa me idolatraba... Seamos francos. [...] Seamos francos; la verdad ante todo... me idolatraba. Creía que yo no era como los demás, que era la caballerosidad, la hidalguía, la decencia, la nobleza en persona, el acabose de los hombres... ¡Nobleza, qué sarcasmo! Nobleza en la mentira; digo que no puede ser... y que no, y que no. ¡Decencia porque se lleva una ropa que llaman levita!... ¡Qué humanidad tan farsante! El pobre siempre debajo; el rico hace lo que le da la gana. Yo soy rico... di que soy inconstante... (*ibidem*: I, 230).

Está borracho y no duda en aclararle a su mujer todos los detalles, hasta los más indignos, le relata cómo abandonó a Fortunata, cómo sorteó los encuentros con la infeliz, y

cómo empujó por las escaleras al tío de ella, que había venido a anunciarle que ella estaba embarazada:

Un día dije vuelvo, y no volví más... [...] Yo tenía algo en mi conciencia, un hilito que me tiraba hacia allá... Lo corté... Fortunata me persiguió; tuve que jugar al escondite. Ella por aquí, yo por allá... Yo me escurría como una anguila. No me cogía, no. El último a quien vi fue Izquierdo; le encontré un día subiendo la escalera de mi casa. Me amenazó; díjome que la Pitusa estaba cambrí de cinco meses... ¡Cambrí de cinco meses...! Alcé los hombros... Dos palabras él, dos palabras yo... alargué este brazo, y plaf... Izquierdo bajó de golpe un tramo entero... Otro estirón, y plaf... de un brinco el segundo tramo... y con la cabeza para abajo... (*ibidem*: I, 231).

Juan Santa Cruz y Fortunata tienen una historia llena de meandros, ella le ama profundamente, pero él se siente atraído físicamente por ella, nada más, le repugna la ignorancia de su amante. Por eso, la busca y la abandona continuamente a lo largo de la novela. Ni siquiera cuando ella está casada con Maximiliano respeta el vínculo sagrado. A pesar de ello, Galdós nunca llega a describir el acto sexual; sólo alude a él.

En cuanto a la noche de bodas con Jacinta, el escritor no revela más que las emociones de la novia:

...aquella pavorosa expectación que la hacían estremecer. ¡Y tantísimo como quería a su marido!... ¿Cómo compaginar dos deseos tan diferentes; que su marido se apartase de ella y que estuviese cerca? Porque la idea de que se pudiera ir, dejándola sola, era como la muerte, y la de que se acercaba y la cogía en brazos con apasionado atrevimiento, también la ponía temblorosa y asustada. Habría deseado que no se apartara de ella, pero que se estuviera quietecito (*ibidem*: I, 200).

Los días siguientes, Jacinta pierde en timidez y gana en atrevimiento, pero no hay más que besos en una calle oscura:

Y cuando pasaban por aquel túnel, al extremo del cual se veía otra plazoleta tan solitaria y misteriosa como la anterior, los amantes, sin decirse una palabra, se abrazaron y estuvieron estrechamente unidos, besuqueándose por espacio de un buen minuto y diciéndose al oído las palabras más tiernas (*ibidem*: I, 209).

Al amor carnal no le concede Galdós ni una sola línea en esta novela.

En *Lo prohibido*, José María, el narrador, se enamora de su prima Eloísa. Habla explícitamente de su pasión, de manera que el lector no tiene dudas. Apunta esmeradamente todas las sensaciones que aquella mujer le provoca y observa las suyas. Los dos se turban cuando se encuentran en la calle y no tienen tiempo para reflejar y poder ocultar sus emociones. Pero, cuando consuman su amor, los detalles del momento no vienen revelados. Lo único que puede hacer el lector es acompañar al protagonista en su recorrido por el palacio, hasta donde encuentra a la mujer amada:

Avancé. Bien sabía yo adónde iba. Tan seguro estaba de encontrarla como de la luz del día. Después de atravesar dos salones, vi a Eloísa de espaldas. Estaba repasando una colección de estampas puestas en voluminosa carpeta. Acerqueme a ella de puntillas; mas aún no estaba a dos pasos de su hermosa figura, cuando sin volverse dijo esto: «Sí, ya te siento; no creas que me asustas...» (Galdós, 2001: 228).

Es todo lo que consigna el autor. El lector tiene que imaginar el resto...

Más tarde, José María tiene la oportunidad de acompañar a Eloísa y al marido de ella en un viaje a París. En la capital francesa, los amantes tienen encuentros menos furtivos que en Madrid, puesto que el marido de Eloísa está casi siempre ausente, eternamente en busca de médicos que alivien los síntomas de su enfermedad. Los amantes son inhumanos, gozan su amor, sin apiadarse del enfermo, pero se amontonan solamente los detalles ajenos al sexo:

En los cuatro días que Carrillo estuvo sin más compañía que la de un camarero, en los baños de Enghien, disfrutamos los pecadores de una independencia que hasta entonces no habíamos conocido. Eloísa iba a mi hotel. Estábamos como en nuestra casa, libres, solos, haciendo lo que se nos antojaba, almorzando en la mesilla de mi gabinete, ella sin peinarse, a medio vestir, yo vestido también con el mayor abandono; ambos irreflexivos, indolentes, gozando de la vida como los seres más autónomos y más enamorados de la creación(*ibidem*: 234).

Nunca jamás se atreve Galdós a describir el amor carnal. Es siempre púdico y discreto, igual que los demás escritores de su generación. Los naturalistas no dudan en describir todo lo grotesco de la vida. El único aspecto de la existencia humana que omiten en sus obras es el amor carnal. Habrá que esperar muchos años para encontrar descripciones manifiestas del acto sexual.

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SYNCHRONISATION VS HERITAGE IN ROMANIAN NEOLOGY. TRANSLATION AS A CASE IN POINT

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Abstract. *The paper analyzes a minicorpus of translated texts, trying to sketch a typology of the main manifestations of translation and retranslation with regard to the use of neologisms in Romanian translated texts. It also tries to suggest a link between updating (and synchronizing) translation and reticence in linguistic use, also based on the author's experience as a translator.*

Keywords: *neologism, translation, updating or synchronization, domestication, foreignization.*

1. Introduction

The present paper proceeds from the various queries and comments in a number of previous articles published by the author, including several typological remarks and illustrations pertaining to the main benchmarks and criteria that good (mainly literary) translations ought to observe, based essentially on the author's own experience as a translator (Manea 2016, Manea 2017). The central point that we would like to make in this contribution is that using terms coming from the neologistic vocabulary stock when translating (literary texts) should be done in keeping with the idea of adequacy, even when synchronization is meant (cf. also the concepts of *domestication* and *foreignization*), without ignoring the related idea of reticence in use. Also, the idea of reticence implies, in this context, not leaving untranslated various nuances and hints that come from the old / historical / traditional / cultural stock of a natural language considered in translational terms.

In our opinion, translation can be defined, in a summative and simple (if rather simplistic) manner, as representing the rendering of a foreign text (or source text) into the translator's own (i.e. native) language, intrinsically respecting a set of rules, standards, theoretical considerations, conventions and repetitive occurrences that essentially arise from the translator's linguistic common sense and his/her linguistic, communicative, stylistic, logical and cultural practice.

The trend, or the initiative of retranslating (usually classical texts) is not necessarily recent, but it can be noticed that it is rather recently that it has become observably common. We would suggest there being a degree of natural closeness between retranslation and synchronization in translation, i.e. as adjustment through updating via retranslation. One can naturally ask oneself whether retranslation is useful, opportune and/or culturally adequate – and, possibly, if it is ethical – or rather to what extent it is so. It can be assumed that adequacy should be (especially when it comes to literary translation) more of a cultural nature, not only (or necessarily) pragmatic or merely communicative. Thus, we think that literature (and literary texts) ought to keep some of its/their inherent difficulties, as well as

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its/their specific “encoding”, and so be able to make a specific, humanly valuable contribution to enriching and (re)organizing a natural language – or at least its vocabulary –, mainly in cultural, historical and geographical terms. In the present context, it would be useful to consider approaching the concepts of *domestication* and *foreignization*, and also the idea of refraining from overuse (i.e. reticence). The degree to which a text is translated so as to comply with the target culture is expressed in terms of the opposed strategies known as **domestication** and **foreignization** (which could be ascribed the Romanian equivalents, *familiarizare* and *defamiliarizare*, respectively). Venuti emphasizes the importance of readership and social institutions in retranslation. The act of translation, he says, is subject to collective action, and determined by linguistic usage, literary canons, etc. Moreover, questions such as these are to be asked: What is the use of translating a certain text after a certain period of time? What are the benefits and limitations of this approach? To what extent will the translated text be better understood or easier to read?

We think that, roughly speaking, the main marks of a **domesticated text**’s nearing the acme of perfection could be either the readers not being able to realize that/whether the text has been translated from a foreign language; or (at least) the readers not being able to say what language the text has been translated from.

The principle-based issue that ought to be reminded in relation to the “synchronization” (or at least the “updating”) of literary translations, in a given linguistic (and national-cultural) community, will be worth revisiting. In other words, is it appropriate or necessary to aim at treating translation **diachronically**? Is this approach likely to provably help the current readership in this country to get a better view of the source texts? Is it more profitable (in terms of cultural perception) for the common reader? For instance, should the translated text of an older novel, like Thomas Hardy’s *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* – or generally the rendition of any other book that illustrates even older cultural periods – “read/sound like” a text that was contemporary with the texts characteristic of the same period in the target language – or at least “as if” it were that kind of text? In this connection, one could quote George Călinescu’s assessment of the “historical lingo” that Mihail Sadoveanu used in his novels: it was actually, the critic said, an admirable artistic fake, a masterfully concocted cultural sham, since the great writer’s *language* and *style*, which he so successfully used in his historical evocative writing, had nothing to do with diachrony, i.e. the history of the Romanian language itself. In fact, it was the result of the author’s own coining, a work of linguistic imagination, as Sadoveanu could *not possibly* know the language spoken by Stephen the Great’s or Duca Voivode’s contemporaries, yet he knew how to artistically “generate” or “recreate” it, or rather suggestively hint at a likely substitute for it, by employing suitable stylistic methods. In the same context, one could also invoke the much debated “diachronic” approach to the (order of the) several meanings of a word in monolingual dictionaries; for instance, should we begin the explanations under the entry of French *assommer* by *abattre* or by *abasourdir*?

We strongly believe that the essentially important point lies in translation being (semantically and factually) *faithful* while trying to achieve the desideratum of (cultural and stylistic) *synchrony*. In other words, the text’s accuracy and veracity ought to be subject to observing the canons of both referentiality and textual correctness, plus acceptance. Synchronization (i.e. achieving the chronological standards by updating) should not come in

the way of either accurate designation, or cultural (and stylistic) perception by the reader. For instance, in the translation of David Lodge's novel *Ginger You're Barmy* (the Romanian title of which is "Răcane, nu ți-e bine!"), authored by M. G., the slangy term *ginger* is rendered as *răcan*; someone who is my (and the translator's) age, or an even older person, has no difficulty in understanding it, and yet we doubt that younger people will agree with the Romanian word, otherwise than in sheer concession to the idea of "using old-fashioned words for depicting a past period and trying to recreate the past atmosphere" – and, really, the novel portrays the 1960s. We actually think that the Romanian army slang words most recommended in order to manage a good "synchronization" of the more recent Romanian vocabulary would be Romanian *biban*, *pufan* or even *pufarez*.

It is nearly useless to demonstrate that the new vocabulary (i.e. the neologistic terms) represents a layer of the word-stock of a natural language which provides translators with the bulk of the most efficient ways and means they can employ to "update" former / older versions of the same texts/books. What we should carefully consider and discuss (and sometimes, or regularly, revisit) is the opportuneness of using neologisms when the prevailing quality of a source text is... *old age*, as the main ingredient of the (obviously "more picturesque") style of the lingo characteristic of a given literary piece. At this point one should talk about the "compensating virtues" of the Romanian language – as most linguistics experts agree upon the point that (literary) Romanian can emerge as "more vivid" or "colourful" precisely by refraining from excessively using neologistic terms. (Manea 004: 35).

2. Since the author of the present paper is a **translator** himself, he has been constantly concerned by the quality of the (culturally collective) act of rendering and rephrasing literary texts written in English, by translating them into Romanian, which undoubtedly constitutes a major cultural contribution. We have to admit that the overwhelming majority of the achievements in that field are positive, and even remarkable – but there are however infelicitous counterexamples. Some of the latter cases are directly due to failing to strike a balance (in logical, informative, cultural and merely human terms) between synchronization, faithfulness and cultural distance (vs. cultural borrowing). We think that the above assertion could prove its obviousness by means of a few **examples** of (more recent) literary translations that illustrate the problematic, hesitating, oscillating, and often erroneous relationship between rendition, adaptation and updating – more often than not because of carelessness or superficially approaching the possibilities displayed by the Romanian language, or else by the inherent difficulties of the English language. Here are a number of (we believe) convincing illustrations excerpted from A. D.'s rendition of Agatha Christie's novel *Three Act Tragedy* (Rom. *Tragedie în trei acte*): "plecase cu ea spre vicariat" (p. 23); "Doamna Dacres are o afacere cu numele Ambrosine, Ltd." (p. 74); "A fost o scuză născocită?" (p. 120); "Foarte isteț din partea dvs." (p. 127); "ce se întâmplă în sanatoriul ăla prețios al lui" (p. 183); "aduce cu o rimă proastă de grădiniță" (p. 194); "Doar la ocazii, poate" (p. 201); "Rămâne în seama lui sir Charles să ridice această bănuială" (p. 257); "se arată foarte dornică să ajute" (p. 228); "Oare nu știe că fata e îndrăgostită de el până peste urechi" (p. 116); "Ea accepta orice întâmplare ca pe un fapt împlinit și trecea la a-i face față în mod eficient" (p. 45); "Egg se dovedi a fi încă în oraș" (p. 115); "Zâmbea ca

pentru sine, *asta făcea*, ca și cum ar fi pus la cale o farsă” (p. 78); “Te face să te simți cam nasol, *tipi dând colțul peste tot*” (p. 182).

Here are some more similar examples, which we excerpted from one of Andrea Camilleri’s detective novels, *Il cane di terracotta*, in E. B.’s Romanian translation (Romanian title – *Câinele de teracotă*): “trecu la examinarea părții centrale [a pixului] pe care, după o *scanare* amănunțită cu privirea...” (p. 45), “camionul *se materializează* brusc în fața supermarketului al cărui patron sunteți” (p. 46), “nu fac decât să pună în evidență *modus-ul operandi* (...) al infractorilor” (p. 48), “Când l-am tras afară din congelator, arăta ca un *batog* uriaș pus la păstrare” (p. 43), “După o primă *ședință* terminată cu huo și cu *tio*” (p. 73), “Sub cearșaf, trupul lui Tano îi păru *accorciato*, mai scurt decât și-l amintea” (p. 96). A special remark will concern the translator’s rather disproportionate efforts at foreignization, e.g. “Dom’le, *cum îi că vă simțăriți?*” (p. 232); “*Dutturi*, d-apăi *pățitărăți* ceva? Bolnav *sunterăți?*” (p. 341).

Yet, the best approach to the issue of synchronization and retranslation is, in our opinion, the **study case** method; numerous useful such studies can/could be conducted starting from the manner in which a translator (preferably, a professional one) perceives a literary text that has already been translated, and manages to “update” it. By analyzing the successive translation variants of the same book or literary piece, one can come across such observations as the notes below. Thomas Hardy’s *Tess of the d’Urbervilles* was first translated in the sixties, and another version was issued some thirty years later. C. R. translated the novel in the mid-sixties, and T. F. in the mid-nineties. To begin with, let us quote and size up the Romanian versions of the title of the book’s first chapter, which are, respectively, *Faza întâi – Tânăra fată* and *Partea întâi: Fecioara*. A bird’s-eye-view of the latter translated text shows that the author, T. F., usually overuses neologistic terms, which hardly fit into the literary “recalled picturesqueness” of the novel’s atmosphere, e.g. “anticar”, “*analelele* bisericești”, “drastic”, “pe linie *paternă*”, “clasicul (...)”, “debutaseră”, “vicisitudini”, “statura”, “exact”, “ar fi *subscris* la”, “în *particular*”, “negustor *ambulant*”, “fredonând” [cf. C. R.’s variant: “îngâna”], etc. Even so, T. F.’s version also includes errors due to his misinterpreting the exact, contextual meaning of some polysemous words, e.g. “un cântecel de *pribegie*” (p. 8), meant to translate “a *wayward* tune” (i.e. “unruly, errant”).

3. We will now go on to **illustrate** and try to suggest some typological remarks concerning the principal processes, mechanisms and linguistic-cultural classes or (sub)categories that are involved in the act of (re)translation, focusing round the concepts of translation synchronization and adaptation. The bulk of the examples provided also concern the influential issue of using neologisms in translation.

3.1. Adaptation. We observed that, in most cases, the translation variants that implied adaptation were suited to the context, mainly in terms of semantics and conceptualization (i.e. adaptation to the *realia* in Romanian), e.g. *ID*’s translated as *buletine* (in film subtitles); “capă” used to translate *fur* (i.e. the fur mantle of an Indian chief); “(...) revisited” translated as “din nou despre (...)”. We can occasionally come across cases of interesting (though possibly, or marginally debatable) adaptation, such as: “Am sunat la 112” (used in order to render the “911” in the original); sometimes, however, the debatable character of the adaptation is overshadowed by its sheer originality, e.g. “*sequential* killer” was translated as “criminal în *secvență*” (for what we would nowadays call a “criminal în

serie” – as the plot of the movies was placed in late-1800 Toronto); personally, we could have thought of an even more original equivalent (given the past context, when the English term did not yet exist), namely “criminal cu *repetiție*”.

Similarly, we can / could occasionally come across cases of felicitous (since very original) adaptation in terms of style, e.g. *quack* translated as (pejorative) *felcer*; “(somebody’s career) is *skyrocketing*” was translated as „are pretenții stratosferice”; (in M. G.’s translation of David Lodge’s 1962 novel *Ginger You’re Barmy* – Rom. “Răcane, nu ți-e bine!”); *liverică* stands for *Scouse* (a common nickname for Liverpudlians), and *tinez* for the inhabitants of the Tyne area. In fact, the specific batch of the proper names seems to pose rather serious problems: some cases of adaptation we analyzed are utterly wrong, e.g. “podîșul *Swabian*” instead of “podîșul *sueb*”, or “Dolomiții *Sexton*”, used to render “the *Sexton Dolomites*” (a region that Italians refer to as *Sesto*); some other adaptation cases are debatable, e.g. *Paul* (to translate *Pavel*, especially when the latter is used in the cultural or religious – Romanian or Balkan/Slav – area; similarly, it is by using *Wilhelm* that one should translate Eng. *William* (rather than *William* itself – cf. also It. *Guglielmo*, Sp. *Guillermo*, etc.); on the other hand, “Sf. Mihail” (standing for a church name) is the right translation variant for “Michael” – which is otherwise directly translatable as “Mihai”. An interesting remark will concern the reason why “Mrs Marple” will more often than not remain unchanged in translation (rather than “d-ra/domnișoara Marple”); surely because this set/“fixed” form has achieved general (cultural, literary) recognition, as the name of a famous fictional character.

3.2. As far as **mistranslation** is concerned, some unmistakable sources of error could be noticed, i.e. poor knowledge in the field of vocabulary, as well as some prevalent mechanisms, especially *calque* (or *loan translation*), e.g. “to be *outspoken*” was translated as “a fi *vocal*”; “an attacker of the *establishment*” was translated as “agresor al *așezării*”; *compound* was translated as “complex” (instead of *țarc* – for the kind of pound where the primates in *The Planet of Apes* were kept). In most cases, it is evident that it is the translator’s deficient or insufficient vocabulary proficiency that triggered the erroneous translation, e.g. “a *clerical* (mistake / error)” was translated as “greșeală *administrativă*” (instead of “greșeală de copiere / scriere / traducere”); “the *onslaught* by 100,000 troops” was translated as “*nimicirea* a 100.000 soldați”; “the *trappings* of authority” was translated as “*capcanele* puterii” (though the images in the movie were quite explicit about the idea of “disguise”); *papoose* was translated as *papuaș* (cf. *papoose* / *pappoose* “an American Indian baby or child”); “*turnip* field” was translated as “câmp de *rapită*”; “the anaconda’s deadly *coils*” was translated as “*spirala* letală a anacondei” (instead of *încolăcirea* / *strînsoarea*), etc.

At other times, mistranslation was due to sheer lack of logic, e.g. *fighter* was translated as “luptător” instead of “boxer” (the latter option is fully justified by the very context and plot of the story); “producția acestei pudre proteice este de 100 de ori mai prietenoasă cu mediul decât în cazul producerii cărnii, *în timp ce* este și de 10 ori mai bună ca pudrele proteice de pe piață” (instead of “(...) dar / iar ea (...)” or “și / de asemenea, ea este (...”).

Mistranslation can also be due to erroneous collocative options, e.g. “cea mai îndelungată *cercetare* asupra delfinilor a fost *condusă* de (...)” (cf. Eng. *conducted*);

“dramatic waters” was translated as “ape *dramatice*”; “România încearcă să salveze câteva dintre pădurile virgine din Europa, adăpost pentru lupi și *urși maro* [sic!], scrie Reuters”.

4. Here are the main sources of **error** or **inaccuracy** that substantially and critically influenced the overall quality of the translated texts that we analyzed – as well as the main forms and manners in which the errors manifested themselves. **4.1.** Of course, we should begin by giving some convincingly illustrative **examples**: (excerpted from *Somnul de veci*, translation of Raymond Chandler’s 1939 novel *The Big Sleep*, by V. S., Editura Nemira, 2014): “în fața marelui juriu” (p. 118); “–Așa simplu, *huh?*” (p. 110); “*Trebuie* că-ți plăcea teribil poponarul ăla” (p. 104); “Detectiv particular, *eh?*” (p. 126); *pixuri* (though the story is set in the thirties); “dosar cu *sticker verde*” (p. 128), etc.

4.2. Ambiguity can sometimes arise because of mistranslation, e.g. “soldații erau în *agonie*”.

4.3. The unwanted overall **effect of Englishing** that was lent to the translated text. In most cases, it is unwelcome, servile literality that is to blame for the poor quality of the translation, e.g. “EY România deschide un nou program de recrutare: peste 150 de *juniori* sunt căutați”. At other times, one can even perceive an (arguably synchronizing) attempt at changing the semantics of some Romanian terms in keeping with Anglo-American words – and concepts, e.g. “*industria Egiptului [antic]*” [sic!]. There are, of course, a number of **extreme cases** of Englished variants, e.g. the Romanian translation of French “*C’est pitoyable*” used the (Englished) calqued meaning of Rom. *patetic*: “Este *patetic*” (occurring in the subtitles of a documentary film on TV5 Monde). However, a rather interesting remark is that sometimes an Anglicism could be ‘smuggled’ into Romanian via mistranslation, e.g. “cotton buds” was translated as “bețișoare de *bumbac*”, when in fact *cotton* simply means “vată” in this context.

4.4. Similarly, quite a lot of sheer **translation howlers** could be found in the texts under analysis, e.g. “Aparatul ăsta e *invalid*” [sic!]; *pencil lead* was translated as “*plumb* de creion” instead of (“*mină / inimă* de creion (din grafit)”; “furt de *design industrial*”; “to do some *damage control*” was translated as “să *evaluez pagubele*” (instead of “să văd cum pot *limita* (etc.) *pagubele*”); “*sucking pig*” was translated as “porc *suculent*”; “*Evurile Întunecate*” used to translate „the Dark Ages”; “*non-commissioned officer*” was translated as “ofițer *incapabil*”; “*crash courses* [for plane pilots]” was translated as “*cursuri de doborât avioane*”; “lost in *battle*” was translated as “pierduți în *acțiune* [despre soldați]”; “the Ruhr *pocket*” (in the context of a documentary film dealing with WW2) was translated as “*bazinul Ruhr*”; “*bathing facilities*” was translated as *băi* or *toaile* (in a WW1 context where the military wanted to reach a small town, which happened to be a bathing resort); “*Gaelic phrase*” was translated as “*sintagmă galeză*” (although the documentary film in question was about brewing whisky in Scotland); “să iau *ochelarii de operă* ai mamei” (standing for Eng. *opera glasses* – though seconds later the said “(looking) glasses” could be seen: they were actually a pair of... *binoculars* – cf. Rom. *lornion*), etc. The worst happens when the real meaning of the sentence is distorted so that the latter eventually conveys the very opposite of what the author meant to say, e.g. “Noi numai am *asistat*” (in fact, they... “le veniseră în *ajutor*”); “(...) who *benefit* the grasslands” was translated as “(...) beneficiază de pășuni” instead of “(...) sînt utili/folositori *pentru* pășuni” or “(...) servesc/folosesc *pășunilor*”). Unsurprisingly, some of the most laughable howlers derive

from the translators' sheer lack of general knowledge, e.g. *nuclear fission* was translated as *fuziune nucleară* – instead of “*fisiune nucleară*” (although the authors of the respective documentary film were trying to distinguish the two forms of generating nuclear energy, by specifically opposing them).

4.5. A special category of mistranslation sources is represented by the notorious **False Friends**, which are naturally selected mostly from the subset of the neologisms of our language (most of which are ultimately terms of Latin or Romance origin). Here are some examples: Eng. *apologetic* was (literally and incongruously) translated as *apologetic*; *gallant* was translated as *galant*; *civil servants* was translated as *servitori civili*; “după cinci zile de durere *agonizantă*”; “vom *expune* fraudele” was meant to translated “vom *da în vileag* fraudele”; “a *glorious* tournament” was translated using Rom. *glorios* (instead of *strălucitor*, etc.); “după două zile *frustrante*”; “a great *patron* of the arts” was translated as “un mare *patron* al artelor” instead of “*protector* al artei”, “un *mecena*”, etc.; “a găsit în cutia poștală un *pamflet* de-al nostru” (used to translate Eng. *pamphlet*); *pamphleteers* was translated as *pamfletari* (instead of “autori de cărțuții de informații, zvonuri și povești etc. – un fel de almanahuri mai mici”, in a 15th century British context); *vest* – was translated as *vestă* (although the actual referent could be clearly seen: it was a mediaeval *blouse*); “Judaic *persuasion*” was translated as “*convingeri* iudaice”, instead of “*credință* / *religie* iudaică”; “un studiu de *amplare* (...) pentru a descoperi *evidențe asupra* vieții de după moarte” – instead of “*dovezi ale* (...)”, etc.

As it happens, though, a lot of the interlinguistic homonyms in the same group as the above examples are words that occur rather frequently in contemporary Romanian (in their real, licit meaning), yet are consistently misused to render their English look-alikes (e.g. *agony*, *asylum*, *false*, *intoxication*, *intoxicated*): “au trimis o echipă de *ingineri* să sape [tranșee]” (meant to translate *engineers* “*geniști*”); *indiscreet* translated as *indiscret* (cf. Eng. *indiscreet* “[.indi'skri:t] not discreet; imprudent or tactless”); *indiscretion* – translated as *indiscreție*, instead of “lipsă de tact; neglijență”, or even “nebăgare de seamă” (cf. Eng. *indiscretion* “[.indi'skreʃən] 1. the characteristic or state of being indiscreet; 2. an indiscreet act, remark, etc.”). In some cases, the erroneous sense generated by the mistranslation is the direct opposite of the meaning intended by the author of the source text, e.g. “pentru a *minimaliza* riscurile” (cf. Eng. *minimize*).

4.6. To the above-cited deficiencies are added **poor knowledge** of, and **abusing the rules of the Romanian language**. Here are a few examples: “the *motto* of the company” was translated as “*mottoul* firmei”, instead of “*deviza* firmei”; “*bay leaves*” was translated as “*frunze de dafin*”, instead of the traditional form, i.e. “*foi de dafin*”; “3.000 artillery *pieces*” was translated as “3.000 *arme* de artilerie”, instead of “3000 de de *piese* de artilerie”.

4.6.1. It will be true to say that poor knowledge of Romanian is mainly manifest in the field of **vocabulary**: not knowing the real meaning or form of a neologistic term, no less than various semantic confusions and paronymy are mainly visible in this respect, e.g. “vacanță *lucrativă*” (instead of “vacanță *de lucru*”); “fields of *orchids*” was translated as “câmp de *narcise*”; “Regiuni *extinse* din Anglia (...) sub cod roșu” (in fact, “regiuni *întinse*” would have been the most appropriate choice); “*gurguii* pândeau amenințători” (to translate Eng. *gargoyle*), etc.

4.7. Crass **literality** in translation critically signals superficiality and evident lack of preoccupation **with** the text end-product on the part of the translator, e.g. “*schemele* (de eliminare a poluării)” to render Eng. *schemes* (see also *system, plan, method, design, proposal, idea*); *occasionally* was translated as *ocasional*; *breastplate* was translated as “placă de piept” (instead of *platoșă*); “one of the most *celebrated* (events)” was translated as “sărbătorit”; “în *sălbăticie*”, instead of “în *mediul natural*”; “icecream *parlour*” was translated as “salon de înghețată”; “avionul militar [rusesc Tupolev] poate *căra* și armament nuclear”, instead of *a transporta* (cf. Eng. *to carry*); “inginerii *civili*” (instead of “construcții”); “(fall from) *grace*” was translated using Rom. *grație*; “Renault Captur Iridium: ediție special *croită* pentru publicul francez” (cf. Eng. *tailored*); “Îmi place să găsesc astfel de *geme* ascunse” (in reference to artefacts of great historical and archeological value), instead of Rom. “nestemate” or “obiecte de (mare) preț” (cf. Eng. *gem* “prize, pearl”); “Ce *funcționează* și ce nu împotriva abuzurilor TV” (used instead of *a merge* or *a fi eficient* in order to translate Eng. *to work* “to work out, to happen as expected”); “după *schisma cu Stalin* din iunie 1948, accentul propagandistic a *căzut* pe argumentul independenței și rezistenței anti-sovietice a popoarelor” (Cf. Eng. *split with* “division, difference of opinion”).

4.8. The same lack of professional concern, attention and scrupulous industriousness transpires from the incredibly great number of **calqued** words, structures and phrases occurring in the target texts, at various language levels (semantic, idiomatic, syntactic, etc.), e.g. *prizonier* (instead of *deținut* – though the prison context was extremely explicit); “A fost, ulterior, *pronunțat mort* la spital”; “să-și lărgească *orizonturile*”; “E o lume mică!” (cf. Eng. *It’s a small world*); “nu vedeam motiv să offensez pe *cineva* din Agor povestindu-le aventurile mele” (P. Roth, *Contraviața*, p. 128, translated by A. C. – cf. Eng. *They...*); “**Și Gilles a jucat în aceleași condiții, la finalul zilei el a fost mai bun**”, a spus și Millman”; “[un] Colt .38” (Raymond Chandler, *Crimă de mintuală*). The result of that kind of superficial rendition is the existence of translated texts abounding in awkward **Englished** structures and manners of expression, which are very far from the licit or standard models of our language, since they smack of servile copying, e.g. “Ea *nu pare să gândească la fel*” (instead of “*Se pare că nu gândește la fel*”, or “Ea *pare că nu gândește la fel*”, or “Ea *pare să nu gândească la fel*”, or “*Parcă nu gândește la fel*”).

In lots of such (half-, or pseudo-)translated texts, the final effect, which surely affects the reader more than just stylistically, is a disconcerting type of English gibberish, a completely unadapted, calqued lingo that can only flabbergast the common reader, e.g. “Avem un contract de operare și unul de *handling*, agreeat de părți, cu tarife transparente, nediscriminatorii (...) Decizia e la ei”; “O *privire mai îndeaproape asupra* creației și evoluției – (...) Dr. Kirt Martin (...) Kirt a predat *științe* peste 20 de ani la această universitate. De asemenea, este *sfătuitor pentru studenții* care optează pentru medicină (...) Este, de asemenea, *bătrân* la Biserica Lui Hristos din Sunset (...) Vârsta Pământului – *Interpretând* datele (...) *Înregistrările* despre fosile (...) Se adevărește că viața are *design*”.

4.9. The same bias towards neologistic exaggeration seems to underlie the cases of mistranslation where both **logicity** and the **context** are overlooked and/or abused, e.g. “They had to become *farmers*” [with reference to the early humans] was translated as “fermieri”, instead of “agricultori”; “(...) purta *adidași roșii*” (subtitles of a movie about

WW2 Italian PoWs in Scotland); “ceea ce-i permitea [păsării – *Terror bird*] să scaneze orizontul”; “a torch” was translated as “o torță” – though the movie clearly showed the man carrying an electric torch (Rom. *lanternă*).

In some other contexts, however, the translator’s preference for the neologistic ring is likely to have arisen from the rather specialized (or technical) character of the vocabulary specific to the source text, e.g. TRAD [pretențioasă/”specializată”, în rom.]: “Those who eat [a kind of toadstool] may die” was translated as “*Ingestia [unei ciuperce]* poate provoca *decesul*”. Nevertheless, we could (interestingly) find a number of examples to the contrary, e.g. *hinge(s)* was translated as *balama(le)*, in a context where the (more technical) term *șarnieră* would have been far more suitable.

4.10. Lack of appropriate all-round cultural knowledge can also conduce to mistranslation – ranging from ignoring the correct Romanian equivalents of a number of famous proper names, e.g. “Lacul Tiberiad” or “lacul Tiberias”; *Brussels* instead of *Bruxelles*; “*Tinerii Turci*” instead of “*Junii Turci*” (cf. Eng. *the Young Turks* – hist.). It can go up to ignoring the Romanian equivalents of various social, historical or scientific concepts, e.g. “[the Boston] *Tea Party*” was translated as “*partida de ceai*”; and even up to ignoring the historical and/or cultural context of a number of otherwise well-known entities or designations, e.g. *corn* (in a TV documentary film dealing with events in the late 14th century, after the *Great Plague*): “nu mai voiau să-i culeagă *porumbul*”, “*excavatoarele* au găsit (...)” (to translate Eng. “the excavators” – in a mid-19th-century context); *Gaelic* was translated as “limba *galeză*” (in an obviously Irish context); *voltage* (“*tensiune* (a curentului electric)”) was translated as *voltaj*; “Se știe până acum că mare parte din acoperiș s-a prăbușit din cauza flăcărilor, alături de “săgeată”, acea turlă înaltă de 96 de metri care a fost mistuită de flăcări” (the Romanian term traditionally used in architecture is *fleșă*).

5. Neologization is present, without a doubt (and – we think – naturally), in practically all the linguistic illustrative materials (i.e. translations, especially literary texts) that we considered and analyzed when starting to write this paper – on account of these two main grounds: (1) due to the type of language (legitimately) used by the authors of those texts, and (2) due to the fact that the direct Romanian counterparts of the English terms translated are neologistic words, as well.

Here are some examples of neologistic bias: “gender” was translated as “identitate sexuală”; “a video” was translated as “un VHS”; “a film *outlaw*” was translated as “o *renegată* a filmului”, and “un road movie” was left unchanged in the Romanian translation; “Vânzări *premium* în august”; “*epitoma* fotbalului modern” (to translate Eng. *epitome* – in the Romanian subtitles to a British documentary about the 1966 World Cup); “(to be) *resettled* was translated as “(...) *colonizați*”, in reference to European Jews, during WW2 – instead of “(...) *strămutați*”.

5.1. In some texts that we analyzed, neologism occurred as **hyper-neologization**, e.g. “I-am *screenat* (pe copii)”. On the other hand, there are numerous cases of **neologism** present, and operating, as part of (highly) **specialized** or **technical contexts**: in such cases, the translators should normally possess a rather good grounding in the terminology characteristic of the domain in question: “*sea-going* predators” was aptly translated as “*răpitori pelagici*”; “(have) an *enlarged heart*” was translated as *cardiomegalie*; “*low fat*

recipe” was translated as “rețetă *hipolipidică*” (in the rather technical context of a public lecture on medical topics); “wading birds” was translated as “păsări *limicole*”, etc.

5.2. When specifically referring to the use of neologism in translation, in most cases we have to discuss the translators’ attempt at **synchronizing** the target text and the source text. Actually, the issue of finding suitable (and hopefully standardized, unanimously accepted) equivalents for proper names may be rather tricky and/or fuzzy – and it also concerns lexicography; for instance, how should we go about glossing and using such proper nouns as *Beijing*, *Mumbai*, *Myanmar*, *Côte d’Ivoire*? Unlike us Romanians, the French stick to the older standard forms, i.e. *Pékin*, *Bombay*, *Birmanie*; as far as *Côte d’Ivoire* is concerned, we have long used the translated variant of the name, i.e. *Coasta de Fildeş*. A kindred issue is related to *onomasiology* and/or versus synchronization: when, for instance, someone translates French *rasoir* as *lamă*, even though the *razor* mentioned was in full sight; was it maybe because the (apparently female and young) translator did not know what a (Rom.) *brici* is?

5.3. Last but not least, it should be added that **the style** of the target (translated) texts is strongly indebted to the neologistic influence in the process of translation (not only literary translation). Sometimes, good style is an attribute that raises the adapted figurative expressions to the level of literary style proper, mainly in view of the context of the respective phrases, e.g. “a *marketplace* for ideas” when aptly translated as “o *agoră* a ideilor”. On the other hand, there are (or there may be) cases of euphemisation through (willing) mistranslation, e.g. “*shithole* countries” (in President Trump’s words, i.e. Third World countries, which send lots of migrants to the US) was translated/adapted by *ProTv* as “*țări-cloacă*” – maybe in an attempt to euphemistically minimize the offensiveness of the expression... Speaking of which – this is a rare example of the kind of internet pseudo-translation that best illustrates the current (neologistic) *langue de bois* that is stuffed with both euphemistic phrases and instances of calque, which is sadly becoming more and more frequent: “1. *Pozitivitatea sexuală* devine mai *intersecțională*. Mai multe grupuri marginalizate sunt luate în considerare în *cercurile sexuale pozitive*, spune Queen. Avem discuții, de exemplu, despre modul în care *persoanele cu dizabilități* pot avea o viață sexuală uimitoare și cum *persoanele trans* pot fi sprijinite de partenerii lor. 2. În sfârșit, feminismul începe să accepte *lucrătorii sexuali*. Carol Queen a petrecut primele decenii ale carierei sale în lupta cu feministele care *au egalat sexul heterosexual cu dominația masculină*, pornografia cu degradarea și munca sexuală cu lipsa de putere. Există încă o mulțime de *stigmatizări asociate muncii sexuale*, însă *feminismul mainstream* este acum preocupat de drepturile *lucrătorilor sexuali*. Și mai degrabă decât să demonizăm toate pornirile sau *munca sexuală*, *dezvoltăm o înțelegere mai nuanțată* a ceea ce constituie *opresiunea*. 3. Femeile se preocupă mai mult de propria lor plăcere. În 1998, *Sex and the City* a venit să ne arate că este bine ca femeile să aibă dorințe sexuale. Șaisprezece ani mai târziu, *Broad City* ne-a învățat că *este în regulă* ca femeile să-și *prioritizeze dorințele* față de dorințele partenerilor lor – și chiar să nu-și dorească un partener. 4. Oamenii încă nu înțeleg suficient consimțământul. Chiar dacă din ce în ce mai multe femei vorbesc despre *atacurile sexuale*, Carol Queen este preocupată de faptul că ne concentrăm asupra aspectelor greșite ale recentelor scandaluri, criticând mai degrabă aparențele făptuitorilor și preferințele sexuale decât acuzațiile. Accentul este pus pe *inducerea unui sentiment de culpabilitate* în

loc de presupusul abuz. Cercetătoarea se întreabă dacă nu cumva *regresăm la negativitatea sexuală*, criticând actele sexuale pentru alt motiv decât pentru lipsa consensului. ‘Îmi fac griji că este vorba despre rușinea sexului în ansamblu, spre deosebire de *actele non-consensuale*’, spune ea”.

6. Conclusions. The more general observation that can be made, after analyzing empirical data such as the above minicorpus of texts, is that the impact of translation – and translators – on the specific quality of the (literary text) being translated can range from efficient adequacy and cultural-stylistic integration to exaggeration, error and various deficiencies; it can go from unlikely attempts at domestication to insistent, over-inflated *foreignization* (with or without an added tinge of stylistic intentionality), e.g. “ce forță au clișeele pe care le *refuzați*, dar care în cele din urmă (...) *vă impregnează!*”; “Amintirile, imaginile, prezența altora, astea *vă torturează. Vă plictisesc*” (*Însinguratul* by Eugène Ionesco, Ed. Albatros, 1990, translated by R. Ch.) – where we can wonder why the translator actually preferred the Frenchified 2nd person plural (cf. Fr. generic/indefinite *vous*) instead of the habitual / vernacular 2nd person singular (*tu*); “*M-am regăsit* în străduța cu trecători rari” (ibidem, p. 43), where several much more Romanian-sounding options could have been used, e.g. “*M-am pomenit (iar) în (...), “Iată-mă (din nou) în (...)*”, etc.

Another equally detrimental, or at least highly debatable, option is that represented by extreme or inadvertently “novel” approaches, namely when translation favours blatant, aggressive neologization (reminding us Romanians of the humorous folk story about “Cum se mai zice oare la... asta... *greblă?*”). In other words, there are translators who betray both the referentiality of the source text and the style of the target text, “preferring” foreign terms, neologistic words, instead of the older terms in the vernacular idiom, and thus... “not calling a *spade* a *spade*”, as it were; there are some cases when it can be proved that such superficial, unskilled translators do not even know what the word in question actually means. Obviously, it would be a mistake for a translator to “re-create” the text in the target language: in fact, that would be neither advisable nor feasible/possible – so, as in many other cases, the *golden mean* is, in our opinion, the best method of (literary) translation, especially when one deals with older writers. As far as a synchronization is concerned, one can say that the translators’ awareness that most cultural and ideological paradigms are changing should not push them to adopt a subservient attitude, nor should indolence or epigonic attitude interfere with diachronic change. Last but not least, the ‘quantity versus-quality’ ought to be rejected as resolutely as the sheer negligent, superficial attitude of those people who generate slipshod, paltry translations.

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SOME PATTERNS OF LINGUISTIC RETICENCE

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Abstract: *When expressing reticence, people resort to a wide variety of strategies on a morphological and syntactic level, some of which will be the focus of our article. Firstly, reticence in discourse can be triggered by a certain level of politeness which prevents the speaker from telling everything or from telling it exactly as it is thought. Therefore, mention will be made of such means as indirectness; apologies; self-deprecation; reserve and social awkwardness, with much emphasis laid on conventional and non-conventional indirectness. Secondly, but in close connection to politeness, taboos cause reticence in speech and they can lead to the creation of euphemisms as more colourful versions of the orthophemism.*

Keywords: *politeness, indirectness, euphemism*

Defining reticence; degrees of reticence

The noun “reticence” is defined in Webster Dictionary based on the three meanings of the adjective it is derived from, i.e. “reticent” (which is a Latin borrowing of the early 1800s, etymologically explained as coming from *reticēre*, - “to keep silent,” (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reticence>):

- first of all, “reticent” means “inclined to be silent or uncommunicative in speech”, a synonymous of “reserved”, and, implicitly, of “silent”. (<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/reticent>) From this point of view, we may say that reticence is expressed through various non-verbal strategies, having no proper representation in speech, therefore is not productive for a linguistic analysis.

- secondly, “reticent” means “restrained in expression, presentation, or appearance”, whilst “restrained” means “not excessive or extravagant” (Ibidem). This economical use of words and expression can interest a linguistic analysis.

- there is also a third meaning of the adjective, synonymous to “reluctant”, which is defined as “feeling or showing aversion, hesitation, or unwillingness” (Ibidem). As far as this meaning is concerned, there is a whole discussion as to the extent of synonymy between the two terms, “reticent” and “reluctant”. When it appeared in the language, “reticent” covered only the quite neutral meaning of silence, lack of communication, whereas at the moment, it has also acquired the negatively emotional meaning of hesitation, unwillingness to do something, not just to communicate. (see <https://www.merriam-webster.com/words-at-play/can-reticent-mean-reluctant>) This negative feeling can also have an expression on a morphological and lexical level, therefore can equally be of interest for a linguistic analysis.

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Reticence and politeness

Politeness can be seen as “a courteous manner that respects accepted social usage” (Webster) and can be achieved by a variety of means including language. If at the beginning it was pragmatics that dealt with the topic of politeness, it then gradually became of interest to other fields such as psychology, sociology or anthropology. There is a variety of perceptions of politeness, function of what is considered to be socially acceptable, a behaviour which reflects one’s educational status, an individual’s generosity and kindness towards others or willingness to put others first (‘self-effacing’), and a reflection of a condescending or artificial behaviour (Watts 2003). As far as linguistic politeness is concerned, it refers to the use of appropriate titles when addressing someone, as well as to the use of certain politeness markers such as ‘please’ and ‘thank you’, or to the avoidance of being direct in speech.

Other insights given by linguists into the matter of politeness are gathered by Culpeper (2011) and will be shortly presented as follows. Leech sees politeness is a tool used “to maintain the social equilibrium and the friendly relations which enable us to assume that our interlocutors are being cooperative in the first place”. (Leech 1983:82) Comparing it to the formal diplomatic protocol (for which it must surely be the model), Brown and Levinson notice that politeness presupposes a certain potential for aggression as it seeks to disarm it, and makes possible communication between potentially aggressive parties. (Brown and Levinson 1987:1) In more pragmatic terms, Lakoff considers politeness as a means of minimizing confrontation in discourse — both the possibility of confrontation occurring at all, and the possibility that a confrontation will be perceived as threatening. (Lakoff 1989:102) To conclude, all these definitions share the idea that politeness is a social tool used to avoid any friction in communication. Now, the politeness can be connected to reticence in as far as the second definition of the latter is concerned, because politeness can linguistically involve restraints in expression.

Social norms differ from one culture to another, and therefore politeness has different principles and expressions in various countries and languages. Thus, according to Brown and Levinson (1987), there are two types of cultures: positive politeness cultures (*camaraderie*), with stress on the social closeness among individuals (e.g. American and Australian English), or negative politeness cultures (*deference*) (e.g. Japanese, British English), with emphasis on distance and respect between individuals. Our interest being English, we are going to enumerate and exemplify such linguistic means of expressing politeness in English, insisting on those which involve reticence. The most frequent manifestations of politeness in British English are: indirectness; apologies; self-deprecation; reserve and social awkwardness.

Indirectness

Based on Brown and Levinson (1987)’s terms, we can properly refer to indirectness by distinguishing between conventional and non-conventional indirectness (see also Mills, 2017: 62-64). Conventional indirectness involves reticence in directly addressing a request or order to somebody and, from a linguistic perspective, it is expressed by the

preference for interrogative sentences over imperative sentences or pure statements. The questions can be formed with modal verbs asking about ability ('can/could') or about willingness ('will/would'). The preterite forms of the modals lend an even more conventional and formal feature to the speech, as well as the adverb "please" added somewhere to the question. Here are some examples of indirect questions for 'Open the window, it's too hot in here!': 'Can you open the window? It's too hot in here!'; 'Will you open the window? It's too hot in here!'; 'Could you open the window? It's too hot in here!'; 'Would you open the window? It's too hot in here!'; 'Can/ Will/ Could/ Would you, please, open the window? It's too hot in here!'.

Moreover, there are two-step questions in which the first one is an introduction to the listener and the second one asks a more specific question. 'Do you like sport? I mean, do you play sport?' 'Yeah. I play basketball. I'm on the school team.'
https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/grammar/british-grammar/politeness_2

Another version of this sequence of questions is a series of two yes-no questions as in: 'Is this your pen?' 'Yes, that's mine.' 'Do you mind if I borrow it for a minute?' 'Not at all.' – a less direct version of the simple question 'Can I borrow this pen?' (ibidem)

Another type of conventional indirectness involves the use of past tense to express present facts or feelings, requests or orders, thus deictically distancing the writer from the content and the addressee of the communication act. The direct questions 'Do you want cream for your coffee?' converts more politely into 'Did you want cream for your coffee?'

Conventional indirectness presupposes the usage of certain polite phrases ('ladies and gentlemen', 'please', 'thank you', 'excuse me', 'madam', 'Mr.', but also the use of hedges (softening words) such as 'kind of', 'a little', 'a little bit', or double modality as in 'could you just', could possibly be', 'may need to'. In academic writing, we use passive sentences with anticipatory 'it' as hedges: 'It has been generally accepted that ...'.

As mentioned above, modality goes hand in hand with politeness, when it comes to requests, possibility / probability and ability. On the other hand, the modal value of order (just like the imperative mood) expresses impoliteness at its fullest.

There is also a syntactical means of expressing conventional indirectness, namely the conditional sentences with 'if', often followed by the modals 'will', 'would', 'can' or 'could', to introduce a polite request: 'If we can move on to the next point for discussion.' (more polite than 'Can we move on ...'), 'If I could just say one more thing ...' (more polite than 'Listen to me, I want to say something.'), 'If you will follow me, please.' (more polite than 'Follow me, please.'). Moreover, some other expressions with 'if' can be used to express politeness: 'if you don't mind', 'if it's OK with you', 'if I may say so', 'if it'll help' – 'If you don't mind, I think I need that cup of tea.'; 'I'll stay here, if it's OK with you.'
https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/grammar/british-grammar/politeness_2

Non-conventional indirectness deals with hints and ambiguous statements which mostly rely on the hearer's ability to work out what the speaker may be trying to say. We may say it involves a certain degree of risk that the receiver of the message might not understand the implied request hidden behind the message. For example, the sentence "I have to study for an exam" is an excuse by which the speaker refuses an invitation to the cinema. In this case, the literal and intended meaning do not match.

Moreover, politeness has been described in terms of positive politeness (when the speaker indicates some solidarity with the hearer) and negative politeness (the speaker uses mechanisms which leave the addressee an 'out' option by allowing him / her to feel non-coerced and respected). All these types of politeness demonstrate a manifestation of reticence in addressing a request directly. (see Blum-Kulka, 1987: 140) A good example in point, for both types, is represented by question tags. The facilitative tags, which invite the addressee to contribute to the discourse, illustrate positive politeness ('Host to a guest at her dinner party: You've got a new job Tom, haven't you?'), whereas the softening tags, which are used to attenuate the force of negatively affective utterances, such as criticism, orders and commands, perfectly stand for negative politeness ('Make up a coffee, would you?') (see (Holmes 1995, 81).

As far as apologies are concerned, analysts have pointed out that there is an excessive use of the adjective 'sorry', and, curiously enough, this adjective is uttered even by the person who has been the victim of an offence. In this case, we may argue that its usage is derived from a reticence of expressing reproach towards the person who has committed the offence. Here is how the British organisation Debrett's Peerage and Baronetage, which has published lists of aristocrats and their titles from 1769 onwards, views the situation:

For many British people, apologising is a default reaction to life's little irritants. This highly illogical response is deeply ingrained in the British psyche. If someone barges into you, treads on your toe, or spills your drink, it is quite normal to mutter "sorry". Obviously this is not a normal apology – a heartfelt mea culpa for a blunder. In fact, the British apology is a strange, strangled version of the outraged "do you mind?" of more confrontational cultures. British people are well aware of this enigmatic agenda. When they commit an offence (a minor infringement of pavement etiquette for example) and are met with the requisite "sorry", they are quite likely to respond in kind. This can lead to a surreal escalation of apologies, which have very little to do with real feelings of regret. (Debrett's, 2008) (see also Mills, 2017: 64-66).

An essential part in English etiquette is played by self-deprecation, which springs from a concern with the other person, or by putting the other first and belittling yourself, with the clear purpose of appearing polite. Therefore, what in other cultures represents an expression of self-esteem and self-confidence is decoded (and misinterpreted) in Britain as boastful and self-aggrandising. From a linguistic point of view, this involves the use of pleasant remarks with positive and extreme adjectives about the others ('amazing', 'gorgeous', 'brilliant', 'cool'), asking questions to make sure people are comfortable, expressing offer to give up seats on public transport. (see Mills 2017: 66-68).

Reserve and social awkwardness characterize the British nation, which can be translated in a type of 'silent' rather than spoken politeness. The British tend to avoid conversation with the others, because they do not feel at ease in their presence. Their deference to the others means respect to the others' and, consequently, to their own privacy, not imposing on other people, giving them space and independence (see Mills 2017: 68). In this sense, reserve covers the first definition of reticence that we have mentioned at the beginning of the article.

Reticence and taboo

Placed at the intersection between politeness and reticence, taboos “arise out of social constraints on the individual’s behaviour where [they] can cause discomfort, harm or injury.” (Allan, K, Burrige, K., 2006: 1) Taboo deals with reticence because it refers to a constant self-censoring of the language used by people. In this sense, (im)politeness interacts “with orthophemism (straight talking), euphemism (sweet talking) and dysphemism (speaking offensively)”. (ibidem) The tabooing behaviour connects to terms and problems such as “jargon, slang, insult, polite and impolite uses of language when naming, addressing and speaking about others, about our bodies and their functions, nourishment, sexual activities, death and killing, as well as the currently much-debated concept of political correctness and linguistic prescription.” (ibidem). As powerful as dysphemism may be since it represents the marked behaviour, the so-called ‘strong language’, people are “by default ... polite, euphemistic, orthophemistic and inoffensive [censoring their language use] to eschew tabooed topics in pursuit of well-being for [themselves] and for others.” (ibidem)

As suggested before, orthophemisms and euphemisms mark conscious or unconscious self-censoring (therefore a form of reticence) thus being a manner of showing politeness through language; “they are used to avoid the speaker being embarrassed and/or ill thought of and, at the same time, to avoid embarrassing and/or offending the hearer or some third party.” (ibidem: 33) The difference between the two concepts manifests in language register, namely “[a]n orthophemism is typically more formal and more direct (or literal) than the corresponding euphemism.” whereas “[a] euphemism is typically more colloquial and figurative (or indirect) than the corresponding orthophemism.” Some examples of such terms are: ‘to die’ (orthophemism) – ‘to pass away’ (euphemism); ‘killed and wounded civilians’ in a war (orthophemism) – ‘collateral damage’ (euphemism), ‘rich’ – ‘well-off’; ‘go to the toilet’ – ‘powder your nose’; ‘overweight’ – ‘well-fed’; ‘having sex with’ – ‘sleeping with’; ‘kind of stupid’ – ‘not the sharpest pencil in the box’; ‘be pregnant’ – ‘have a bun in the oven’; ‘drunk’ – ‘tired and emotional’. As it can be easily noticed from these examples, taboo and the consequent censoring of language, and above all euphemisms which involve double thinking, motivate changes in language and encourage the

creation of highly inventive and often playful new expressions, or new meanings for old expressions, causing existing vocabulary to be abandoned. There are basically two ways in which new expressions arise: by a changed form for the tabooed expression and by figurative language sparked by perceptions of and conceptions about the denotata (about faeces, menstrual blood, genitals, death and so on). [...] In these ways taboos and the attendant censoring trigger word addition, word loss, sound change and semantic shift. They play havoc with the standard methods of historical linguistics by undermining the supposed arbitrary link between the meaning and form of words. (ibidem: 2)

Conclusions

There are three views on defining reticence, but the most appropriate for our paper is the one referring to restraint in expression, presentation, or appearance. The best example

in point resides in politeness manifested through language, especially conventional indirectness achieved by questions asked instead of direct requests, modal verbs and expressions, two-step questions, conditional clauses. Another important and interesting aspect we have insisted upon is the problem of taboo which requires replacing the incriminated word with some milder variants, mostly with euphemisms, thus proving the productive and creative nature of reticence.

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AUGUST WILSON AND THE PLAYWRIGHT'S (RACIAL) RETICENCE

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Abstract: *This contribution aims to expose the similarities and dissimilarity in characters and themes in August Wilson's plays, with stress on Fences, one of his most successful plays. The study is an attempt to highlight the reflections of racism and the conditions of the whites and the way they have created their tradition, culture, and civilization to subjugate the African Americans through the creation of slavery, racism, and sexual exploitation of the black women. We explain different productions of the play and the director's comments which bring about a possible explanation of August Wilson's reticence of having a white film director for his play Fences.*

Keywords: African American, "Fences", race, theatre, Wilson (August).

1. Introduction: The playwright's voice

The contemporary African American community is characterized by its robust and affirmed identity within the American national population. Most black Americans today share the ancestral legacy of slavery, much less extensively, racism and discrimination. They also share the heritage of the Civil Rights Movement. The African-American identity remains marked by diversity, like American culture and society. The shared past passed down from generation to generation is still maintained today by a crucial memorial work that unites the African American community. However, between slavery and the 1960s, this identity was not always unified. The division that characterized it reflected another identity, that of the nation, still clearly shared between North and South despite the institutional reconciliation after the American Civil War. Between the end of the 19th century and the 1960s, the South, where a majority of the black population lived despite massive migration to other regions, was governed by openly discriminatory segregationist laws. While racism and discrimination permeated all of American society at this time, they were only genuinely institutionalized in the South, where blacks were not recognized as full citizens.

Two-time Pulitzer Prize winner, critically acclaimed African-American playwright August Wilson was one of the 20th century's foremost writers who highlighted the struggles of the African-American community. A victim of racial discrimination himself, Wilson was terrified as a child as he experienced traumatic episodes of racism in school. Not only was he kicked out of school for being the only African American, but he was also threatened and abused to the point of being physically assaulted. These experiences deeply marked young Wilson, so much so that he began to express his feelings through his writings. One of the first African-American men to achieve success on Broadway, Wilson was instrumental in

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shaping the African-American movement and highlighting their plight in the eyes of people around the world.

Wilson gives a voice to the oppressed groups, enriching African-American history with valuable themes and aspects. Not only does he try to turn a drama into a history book for black Americans to make them think deeply about their past and present lives, but he also uses this as a way to think about their future and dreams. In his early life, Wilson had to work hard to help his family, compromising six children living in the racial ghetto in Pittsburg. It was an environment characterized by slavery and racism in all forms that affected his previous writings. In portraying the various themes of abuse, exploitation, and racism in his work, he was, in fact, part of his experience both as a young man and later, starting in the white suburb where he lived, and he faces radical racism and ends up in school. These harsh conditions made him drop out of school and go to self-study in history and literature. His main concerns in this regard were his involvement in the Black Power Movement. He wanted to help others better understand black people in a multicultural society. To create works that describe more extended periods in the lives of African Americans, he used an original strategy. Each piece represents a decade, as a historical circle from the first decade of the twentieth century to the 1980s, focusing on the cultural aspects of colour differences that govern society.

2. The language of “call-and-response” – leading to reticence?

Wilson had the privilege of attending numerous performances of his plays until he died in 2005. When asked about the different impact of his plays on diverse audiences, Wilson responded by remembering *Fences*' performance, which had made a strong impression on him in Chicago. Indeed, as the play drew to a close and Gabriel was about to blow his trumpet, an African-American woman sitting five rows behind Wilson shouted, “[Troy] don't need you blowing that horn. He's going straight to hell” (Shannon 2003: 154). A general burst of laughter ensued, both from the audience and from the actors who could not contain themselves. The African-American community knows the “call-and-response” that worshippers practice during mass in black churches. There are two overlapping definitions of “call and response”: (1) a style of singing in which the melody sung by one singer is responded to or echoed by another or others; (2) a form of interaction between a speaker and one or more listeners. Every utterance of the speaker elicits a verbal or non-verbal response from the listener or listeners.

The interactivity that takes place between a pastor and his congregation reminds us of the interactivity that took place between this black woman and the actors on stage. According to Wilson, no longer distinguishing between reality and fiction, this woman allowed herself to intervene in the play, a case far from isolated. Indeed, the playwright remembers similar circumstances during other performances that he attended. The spectators allowed themselves to exchange their thoughts or their reactions aloud in front of the action on stage.

The play takes on an interactive dimension between the actors and spectators, and the audience takes on an unexpected choir role. The voice of the actors mingles with the voices of the spectators. Thus, an African-American audience stands out clearly from a

European audience, where the tradition of intervening vocally in front of a play is not widespread. Wilson's remarks on this point sum it up well, as Sandra G. Shannon puts it:

[Wilson] recalls several instances in which African Americans in the audience became so in tuned with [*Fences*] that they sought to engage the characters in conversation, turning the performance into an interactive session where they freely rendered their thoughts out loud to concerns that provoked them. (154)

Shannon continues her analysis by sharing her own teaching experience while studying *Fences* with her African-American students. Their emotional reactions and overflowing with enthusiasm confirmed to him that many of them identified with this text. At this present moment, *Fences*' dramatic fiction has merged with their own experience, even given it a body for a cathartic experience. According to the direct testimonies of the first actors who interpreted the play, James Earl Jones and Mary Alice, the adequacy between the play's themes, history, and African-American identity was immediate and still lasted to this day. Thus, during the first performance of *Fences* at the Yale Repertory Theater in 1985, Mary Alice confided: "Basically, I just started with what had been given by the writer, what Rose says, what is said about her. I suppose I somehow used women that I knew, women I knew in 1957" (Shannon 2003: 165-166).

In his 1987 article published in *The New York Times*, Brent Staples – author and columnist, and an African American himself – explained the audience's response to Wilson's play:

The brief scene in which Alice pounds away at the barrel-chested Troy cuts various angles of response through the audience. Some sit quietly and absorbed, in the traditional silence of the playhouse. But some of the black women in the theater vocalize or moan or nod or cry as though this were a tent revival meeting and the preacher was summoning up the Holy Ghost at Pentecost. For some, it is a liberating moment, and they applaud.

It is, perhaps, one of the aspects which a white director might not expect. However, knowing Wilson's position on a multi-ethnic cast playing black American characters, it seems very surprising at first to find out that he permitted an American (white) director, Margaret Booker, to direct *Fences* in Beijing, China, in 1997. With an exclusively Chinese, non-English speaking cast, the play achieved astonishing success despite a non-English speaking audience. Not being aware of the Afro-American context of the play and hampered by the English language barrier, how can this success be explained by both the actors and the Chinese audience? Margaret Booker sketches an explanation by looking at the Chinese political context of the 1990s:

China in the '90s wants to be a member of the modern world and economic community, yet still tries to preserve its intellectual tradition and social values. Nowhere could the clash between old and new be more apparent... I believe that *Fences*, set in the social upheaval of the civil rights movement and revolving around a father/son conflict, would suit both the rapid societal change in China as well as the Beijing's People's Art Theatre. (Booker, Building *Fences*)

The Chinese political context of the 1990s helped young spectators to identify most likely with the cause of Troy's young son, Cory. His rebellion against paternal authority certainly resonated with young Chinese audiences, as they recognized themselves in this struggle against domination. The director comments:

Despite Wilson's recent public disavowal of cross-racial casting, this production's success testifies to his belief that he writes about issues "common to all cultures, but roots them in the black experience." It's not just Troy's son Cory who confronts his father, drunk on the steps, with "You in my way. I got to get by." As Wilson declares, "Every generation says that to the previous generation.... That's the climb into manhood. There's a moment when we all challenge our parents, challenge our fathers." (Ibid.)

The Chinese actor Liang Guanghua who played Troy, commented on their acting without pretending to be black: "Everybody knows we're not black. Let's just take our yellow skin up onstage and make the audience believe we're black with our words and performance." It was a spontaneous decision praised by the Chinese theatre critics who praised this approach, finding the Chinese version of Troy "an endearing combination of 1950s Pittsburgh and 1990s Beijing" (Ibid.).

In Paulette Randall's British production of *Fences* (2013), the actors were all black and British. In Britain, known for its tradition and love of the theatre, the adaptation of *Fences* met with great critical and popular success. How to understand this craze? Lenny Henry, a British actor known above all for comedy, undoubtedly played an essential role in this success, arousing the spectators' curiosity to see him play his second dramatic role after having lent his features to the eponymous character of *Othello* in 2009.

The blues accompanied the play in the background as soon as the audience entered the room. The blues were also present during the stage transitions and the intermission. Through the soundtrack of a British composer, Delroy Murray, Paulette Randall tried to integrate the blues as a character in its own right, invisible but whose presence is still. Gabriel's scene performs a particular dance that gives way to tribal music, with a slow rhythm, where the percussions are very present.

Paulette Randall repeatedly mentions the "call-and-response" as an aspect that brings black Britons closer to black Americans. Randall also emphasizes that Wilson's plays' universality is one of the main reasons she took up the challenge of staging the Wilsonian repertoire and sharing this theatrical heritage with audiences in her home country of the United Kingdom. Randall mentioned she had the opportunity to meet Wilson and that the latter showed her invaluable support during the directing of *The Piano Lesson* (1987) by herself. Randall started staging the Wilsonian repertoire with this piece which is not among the first in the chronology of the decades of the theatrical cycle. Indeed, *The Piano Lesson* is set in the 1930s and is not the first that Wilson wrote.

We have just touched upon one of the main reasons which might trigger the writer's reticence to allow a white director to direct *Fences*: language. The Chinese cast solved the problem of the musical quality of black English. To the all-British cast of Randall's version, language was a challenge. Brent Staples (1987) comments on the characters' speech: the vernacular of August Wilson's native Pittsburgh:

This is a peripatetic language, a strutting, fretting medium in which an ostensible pejorative – like the word “Nigger” – can, in the right mouth, be transformed to a term of affection. (Troy tells his lifelong buddy, Bono, “I love you, Nigger,” or kisses him.) There is laughter, the raucous call-and-response of the black church sermons, jazz and blues music – all inevitably rooted in the African style.

Fences invites the audience to participate, to respond to what is happening on the stage. Faithful to the forms of black speech, Wilson’s play addresses those familiar with the style and the particulars of this subject matter drawn into the dramatic dialogue. For an African American audience made up of women and men who grew up using the vernacular of the Pittsburgh, or Chicago blacks, Troy’s talk on the stage was not only known to them; it was part of their racial identity.

3. “I Want a Black Director” – August Wilson

August Wilson finished his much-commented article “I Want a Black Director” (1990), published in *The New York Times*, by explaining his determination to have a black director for the film *Fences*:

I want somebody talented, who understands the play and sees the possibilities of the film, who would approach my work with the same amount of passion and measure of respect with which I approach it, and who shares the same cultural sensibilities of the characters. The last time I looked, all those directors were black. I want to hire them just because of that. (in Nadel, *May All Your Fences* 204)

The representation policy influenced any debate about the stage presentation of the black experience. It aimed at those designated to present this experience in front of an audience. Wilson’s explicit request to screen the play is a challenge to the perception of ethnic difference in America in the last decade of the twentieth century. The justification he offered for such a request touched upon white, racialized procedures that dominated the selection process at the movie studios: “Blacks don’t direct Italian films. Italians don’t direct Jewish films. Jews don’t direct black American films” (in Nadel, *May All Your Fences* 204).

Michael Awkward explained that the playwright had to face several “forces of resistance,” among them, “the views of film and literature scholars which, almost without exception, are unsympathetic to claims that movie adaptations need necessarily position themselves as pictorial or even thematic realizations of their originary sources” (ibid. 205).

Going back to Wilson’s experience with Paramount Pictures, who had bought the rights for a film version of his play *Fences*, we find his request for a black director even more compelling:

I said I wanted a black director for the film, and he said, “I don’t want to hire nobody just ‘cause they black.” My response was immediate. “Neither do I,” I said. What Mr. Murphy meant I am not sure. I meant that I wanted to hire somebody talented, who understood the play and saw the possibilities of the film, who would approach my work

with the same amount of passion and measure of respect with which I approach it, and finally, who shared the same cultural responsibilities of the characters. (in Nadel, *May All Your Fences 200*)

The reasons are very clearly stated: “I declined a white director not on the basis of race but on the basis of culture. White directors are not qualified for the job” (201), and Wilson compared the producers’ refusal with the position of the early plantation owners who, “unfamiliar and uninterested in African culture, viewed their slaves as slow, dull-witted, childlike, and otherwise incapable of grasping complex ideas” (202). However, in 2010, Wilson finally found his black director: Denzel Washington. Jake Lamar (2021) explains:

The film version of *Fences* that he starred in and directed is a master class in ‘opening up’ a piece of theater. With clever changes of settings and dynamic camera work and editing, Washington made the stagiest of dramas thrillingly cinematic. He also respected the cultural integrity of Wilson’s work.

Wilson’s wish was granted ten years later when Denzel Washington directed the film and took the leading part. In 2017, the Denzel Washington-directed film *Fences* was nominated for an Oscar alongside its two leads, Washington himself and Viola Davis. It is not one of the favorites, but it is one of the most esteemed by American critics and intellectuals. The results exceeded any expectations. This preference is not surprising at all, especially considering that the film is based on a script by August Wilson, adapted from Wilson’s own Pulitzer Prize-winning play.

The power of the film resides in the text of August Wilson himself, one of the greatest playwrights the United States has produced. His most famous work, a ten-piece series entitled “The Pittsburgh Cycle,” earned him two Pulitzer Prizes in 1987 and 1990. Each play is set in a different decade and depicts the comic and tragic aspects of the African American community in the 20th century. However, the one that brought him to fame was *Fences*, released in 1985. It was a family drama set in the 1950s with an old baseball star who could not get into the big divisions because, in his day, blacks were forbidden to play in them. When her son followed in the same footsteps in the last moment, it was possible to sign men of colour for the first teams, giving birth to misgivings, bitterness, and generational clash.

Of all Wilson’s works, *Fences* is the closest to being an autobiography. Many have compared it to *Death of a Salesman* or *King Lear* because of the self-destructiveness of its central character. In short, one of the masterpieces of the North American theater that leaves the stage to seek glory also in the cinema. Win the Oscar or not (his actors have serious chances of getting it), his place on the podium of honor is assured.

Fences was a tremendous theatrical hit. It ran for 525 Broadway performances, the longest of any Wilson work. Also, he won the triple crown to which any play can aspire: a Pulitzer Prize, a Tony, and a New York Theater Critics Circle Award. Even a 2010 revival of the play (starring the same duo as the film Denzel Washington and Viola Davis) won the Tony Award for best revival, best actress in a play, and best actor. It is the first work by this author to reach the big screen. The repercussion of Wilson in the American theater was so great that many intellectuals included him in the select group of geniuses such as Anton

Chekhov, Henrik Ibsen, Samuel Beckett, Harold Pinter, or Bernard Shaw. Throughout his life, Wilson received two Pulitzer Prizes (*Fences* and *The Piano Lesson*) and eight awards for Best Play from the New York Theater Critics Circle, something unusual. Only two of his works (*King Hedley II* and *Gem of the Ocean*) were not awarded.

All of his works, except for *Gem of the Ocean* and *Radio Golf*, have been significant reruns on Broadway and alternative circuits. His work is vital to understanding black life in America. Many say that his inspiration comes from the blues, but what is certain is that he composed masterpieces about the plots of small communities where an expansive universe was reflected. More recently, the Netflix screening of *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom* has exceeded any expectations.

4. Conclusions

The Pulitzer Prize-winning play *Fences* is just one of ten in the Pittsburgh Cycle series, also known as the Century Cycle, written by African-American playwright August Wilson between the early 1980s and the mid-2000s. The Cycle reveals the experience of black people in the 20th century, one decade at a time, and reflects the poetry in the everyday vernacular of black America. All of the plays are located in the Hill District of Pittsburgh, except for *Ma Rainey's Black Bottom*, which takes place in Chicago. The Cycle stories are not interconnected as in a series, but some characters appear in more than one play, as children of characters in earlier plays sometimes return as adults in later plays. The Goodman Theater in Chicago was the first theater to produce the entire 10-piece Cycle, running from 1986 to 2007.

Wilson tapped into the power of theater to bring communities together to witness events and attitudes to educate them. In an interview with *The Paris Review* in 1999, Wilson said, "I think my plays offer white Americans a different way of seeing black Americans. For example, in *Fences*, they see a garbage collector, a person they see every day, but they do not look. Looking at Troy's life, the whites discover that the content of this black man's life is affected by the same things – love, honor, beauty, betrayal, duty. Recognize that these things are as much a part of their life as theirs can affect the way they think and interact with black people in their lives." Two years before his death in 2005, August Wilson wrote and performed his unreleased solo piece, *How I Learned What I Learned*. In this production, Wilson revisits his days as a young writer living in poverty in Pittsburgh's Hill District and how this neighborhood and its people inspired the pieces of Century Cycle.

What resonances did August Wilson's theater leave behind? In literature, Walter Mosley's name comes to mind above all, with his detective novels starring an African-American detective, Easy Rawlins. Like the Wilsonian characters, he is torn between the legacies of his Southern community and the dominant society. Mosley features a character steeped in contradictions, unable to find his voice as much as his voice. We witness a dark and complex vision of an identity tension because neither his community nor the company provides Easy with a sense of belonging. As Alice Mills points out,

So it would be reductive to limit the expression of the hero's identity to a confrontation, to a choice, or, to use the thought of W.E.B. Du Bois, to a fusion between the values of the black minority and those of the dominant society. However,

the problem of community and national allegiance cannot be dismissed, as the character comes up against it, if only to overcome it. (Mills, 2000, 57, my translation)

Within television, the series *Treme* created by David Simon and broadcast by the American channel HBO reflects this impossibility of separating the music from the existence of the Treme district's inhabitants, district of New Orleans. There is the fundamental importance of music in the struggle to exist, which cannot be denied. In these musical legacies, we find blues and jazz and this symbiosis between the two. We also find this impossibility of rejecting musical heritages in the search for a musical path, particularly with the example of the trumpeter Delmond Lambreaux interpreted by Rob Brown.

The Wilsonian characters are thus torn between their double heritage. The pieces studied highlight that the reconciliation of these two heritages can be achieved through violence or, as *Fences* shows, through redemption.

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PATTERNS OF RETICENCE IN ISABEL ALLENDE'S "THE JAPANESE LOVER"

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Abstract: *Exploring the links between shame and reticence, this article examines the psychology of some of Isabel Allende's characters in "The Japanese Lover". Our contention is that their insecurities might have stemmed from anxieties about the nature of self-representation. What is more, we consider that shame is an appropriate affective marker of such anxiety because it occurs at the confluence between internal and external self-evaluation. Moreover, the paper attempts to analyse, the emancipation of the ignored voices in the novel and how Allende abridges women's silence to empowerment.*

Keywords: *reticence, shame, patterns, strategies, Allende.*

Conceptual Framework

The concept of **reticence** is defined in the Longman Dictionary as "unwillingness to talk about what you feel or what you know" and one can add "because you are nervous or being careful" as rendered by the Cambridge Dictionary. Interestingly enough, in the Free Dictionary Online the same concept stands for "the trait of being uncommunicative, not volunteering anything more than necessary" as well as "the keeping of one's thought and emotions to oneself," accompanied by "reserve in speech, behaviour or dress."

According to Arthur Waugh, reticence in literature could be considered a shortcoming, since the amount of frankness lurking behind reticence, could be perceived as a sort of violence in literature. Throughout time, reticence has become increasingly pronounced, and literature, moving, as it must, with the age, has assumed in its normal and wholesome form the degree of silence which it finds about it (Waugh, 2013: 206-208).

On the other hand, it is highly debatable if relishing lack of moderation and becoming the passion's slave might be foolish. Additionally, some might claim that the person who loses reticence loses self-respect, and the one who has no respect for oneself will scarcely find others to cherish their behaviour (*Ibidem*: 211).

Isabel Allende confesses that reticence is at the chore of every story she comes up with: "Sometimes I feel maybe I'm not supposed to write that story. But most of the time I just show up and keep doing it, and sooner or later it happens" (Beard: 2016). Apparently, Allende seems very comfortable making her private life public. When she wrote *Paula*, her mother stated: "You've written so much about your intimate life, you are so vulnerable." She answered back, "Mom, I'm not vulnerable because of the truth I tell, only because of the secrets I keep" (*Ibidem*: 2016).

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Textual Patterns/Strategies of Reticence

Textual strategies of reticence consist of the textual force of that which is unspoken, obscured, withheld, or made to speak in a register other than the discursive. These may express Allende's struggle to transcend historical moments, just like Alma and Ichimei's love. The novelist uses 'reticence' to imply blockage, stifling communication and emotion. What is more, she can use that kind of textual reticence that psychoanalysis takes to be a disclosure of unconscious tensions. Reticence simultaneously articulates what is missing from the world, and the affective register – the shame of remaining immersed in one's historical moment – of the psychological chaos caused by such omissions. My contention is that reticence is an apt rhetorical expression for shame because it indicates the force of repression at work, although I do not assume that shame expresses a certain trauma for Allende (Roberts, 2020: 5, 10).

Most theories of shame concur that as a discrete psychological experience, shame involves an unpleasant confrontation with an aspect of the self that is revealed or highlighted. Shame is also seen both as an uncomplicatedly negative, even toxic *emotional* episode and as a *conceptual* category which indicates ethical intelligence and sensitivity. We can argue that shame can be productive in capturing the way that self-appraisal and self-knowledge are generated by a relationship between internal and external criteria of assessment. This self-alienation occurs when notions of the novelist's identity and its utility to society rely on uncritical notions. The ideologies and modes of thinking which alienate us and make us feel ashamed are thoroughly intertwined with the phenomenological experience of one person's struggle with their freedom, and the way in which this interacts with one socio-historical moment (*Ibidem*: 18).

Overcommunication of the body in shame is what enables the 'self' to become a particularised *social object*. What shame theories have in common is the affective sense of the self, erupting into a particularised sense of identity previously saturated by its socio-historical placing. Shame threatens the self with depersonalisation just at the moment that it also offers it up to a scrutiny which can be constitutive (*Ibidem*: 19). In the body of the present paper, we will discover Irina's appearance which is the result of shame and consequent reticence to show herself and her genuine personality.

It goes without saying that Allende's characters house 'open secrets' – meaning the use of free indirect narration to create subtle modes of identification and ownership. We can propose there is a 'mildness or muteness' to 'open secrets' which are liberatory in their refusal to grant distinct moments of confession (*Ibidem*: 19). Most of the characters featuring in *The Japanese Lover* harbour these secrets, which are eventually revealed, joined with the reasons of not disclosing them during their lifetime.

The Japanese Lover – Plot

As in all of Allende's fiction, we find a large, colourful cast of characters, living around the octogenarian Alma Belasco, who resided in Lark House, a retirement home in San Francisco. Irina Bazili is a young Moldovan immigrant whose repressed "terrors" of adolescence form a drumbeat of foreshadowing through the three years of her service to

Alma. But as the story lurches back to the late 1930s and then to the highlights between, we also meet Alma's Jewish family in pre-World War II Europe; the San Francisco relatives who adopt her; the entire family of her Japanese lover, Ichimei Fukuda; and a host of other lovers, care givers, evildoers and saints (Ferriss: 2015). Mention should be made that *The Japanese Lover* covers a lot of historical and social ground: the European Jewish diaspora, World War II concentration camps, pre- and postwar racism, illegal abortion, AIDS (*Ibidem*). The range of characters with which Allende peoples her story quickly develops into a series of stereotypes: the wealthy Jews (Alma, Seth), the "serene" Japanese (Ichimei), the traumatized and possibly alcoholic Eastern Europeans (Irina) (*Ibidem*). Alma, the refugee from Eastern Europe harbours a terrible secret – as do a few other major characters.

Setting and Patriarchy vs. Reticence

Setting in the present novel is of paramount importance. Both Moldova, Irina's birthplace as well as Japan, the Fukudas' background, represent countries where "patriarchy has dominated every aspect of life, from relationships, gender roles to the use of language and also, the balance of power between the two sexes." As a result, when access to power has been revoked, women have resorted to silence. However, silence is often the initiation of women struggle for social change and later becomes a vehicle of self-expression. In her works, Isabel Allende manages to give voice to the silenced marginalized subjects (women) of patriarchal societies, such as Irina, as well as Alma (Dhaliwal, 2017: 852).

Patriarchal societies adopt certain means of marginalisation which condition women to maintain silence, such as denial of privileges as civil rights, legal rights such as right to justice and fair treatment. In most cases, women have been positioned on the margins of culture, which in turn lead them to silence and invisibility. Janis P. Stout in his book *Strategies of Reticence* argues about certain ways of indirectly conditioning women to maintain silence. He states that such is done by "undervaluing women's voices in decision-making situations, praising soft-spokenness and casting women as 'ladylike' figures, lacking authority or nationality" (Stout, 1990: vii-viii). All this is represented in the gender roles that women are expected to play, examples of which in the novel features: Alma, as a wife to her gay distant cousin, while being in love with Ichimei; Irina is a molested step-girl, reluctant to confess or to face her molester.

One of the most varied methods of subjecting women to silence adopted by the patriarchal society is violence in all its forms that is inflicted on the mind, body and presence of the women (*Ibidem*: vii-viii). The novel is explicit with examples of violence that is inflicted on women, in which case Irina is the 'best' representative, since she comes from such a patriarchal society and was abused by her step father, whom she does not dare to denounce or even pursue in court.

The next step from silence is often assertion, which can occur in many forms. Women in *The Japanese Lover* prove their assertiveness through various strategies. Some will resort to the narrative power, such is the Alma's case, who prompts Seth to write about her life. Another strategy entails their creativity and the different kinds by which it is manifested – Alma is one more time a user of this strategy by means of her line of work. As such, women

in the novel, not only express themselves by their creativity, but also unmask the hidden truths of their patriarchal society and of the dictatorship faced by them (Dhaliwal, *op.cit.*: 853).

Alma can be seen fighting at a personal level, when she chooses her lover from a society class lower than hers. At the social level, she asserts her freedom by choosing her own liberty and freedom of marrying whomever she wanted, wishing to elope with her lover. Nonetheless, historical events will prevent her from achieving her goals, namely the concentration camps, Ichimei and his Japanese family are forced to live in.

Another “concentration camp” could be considered the Lark House which is led by a male figure. However, the male presence does not transform it in a patriarchal institution, as most of the personnel consists in women, who are either outspoken or reserved. The facility is a quite secluded setting: a care facility on a “magnificent property,” intended for “elderly persons of slender means.” It serves organic food, showcases a wide range of sensibilities and gives its residents both complete freedom and individualized attention. What is problematic is the very real history forging the lives of its residents, particularly Alma, which are presented quite reticently (Ferriss: *op.cit.*), unless disclosed by relatives or casual acquaintances

Reticence(-free) Elements

Even though the main purpose of this paper is to identify patterns of reticence in some of the novel’s characters, mention should be made that there are also instances in which there is no reticence involved. For example, dialogue either conveys information (“I have an inoperable brain tumor”) or gives vent to direct emotions (“You know I’ve loved you for three years”). This last utterance is typical of the novel’s “great loves,” which the reader is meant to accept at face value. Like knights on horseback, the men in this story rescue the women – and when they issue orders (“Well, Irina, that’s going to have to change”), the women are grateful.

At the beginning of the novel during the job interview, Irina was under direct scrutiny of her future employer, Hans Voigt, who without any reticence whatsoever pointed out that “she was too young for a job with such responsibility, but since they had a vacancy they needed to fill urgently, she could stay until they found someone more suitable.” Unfortunately, at this stage of the novel, feminine characters are heavily imbued in reticence, being unable to utter what they think. Therefore, at first Irina merely “thought the same could be said of him: he looked like a chubby little boy going prematurely bald, someone who was out of his depth running an establishment of this sort.” Eventually, she “assured him that her lack of qualifications was more than compensated for by the experience she had of dealing with old people in her native Moldova.” Nonetheless, it was not her speech that made a lasting impression on her prospective employer, but “her shy smile softened the director’s heart” (Allende, 2016: 1-2).

Lark House is the epitome of *how (not) to be reticent*, since, on the one hand, if any of the residents “seemed isolated or very sad, stayed in bed or stopped eating” that was a clear sign of depression and repression of feelings, hence reticence. On the other hand, in this

retirement house “the elderly are the most entertaining people in the world; [...] they have lived a lot, say whatever they like, and couldn’t care less about other people’s opinion” (*Ibidem*: 7-8).

Reticent Characters

In terms of the relationship between Alma and Irina is concerned, they are both epitomes of different types of reticence; while the former “was so accustomed to giving orders and keeping her distance,” the latter was “so accustomed to receiving orders and being discreet” (*Ibidem*: 23).

When it comes to Alma and her connection with reticence, one can mention that she had refused to sell her brand or to work with fashion designers; each of her original creations was reproduced in a limited edition that she closely supervised and then signed. Irrespective of her outspoken manner and lack of reticence regarding her love life, her thriving business lay under the sign of reservation (*Ibidem*: 23).

Irina “[...] from a distance could be taken for a scruffy-looking young boy. She was so inclined to remain invisible that it took a good pair of eyes to even notice her. Her baggy clothes and knitted hat pulled down low did not exactly make her stand out. Seth was attracted by her mysterious intelligence, her impish, heart-shaped face with a deep dimple in the chin, her startled greenish eyes, her slender neck that emphasized her vulnerability, and her skin, so white it seemed to glow in the darkness. Even her childlike hands and chewed nails moved him (*Ibidem*: 24).

In 1939, as Poland falls under the shadow of the Nazis, young Alma Belasco’s parents send her away to live in safety with an aunt and uncle in their opulent mansion in San Francisco. There, as the rest of the world goes to war, she encounters Ichimei Fukuda, the quiet and gentle son of the family’s Japanese gardener. Unnoticed by those around them, a tender love affair begins to blossom.

Considering the title of the book, it should not be much of a surprise that Alma and Ichimei’s relationship heats up in the years to come. For months, she and Ichimei secretly meet in a cockroach-infested motel. They spend hours in bed, staring into each other’s eyes, “abashed at having touched their souls’ deepest levels . . . in such a state of ecstasy they could no longer distinguish between joy and sadness.”

Memories of these rendezvous keep her faith in their love for the remainder of her days. Marriage was not a possibility either Alma or Ichimei imagined was available to them in post-war America. Both of them move on with other people. Much to the shock of her aunt and uncle, Alma marries her own first cousin, Nathaniel. She vows her fidelity to him. Nathaniel tells her she does not need to offer him quite so much. “We’re going to travel this path together, step by step, day by day, with the best of intentions. That’s all we can promise one another,” he says.

Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Alma and Ichimei are cruelly pulled apart as Ichimei and his family – like thousands of other Japanese Americans – are declared enemies and forcibly relocated to internment camps run by the United States government. Throughout their lifetimes, Alma and Ichimei reunite again and again, but theirs is a love that they are forever forced to hide from the world.

Decades later, Alma is nearing the end of her long and eventful life. Irina Bazili, a care worker struggling to come to terms with her own troubled past, meets the elderly woman and her grandson, Seth, at San Francisco's charmingly eccentric Lark House nursing home. As Irina and Seth forge a friendship, they become intrigued by a series of mysterious gifts and letters sent to Alma, eventually learning about Ichimei and this extraordinary secret passion that has endured for nearly seventy years.

Isabel Allende's Female Characters

Allende's novels are often based upon her personal experience and pay homage to the lives of women, while weaving together elements of myth and realism. She incorporates aspects of feminism and traditionalism in her stories which reflect personal viewpoints on political and social issues, and she challenges the reader to evaluate these issues through the perspective of culture.

When it comes to her feminist status, Allende's works arouse conflicts of opinion among her critics. Doris Meyer feels Allende represents a liberated feminist perspective, while Gabriela Mora labels her a proponent of the masculine sexist paradigm (Dulfano, 1993: 15-16). Responses to Allende's writing vary between this spectrum. As stated in *Contemporary Literary Criticism*, "Much critical analysis of Allende's work has been devoted to her feminist perspective and her depiction of the patriarchal society of Latin America has been applauded, though some critics charge that her portrayals of Latin males are frequently stereotypically macho and that she at times resorts to other cliché's about Hispanics" (Hart, 1997: 26). Growing up in the machismo Latin American culture caused Allende to question everything – tradition, myths, culture, family, laws, religion, and science – because they were all manipulated by men. In an interview with Norma Valle for *Fempress*, Allende says it took her nearly four decades to accept herself because before that acceptance, she wanted to be a man and to be able to have some control in her society.

Concluding Remarks

In the present article, I have emphasized the functions of reticence, shame and silence in Isabel Allende's *The Japanese Lover*. Sweeping through time and spanning generations and continents, the novel explores questions of identity, abandonment, redemption, and the unknowable impact of fate on everyone's lives.

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SILENCE AND FEMALE VOICES IN MAXINE HONG KINGSTON'S "THE WOMAN WARRIOR"

Georgiana-Elena DILĂ *

Abstract: "The Woman Warrior" represents Maxine Hong Kingston's first success in the literary world blending together autobiography and Chinese folktales. There are several voices narrating the stories offering a mixture of American language and Asian accents and tones while showing that there also different types of silences. These silences are brought about by the reticence of the marginal individual who is part of a minority feeling that he/she has no powerful voice, as well as the fear of not knowing the language well and thus keeping silent, while being aware that some topics are completely taboo and could lead to deportation and also rituals that are kept private for the minority community. There is this reticence in approaching life in a fresh and new way carrying the burden of tradition.

Keywords: voice, reticence, warrior, storytelling, silence.

Maxine Hong Kingston represents one of the best-known Chinese American writers, Anthony Fonseca naming her "the most influential Asian American writer of the twentieth century" (Fonseca 2005: 164). Her famous work, *The Woman Warrior*, has been introduced as part of literature curricula in many American colleges and universities and has become part of the American ethnic canon, being the most read work of a living author.

Even though Kingston was criticised by many that she embellished the stories she had heard from her mother and made them more Americanised there is no doubt about the impact they had on her readers, who were interested in finding more details about the entangled world of the young narrator of the book, making storytelling the key element of the book. She carefully explained that:

Sinologists have criticised me for not knowing myths and for distorting them; pirates correct my myths, revising them to make them conform to some traditional Chinese version. They don't understand that myths have to change, be useful or be forgotten. Like the people who carry them across oceans, the myths become American. The myths I write are new, American. That's why they often appear as cartoons and kung fu movies. I take the power I need from whatever myth. Thus Fa Mu Lan has the words cut into her back; in traditional story, it is the man, Ngak Fei the Patriot, whose parents cut vows on his back. I mean to take his power for women. (Wong 1991: 26)

Kingston has tried not to become part of the pen wars regarding her work, although there have been many Chinese Americans that have attacked her and argued about her wanting to please the white public and getting off track when it came to real events from the Chinese history and stories. These people were somehow afraid that the ones who were not familiar with Chinese customs, history and events would immediately take what was written

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by the author for granted. There is a belief that an ethnic writer has a responsibility to the community he/she is part of, being a representative of the group, someone that can be regarded as an icon. One of Kingston's critics, Katherine M. Fong, even felt the need to send her an open letter where she addressed her concerns regarding *The Woman Warrior*:

I am bothered by your distortions of the histories of China and Chinese America. Your story is a *very personal* description of growing up in Chinese America. ... I read your references to mythical and feudal China as fiction – as descriptions of ghost-dream imaginings of a child who heard stories of an unknown place called China. Your fantasy stories are embellished versions of your mother's embellished versions of stories. As fiction, these stories are creatively written with graphic imagery and emotion. The problem is that non-Chinese are reading your fiction as true accounts of Chinese and Chinese American history. That's the awesome price we Chinese Americans pay when so few of us – Jade Snow Wong, yourself, and a few others – are published. Your one experience, your one story, becomes the definitive description of all of us. Chinese Americans have commonalities, but I hardly think we are so homogeneous. (Fong 1977: 67)

Kingston's work has been labelled a novel by some and an autobiography by others, always offering mixed ideas about what it really is. Considering the fact that it won the National Book Critics Circle Award labels do not seem as important, but the value of the content the book bears. Being a woman and belonging to a minority kept Kingston very tied to these two elements as they seemed to primarily define her both in her work and also in her life. There is a contrast that she observes between telling something and keeping quiet, especially when societies are more male dominant:

Kingston equates memory and voice with storytelling and silence with oppression. Kingston uses memory narratives as a strategic method to question traditional system of gender identities, roles and expectations. She excavates cultural and familial stories or collective memories, and then revises or retranslates them to understand her place and identities in America and in the Chinese diaspora. Kingston is conscious that the process of recovering, retranslating, and transmitting personal, familial, and ethnic collective memory is always fractured, negotiated, and a product of struggle. Hence it destabilizes constructions of identity and community formation along with knowledge production. Kingston notes that women are frequently the transmitters of memory – personal, familial, cultural, and collective – through their storytelling. (Hua 2013: 71)

The Woman Warrior has five parts that address layers of meaning by adding elements from the American culture on top of the Chinese ones, while making references to stories, literature and even ghosts. There are numerous elements that could be considered appealing by some and boring by others and the author is aware of this. There are women presented in the text that inspired the development of a young girl who admires real and mythical/ghostly women, who help her become the warrior she desires to be showing her different aspects of life. Kingston is not afraid to reveal her own version of events, even though there have been people willing to correct what they regarded as unfaithful to the original myths and stories. She offers different stories from which the narrator can be inspired. Nevertheless, the young girl still worries about properly understanding her Chinese heritage and still embracing the American everyday life:

‘Chinese-Americans’, she asks, ‘when you try to understand what things in you are Chinese, how do you separate what is peculiar to childhood, to poverty, insanities, one family, your mother who marked your growing with stories, from what is Chinese? What is Chinese tradition and what is the movies?’ (Kingston 1976: 13)

In a minority family there are always things that have to be kept from others. The young narrator is first introduced to the idea of secrecy when her mother warns her not to tell anyone what she is about to hear, so keep silence and be reticent around others, always careful not to reveal the information she has acquired. The young girl is used to being silent as she presents the details herself:

When I first went to kindergarten and had to speak English for the first time, I became silent . . . During the first silent year I spoke to no one at school, did not ask before going to the lavatory, and flunked kindergarten.... I enjoyed the silence. At first it did not occur to me that I was supposed to talk or to pass kindergarten.... It was when I found out I had to talk that school became a misery, that the silence became a misery. I did not speak and felt bad each time that I did not speak. (Kingston 1971: 165-166)

The story she is presented by her mother involves one of her aunts who had become pregnant and committed suicide, killing herself and the new-born after the community had judged and blamed her for her deeds. The burden of the reaction people around her had and the reticence they regarded her with overwhelmed the young woman and led to her death. These events are meant to show the narrator that such a shame for her family would be unacceptable and she should be careful never to let such a thing happen. The patriarchal community was set on blaming and shaming women who did not follow certain rules, they had no voice to defend themselves as they were not taken into account. As the narrator was looking for role models she chose not to be on the side of those who judged, but rather considered it very cunning of her aunt to throw herself into the drinking well and stopping people from having a water source as it was now contaminated.

Kingston’s narrator is struggling to understand why she is presented with the idea that she has to be a wife and a slave, when there are many other options, such as being a woman warrior like Fa Mu Lan, who is presenting her own story in the second part of *The Woman Warrior* entitled “White Tigers”. The version that is portrayed in the book about the Chinese warrior is apparently not the best known one, however, Kingston is allowed to show her own perspective of the myth, focusing on the struggles Fa Mu Lan had to face as a woman, as there exist several stories regarding her adventures. In the book we are presented with a young woman who trains for the war and has to pass a harsh test – that of being in the land of the white tigers with no shelter or food. After her training is complete she returns to her village in order to revenge the wrongs that her family had to endure. She has to pretend to be a man and gather enough warriors by her side for them to then win one victory after the other. What might be surprising is her giving birth to a baby and after that still continuing to fight. However, what all versions apparently have in common is the fact that Fa Mu Lan eventually goes back and leads a quiet life in the household of her parents-in-law, following the rules of a patriarchal community. Fa Mu Lan’s story is a parallel to the

modern world when women can be leaders, they can have a voice and be heard, but at the same time they have a family and give birth to children. Kingston's version of the events brings forward other elements of the Chinese popular tradition, blending influences in order to come up with something that would suit the purpose of her work, serving as a role model for the young girl.

While *The Woman Warrior* debunks the idea that there can be a causal relationship between language and the body, it grapples with the question of what it means for a racialized body to acquire a language. By showing how the body's racial marker precedes language performance, Kingston dismantles an easy distinction between language ability and disability and makes the reader aware that language is always intimately linked to the body that speaks and the material conditions of that body. (Lim 2006: 50)

Kingston chooses to look at the close members of the family and reveal that the narrator's mother is also an impressive woman, whose story is presented in the third part of the book, showing how women can embrace various roles, not just what is dictated to them by the society, even though she is traditional and wants her children not to forget their legacy, having them memorise things about places so far away that they might never get to see. So, Maxine's mother, Brave Orchid, was a

pioneering doctor and scholar in China, war medic, vanquisher of ghosts, emancipator of Chinese girl slaves, expert and adventurous cook, competent mother and tireless labourer in her laundry in America, Brave Orchid herself functions as a model of female strength and accomplishment, and as an admirable survivor in her daughter's imagination. (Grice 2006: 25-26)

The narrator's mother is presented in contrast with her sister, whose story is told in the fourth part and who embodied the opposite of a strong woman, always feeling anxious and lacking personality. Her insecurities and inability to adapt to life in the United States, while failing to please her sister lead her to insanity.

There are struggles to leave the Chinese inheritance behind and try to adapt to the new community as Maxine presents this in detail when she says that:

The immigrants I know have loud voices, unmodulated to American tones even after years away from the village where they called their friendships out across the fields. I have not been able to stop my mother's screams in public libraries or over telephones. Walking erect (knees straight, toes pointed forward, not pigeon-toed, which is Chinese-feminine) and speaking in an inaudible voice, I have tried to turn myself American-feminine. (Kingston 1971: 11)

The final part of the book comes back to the mother-daughter relationship and reveals the ways in which the narrator would try to separate herself for the maternal influence and be more independent, with a voice of her own, embracing her life in the United States and the compliments her teachers gave her about being able to win scholarships. This is one of the reasons why she uses English instead of Chinese to express herself. In her opinion girls and women are presented somehow as being useless in the Chinese stories, being called slaves and cowbirds. Her desire is to succeed in being free from embarrassment of her parents not knowing English well and being asked to act as a

translator: “You can’t entrust your voice to the Chinese, either; they want to capture your voice for their own use. They want to fix up your tongue to speak for them. “How much less can you sell it for?” we have to say” (Kingston 1971: 152). She also had to face her own silence in school, which made teachers wonder what was wrong and ask for parental cooperation, but unfortunately the parents were unable to properly help because of their badly spoken English. There is the silence that is imposed by the Chinese community that can also be encountered in the first part of the book, with women who are supposed to not fight back, to never offer a response.

However, while *The Woman Warrior* does not ask for a sorting out of fact from fiction, too hastily labeling as fictional every incident in the text that potentially signals intercultural tension does not help understand Kingston’s sophisticated manipulation of reality and imagination. To explore the figure of tongue-cutting in the text as it marks a crucial intersection between the body and language is to take a step further from the debates over representation and to think about how Kingston’s text interconnects social reality and the material conditions of life. (Lim 2006: 50)

The Chinese inheritance voices not only the immigration status that the family has, but also how different the lives of the parents are in comparison with their children. Maxine’s mother even complains about how her life had changed and the fact that in China she would still be young. This comment implies her sacrifices and her fight for a better life for her children. The storytelling helps with presenting cultural values and keeping in mind the inheritance parents share, no matter how much they might want to escape it.

Home and a sense of belonging are thus experienced differently for the first and second-generation Chinese diasporic subjects. While *Brave Orchid* and other emigrant villagers recall China and mourn it as a lost home, Maxine and her siblings view China as a haunting symbolic site of incomprehensibility. China, for Maxine and her siblings, is a place rife with sexism and age hierarchy, and America is perceived as a new cultural and political home, even if life in America is fractured by sexism, racial discrimination, and class inequality. (Hua 2013: 86-87)

Storytelling helps communities let new members know about values, history and culture by bringing them closer to maintaining certain traditions that are related to identifying as part of a certain group or not. The allusions Kingston makes to Chinese elements may not always be familiar to the readers, but the American voice telling the story makes sure to comfort those that might, at some point, seem lost.

Though the power to limit the participation of others in the national community is certainly important, *The Woman Warrior* is not the story of Kingston’s progression from a Chinese to an American identity, but rather toward that more complex, blended, and contradictory autobiographical self-presented in the story that concludes the narrative. (Hunsaker 1997: 457)

She does not want her two sides to be in contrast, rather than offer a more complex human being ready to face any challenge. In the end we have to say that “fortified with talk-story from her mother and other female relatives, Maxine is finally able to break her own silence, tell her own story, and speak her mind” (Huntley 2001: 94)

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ELOQUENT RETICENCE AND NARRATIVE REPRESENTATIONS OF SILENCE IN THE 18TH CENTURY

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Abstract: Eighteenth-century English language conduct books for women discuss the importance of female silence in polite conversation for specific locations, situations and interlocutors. They consider silence as a non-verbal means of communication, suitable to transmit different messages, communicate virtues, cover secrets and faults. Slightly differing attitudes towards silence voiced in different texts indicate a possible tendency towards a greater acceptance of female speech as the century progresses. The need to negotiate changing ideals of femininity such as the question of female silence may have contributed to the increasing popularity of the genre.

Keywords: silence, reticence, non-verbal communication, conduct books

This is an article which analyses the role of *silence* in the point of communication view in order to understand better the message of the text, even if the word “silence” seems to be lack of information.

The 18th century is a period of time when women were advised to be “silent” as much as possible by the “conduct book”¹. The conduct book called *The Polite Lady* sets up a basic rule for a young lady’s conduct in regard to silence: “Still, however, it is certain, that young ladies should be more apt to hear than to speak (Allen; 97). *The Polite Lady* is a collection of anonymously published fictional letters from a mother to her daughter Sophy, who is a well-to-do young woman about to finish her education and set out to find a suitable husband. Sophy’s mother’s advice includes recommendations of silence, a most typical conduct for young women in the late eighteenth century. In *Advice of a Mother to her Daughter* (first published in 1728) rules that “the greatest prudence lies in speaking little” (183), and a 1795 edition of John Bennett’s *Letters to a Young Lady* (first published in 1784) reminds the young female reader that “nature has given you two ears, and only one tongue; and that scripture has said, ‘be swift to hear but slow to speak.’” (2:25) But *The Polite Lady*’s defensive “[s]till, however, it is certain” (Allen; 97), while obviously referring to some exceptions mentioned earlier in the text, may nevertheless leave the observant reader wondering why it should be phrased so defiantly if it were indeed so indisputably “certain.”

Conduct books characterize young women silently listening as actively – even if non-verbally – communicating. As we will present, there are many communicative messages that can be conveyed by a specific mode of silence. First of all, silence may signal a suitable consciousness of youthful inexperience, shyness, politeness, fear. Obvious silence

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¹ The term “conduct book” in this context refers to a specific historical subgenre of advice literature. Its most important characteristic is that it gives advice on both character formation and the conduct of life (Newton, *Learning*)

may also signify those personal attributes viewed as suitable for the addressee's age, gender and rank: the female conduct book's typical target readership is young and of the "middling sort," as well as female. This is predictably characterized as incompatible with showy self-presentation. Another important point for a young lady is the fact she knows when to retire inconspicuously: a young lady can show off her exemplariness only by not actively drawing attention to herself.

This modesty, which I think so essential in your sex, will naturally dispose you to be rather silent in company, especially in a large one. – People of sense and discernment will never mistake such silence for dullness. One may take a share in conversation without uttering a syllable. The expression in the countenance shews it, and this never escapes an observing eye. (Gregory 12)

These kinds of books generally stress that silence makes a woman more attractive. This comes close to what Brayman Hackel has called an "oxymoronic ideal of displayed silence" (101): a woman inaudibly boasting of being silent, flaunting her attractiveness as a virtuous woman in a way that can only indirectly be perceived. If women remain silent they can become centre of attention, authors recommending silence as a means of imposition, of elegantly hiding personal faults or unflattering personal attributes. Exceptionally good health, for example, should be enjoyed in "grateful silence" (20) according to Gregory's *Legacy*, because he considers it unfeminine and therefore unattractive.

Sometimes silence is helpful for a less intelligent girl and she could just pretend to be modest to hide that she does not have much to say. De Lambert quite openly instructs her daughters to use silence to deceive: "we should learn how to listen to other people's discourse, and not betray an absence of mind either by our eyes or our manner" (182).

In an era when the role of reticence was considered a primary requirement for a respectable woman, the representations of silence can enrich the understanding of the 18th novel.

Silence, in communication, is seen as a pause which serves as inner time for one to absorb and reflect (Bruneau; 1973), and it can be seen as a voice which can say something "unsaid" (Zembylas; 2004). Silence can be a permanent trait, a part of someone's personality, a situational behaviour resulting from some circumstances. Silence can be a communication strategy with clear motives such as: disagreement, objection, defiance, consideration, etc. or just an "absence of noise" (Jaworsky and Sachdev; 1998).

Bruneau classified silence into psycholinguistic silence, interactive language and sociocultural language. Psycholinguistic language refers to hesitation and discontinuity of speech in order to include supplementary meanings in speech and to assist the decoding process. Interactive silence is used to get attention, reflection, interpretation, and judgement from the others. Sociocultural silence is part of the cultural pattern of communication within a society which can be highly valued and might have various communicative functions such as showing respect, acceptance, faith, power, and other social attitudes.

Major distinctions between silence and reticence

The first distinction is in the point of motives. Silence is viewed as an aspect of language and a form of conversational dominance (Picard, 1948; Brown and Attardo, 2000). In their opinions, silence is an important layer of interpersonal discourse and is a neutral part of conversational skills, accompanying speech to express a variety of meanings and perform a range of language functions – including to comfort, to support, to accept, to attract attention, to negotiate power, etc. On the contrary, reticence, tends to suggest subordination in activating communicative skills. So, reticence indicates a level of reserve in speech which can coincide with shyness.

In many cases, both silence and reticence demonstrate communication breakdown (Yoneyama 1999), a lack of ability to communicate, a failure of language (Tannen 1985), shyness, anxiety or lack of knowledge (Jawarsky, 1993, Phillips, 1991, Buss, 1984, Tsui, 1996, Foss and Reitzel, 1998, Hilleson, 1996).

According to Hymes (1972), language competence comprises three elements: knowledge, ability and actual use. Also silence space for the construction of knowledge and the ability, it may not show evidence of actual use of language.

Some fictional representations of female behaviour in the late eighteenth-century novel certainly transmits the impression that a young woman's noticeable reticence in conversation was no longer indisputably taken to be her way of demonstrating her female excellence but rather thought unusual and perplexing: there is Evelina, in Frances Burney's 1778 novel of the same title, an inexperienced young woman brought up by a country parson, her guardian. When first attending a private ball, Evelina feels so frightened by the novelty of being asked to dance by a stranger, Lord Orville and leaves her dancing partner in confused wonder. Her detailed confession of the episode in a letter home focuses on her repeated but hopeless attempts to overcome her extreme shyness:

He seemed very desirous of entering into conversation with me; but I was seized with such a panic, that I could hardly speak a word [...] I made no answer, but hung my head, like a fool, and looked on my fan [...] I had not the presence of mind to say a single word [...] I [...] listened to him in silent embarrassment [...] I was unable to go further than a monosyllable. (Burney I Letter XI: 31-34)

Her naïvely modes of silence agree the youthfully reticent femininity to the conservative eighteenth-century reader, but the poor girl fails to convey the same message to her dancing partner who later complains that if she be an "angel", she is "A silent one [...] A poor weak girl!" (I Letter XII: 36-37.

Another fictional image of female silence in the ballroom in a long eighteenth-century novel, Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* (1813), shows how pertinent conduct rules influence more socially experienced young women's behaviour, and their expectations of their interlocutors' reactions, even when they decide to break those rules. Just like Evelina, Elizabeth Bennett dances for the first time with an attractive aristocrat. Unlike Evelina she is familiar with female conduct rules as well as with basic ballroom etiquette. Yet she deliberately uses a mode of silence to communicate her dislike to her interlocutor: "They stood for some time without speaking a word; and she began to imagine that their silence was to last through the two dances, and at first was resolved not to break it" (I

Chapter XVIII: 89-90). After having decided that this is not strong enough a “punishment” (90) – and maybe realising that her partner, Mr. Darcy, does not readily decode the contemptuous message she wishes her silence to convey – Elizabeth proceeds to talk about their failure to talk: “she made some slight observation [...] After a pause of some minutes she addressed him a second time with ‘It is *your* turn to say something now [...]. – I talked about the dance, and *you* ought to make some kind of remark” (90). Her attempt to ironically draw attention to her own exemplary efforts at suitably light conversation, and to his failure to support her in these, does not have the desired effect of irritating Mr. Darcy, who entertains “a tolerable powerful feeling towards her” (92-93). He rather appears to enjoy the unusual situation of meta-communicatively reflecting on the due proportion of speech to silence in the ballroom while actually dancing. No longer taciturn, he enquires after the importance she attaches to conduct rules for real life: “Do you talk by rule then, while you are dancing?” (90) and gets as a reply a short summary of the basic rules Evelina had so much trouble to abide by: “Sometimes. One must speak a little, you know. It would look odd to be entirely silent for half an hour together” (90).

By the end of the dance, Elisabeth get to quarrel with her partner, but not before she has used her female silence both in the literal sense and as a subject for conversation to provoke and attack. Austen novel can be read far more in creative ways: from young women’s breeding, embarrassment and socially misunderstandings to conduct rules on females’ silences.

Representations of female silence in the novel show the difficulties with the encoding and decoding of messages which could appear when female silence was considered as a means of non-verbal communication as well as the creative uses to which the silence rules could be put by young women.

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THE REPRESENTATION OF RETICENCE IN HENRY JAMES'S WORKS

Mihaela GAVRILĂ*

Let us be silent, for so are the gods.
Silence is a solvent that destroys personality, and
gives us leave to be great and universal. (Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Intellect*, 1841)

Abstract: *Henry James's representation of reticence is revealed in his texts as a communicative method through which the protagonists understand each other's unuttered words. Reticence is almost perceived in James as a distinctive mark of his own discursive mastery since the ambivalent swing between deductible and direct communication is exposed overtly. He believes that an author's craftsmanship resides in his/her ingenuity of pushing the limitations of speech that ultimately proves the boundaries of narrative representation. The present paper proposes to analyse some of James's novels paying particular attention to the author's depictions of silent communication.*

Keywords: *silence, limitations, reticence, communication.*

Henry James has always been perceived as a writer that bridged Modernist and Traditional literature although he could be specifically pinpointed to other currents such as Decadentism, Symbolism, Impressionism, and even Existentialism. The author's representation of speech, through silence can stand as a sign for his reticence against nineteenth-century Positivism. John Auchard's study, *Silence in Henry James: The Heritage of Symbolism and Decadence*, identifies in James's three literary phases, a development of speechless exchanges and of different related manifestations of silence, such as absences, gaps, voids, and even ghosts, that in his opinion, reflect the author's movement of consciousness and the acknowledgement of non-being and non-expression.

In Henry James's fiction silence as a communicative method gains so many nuances of signification that in *The Ambassadors*, James uses various kinds of silence to display the main character's expanding consciousness, supplementing the uttered or written word with different symbol mechanisms. The act of communication cannot always be trusted to render the truth since language can be manipulated and altered to express what the interlocutor desires. For Strether, the main protagonist of the novel, language and silence equally become the method of utterance since he constantly tries to redefine words so that the situations can match the language utilized to describe them.

Strether starts to hear and understand reality only after the words are no longer present and he achieves a state of conscious wholeness when he acts in silence that is illustrated as a positive phenomenon. An example of this kind of situation is represented by

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Strether's disbelief in Chad Newsome's true reason behind what kept him in Europe and his realization that Chad's verbal emphasis was a technique meant to mislead him from understanding the truth. Not until Strether sees beyond language that he is able to unmask the truth:

Then what are you here for? What has kept you," Strether asked, "if you *have* been able to leave?"

It made Chad, after a stare, throw himself back. "Do you think one's kept only by women?" His surprise and his verbal emphasis rang out so clear in the still street that Strether winced till he remembered the safety of their English speech. "Is that," the young man demanded, "what they think at Woollett?" At the good faith in the question Strether had changed colour, feeling that, as he would have said, he had put his foot in it. He had appeared stupidly to misrepresent what they thought at Woollett; but before he had time to rectify Chad again was upon him. "I must say then you show a low mind! (James, 1964: 101)

Even if it has not arrived yet to consciousness, it seems that Strether's growing awareness is unfolding as there are other means besides language to reach the truth. Evidence to support this idea, stands in the passage of his lunch with Madame de Vionnet after their initial encounter in Notre Dame, when Strether acknowledges that his level of comprehension has come a long way since his first night in London, when he required explanations about everything:

He was to feel many things on this occasion, and one of the first of them was that he had travelled far since that evening in London, before the theatre, when his dinner with Maria Gostrey, between the pink-shaded candles, had struck him as requiring so many explanations. He had at that time gathered them in, the explanations – he had stored them up; but it was at present as if he had either soared above or sunk below them – he couldn't tell which; he could somehow think of none that didn't seem to leave the appearance of collapse and cynicism easier for him than lucidity. How could he wish it to be lucid for others, for any one, that he, for the hour, saw reasons enough in the mere way the bright clean ordered water-side life came in at the open window? – the mere way Madame de Vionnet, opposite him over their intensely white table-linen, their *omelette aux tomates*, their bottle of straw-coloured Chablis, thanked him for everything almost with the smile of a child, while her grey eyes moved in and out of their talk, back to the quarter of the warm spring air, in which early summer had already begun to throb, and then back again to his face and their human questions. (James, 1964: 173)

While in *The Golden Bowl* the line between speech and thinking is unclear and the meaning is projected onto another due to Maggie's progressive unraveling of her knowledge about Amerigo's adultery, in *The Wings of the Dove* the process of thinking equals looking: Milly Theale sees a thought (she looks at the Bronzino portrait) and is then given a meaning for it (she sees herself in the image of the lady but the reflection is reminiscent of death). In both novels however, the power gained through the process of thinking is expressed in silence, the sign of Henry James's representation of reticence:

She couldn't help that – it came; and the reason it came was that she found herself, for the first moment, looking at the mysterious portrait through tears. Perhaps it was her

tears that made it just then so strange and fair – as wonderful as he had said: the face of a young woman, all magnificently drawn, down to the hands, and magnificently dressed; a face almost livid in hue, yet handsome in sadness and crowned with a mass of hair rolled back and high, that must, before fading with time, have had a family resemblance to her own. The lady in question, at all events, with her slightly Michaelangellesque squareness, her eyes of other days, her full lips, her long neck, her recorded jewels, her brocaded and wasted reds, was a very great personage – only unaccompanied by a joy. And she was dead, dead, dead. Milly recognised her exactly in words that had nothing to do with her. “I shall never be better than this.” (James, 2015)

According to Kenneth Burke language is the human being’s instrument for communication but it also represents the reason for his separation “from his natural condition by instruments of his own making”: “language referring to the realm of the nonverbal is necessarily talk about things in terms of what they are not – and in this sense we start out beset by a paradox. Such language is but a set of labels, signs for helping us find our way about. Indeed they can be so useful that they help us to invent ingenious ways of threatening to destroy ourselves.” (Burke, 1989: 59)

James manages to play with the emerging twentieth century Modernist self-consciousness about the nature of language as a subject. Strether, for example, has to face the paradox of language and succeeds in transcending it through silence, but not before confronting the remains of communication and juxtaposing it with the truth. The scene when Strether meets the artist Gloriani at Chad’s represents the collapse of words as transmitters of meaning:

The artist used that word the next moment smiling courteously, wiping his nippers and looking round him further – paying the place in short by the very manner of his presence and by something Strether fancied he could make out in this particular glance, such a tribute as, to the latter’s sense, settled many things once for all. Strether was conscious at this instant, for that matter, as he hadn’t yet been, of how, round about him, quite without him, they *were* consistently settled. Gloriani’s smile, deeply Italian, he considered, and finely inscrutable, had had for him, during dinner, at which they were not neighbours, an indefinite greeting; but the quality in it was gone that had appeared on the other occasion to turn him inside out; it was as if even the momentary link supplied by the doubt between them had snapped. He was conscious now of the final reality, which was that there wasn’t so much a doubt as a difference altogether; all the more that over the difference the famous sculptor seemed to signal almost condolingly, yet oh how vacantly! as across some great flat sheet of water. He threw out the bridge of a charming hollow civility on which Strether wouldn’t have trusted his own full weight a moment. (James, 1964: 156)

This is not the only passage that tries to solve the nature of the word since the very opening of the novel signals its absence: after arriving in Chester, Strether receives a telegram from his friend Waymarsh but the reader does not have access to its content; we can only deduce what it was transmitted through it by the protagonist’s reaction to reading it. Thus the telegram becomes an emblem for a previous symbol system and does not elucidate Strether’s questions about the situation of his friend. The word does not facilitate in this case the understanding of meaning:

The principle I have just mentioned as operating had been, with the most newly disembarked of the two men, wholly instinctive – the fruit of a sharp sense that, delightful as it would be to find himself looking, after so much separation, into his comrade’s face, his business would be a trifle bungled should he simply arrange for this countenance to present itself to the nearing steamer as the first “note,” of Europe. Mixed with everything was the apprehension, already, on Strether’s part, that it would, at best, throughout, prove the note of Europe in quite a sufficient degree. (James, 1964: 17)

Initially perceived as direct speech due to the quotation marks and the other signs of oral communication (emphasis on words, pauses), in the following passage, just like the narrator underlines, the reader is left puzzled about the real meaning of the text, revealing the fact that Maggie might have mentally thought about the message that was to be transmitted but never uttered the actual words:

‘Why, why’ have I made this evening such a point of our not all dining together? Well, because I’ve all day been so wanting you alone that I finally couldn’t bear it, and that there didn’t seem any great reason why I should try to. *That* came to me – funny as it may at first sound, with all the things we’ve so wonderfully got into the way of bearing for each other. You’ve seemed these last days – I don’t know what: more absent than ever before, too absent for us merely to go on so. It’s all very well, and I perfectly see how beautiful it is, all round; but there comes a day when something snaps, when the full cup, filled to the very brim, begins to flow over. That’s what has happened to my need of you – the cup, all day, has been too full to carry. So here I am with it, spilling it over you – and just for the reason that is the reason of my life. After all, I’ve scarcely to explain that I’m as much in love with you now as the first hour; except that there are some hours – which I know when they come, because they almost frighten me – that show me I’m even more so. They come of themselves – and, ah, they’ve been coming! After all, after all – ! (James, 1972: 311)

Ultimately there is no clue to who has formulated the words, if those are the actual words or whether there were others similar to them. The reader cannot know for sure whether that is Maggie’s speech or the narrator’s interpretation of her unarticulated experiences: “Some such words as those were what *didn’t* ring out, yet it was as if even the unuttered sound had been quenched here in its own quaver. It was where utterance would have broken down by its very weight if he had let it get so far” (James, 1972: 312). Another explanation for the passage could be that it represents Amerigo’s perception of his wife’s unspoken communication, that even if it is speechless it does manage to send a powerful message: “Without that extremity, at the end of a moment, he had taken in what he needed to take – that his wife was *testifying*, that she adored and missed and desired him. “After all, after all,” since she put it so, she was right.” (*ibidem*)

Eight years before his brother published his original gothic ghost story, *The Turn of the Screw*, William James, in *The Principles of Psychology* (1890), talked about speech as the most unpremeditated manifestation of thought, highlighted the idea that language represented a reflection of thought and personal consciousness and introduced the term “stream of consciousness” for the first time:

There is not a conjunction or a preposition, and hardly an adverbial phrase, syntactic form, or inflection of voice, in human speech, that does not express some shading

or other of relation which we at some moment feel to exist between the larger objects of our thoughts. If we speak objectively, it is the real relations; if we speak subjectively, it is the stream of consciousness that matches each of them by an inward coloring of its own. In either case the relations are numberless, and no existing language is capable of doing justice to all their shades. (James, 2007: 245)

Even if the novella abounds in acoustic representations, the quietness of the setting did not escape readers and critics alike, making Virginia Woolf to state that: “Perhaps it is the silence that first impresses us. Everything at Bly is so profoundly quiet” (qtd. James 1966: 179). The peculiar relationship between the dead servants and between them and the children and also the reason behind Miles’s expulsion from school are the pivotal paradoxes upon which the narration is constructed. A stratagem of silence obstructs the governess’s understanding of the events that succeeded before her arrival and she begins to sense that the housekeeper is hiding something:

A rigid control, from the next day, was, as I have said, to follow them; yet how often and how passionately, for a week, we came back together to the subject! Much as we had discussed it that Sunday night, I was, in the immediate later hours in especial – for it may be imagined whether I slept – still haunted with the shadow of something she had not told me. I myself had kept back nothing, but there was a word Mrs. Grose had kept back. I was sure, moreover, by morning, that this was not from a failure of frankness, but because on every side there were fears. It seems to me indeed, in retrospect, that by the time the morrow’s sun was high I had restlessly read into the fact before us almost all the meaning they were to receive from subsequent and more cruel occurrences. (James, 1966: 27)

The ghostly apparitions by themselves represent another technique of reticence to convey meaning, embodied by intense and unreal silences, insightfully portrayed; the first encounter of the governess with Quint standing on the tower (“I can hear again, as I write, the intense hush in which the sounds of evening dropped. The rooks stopped cawing in the golden sky, and the friendly hour lost, for the minute, all its voice” – James, 1966: 16), Flora’s intentional silence that precedes the sight of Miss Jessel’s silhouette on the other side of the lake (“I waited, but nothing came; then, in the first place – and there is something more dire in this, I feel, than in anything I have to relate – I was determined by a sense that, within a minute, all sounds from her had previously dropped; and, in the second, by the circumstance that, also within the minute, she had, in her play, turned her back to the water” – James, 1966: 30) and another apparition of Quint led to the Governess’s impression that the silence was equal to her courage to confront the ghost, to her power to banish it from the house:

It was the dead silence of our long gaze at such close quarters that gave the whole horror, huge as it was, its only note of the unnatural. If I had met a murderer in such a place and at such an hour, we still at least would have spoken ... the silence itself – which was indeed in a manner an attestation of my strength – became the element into which I saw the figure disappear. (James 1966: 41)

Although he paid particular attention to speech, dialogue and communication in general, Henry James is best known and appreciated for his study of human psychology and character because unlike the rest of the Modernist novelists, he concentrated more on the deceitful nuances of thought rather than on their linguistic frame. According to the author,

the most skilful characteristic of a writer stands in its capacity of restricting the narrative, linking authorial and social reticence and creating reticent, silent, reserved and sometimes impenetrable characters that are the embodiment of his own authorial reticence: “This sort of legible reticence represents the novel’s capacity to determine social expectations as a new formal technique, simultaneously appropriating and abandoning the distinction between narration and dialogue, interiority and exteriority, speakable and unspeakable.” (Leibowitz, 2008: 35)

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TRAVEL WRITING – A MEANS OF PERSONAL METAMORPHOSIS: “AMERICA DAY BY DAY” BY SIMONE DE BEAUVOIR

Corina Amelia GEORGESCU *

Abstract: Simone de Beauvoir, one of the iconic French personalities of the 20th century, is especially known for her activity as a feminist, being the author of *The Second Sex* and the one who started a world movement for women's rights. Simone de Beauvoir wrote books of philosophy, novels, articles and only one travel book: *America Day by Day*. The objective of this paper is to show how the travel to New York and the arrival in this city enable de Beauvoir not only to discover it, but also to re-discover her own self, by facilitating her a sort of personal metamorphosis.

Keywords: travel writing, self, personal metamorphosis.

1.Introduction

Simone de Beauvoir, one of the iconic French personalities of the 20th century, is especially known for her activity as a feminist, being the author of *The Second Sex* and the one who started a world movement for women's rights. Nonetheless, there are plenty of reasons for which she deserves a special place in the world's cultural hierarchy. For instance, at 21 years old, she was the youngest person ever to pass the *agrégation*, the most difficult French national exam of Philosophy, being ranked the second, after Jean-Paul Sartre. She and Sartre had one of the most controversial relationships, known as an open one at the time, but lasting, nevertheless, until he died. Simone de Beauvoir was awarded Le Prix Goncourt for one of her novels, *Les Mandarins* (The Mandarins), which was described by Iris Murdoch as “a remarkable book, a novel on the grand scale, courageous in its exactitude and endearing because of its persistent seriousness” (Sunday Times). Her books depict her as an inquisitive mind accustomed to critical thinking, a sensitive woman seeking love while disregarding any social conventions, but also as a perseverant fighter against all types of injustice. This overwhelming complexity makes Simone de Beauvoir's life and work be challenging topics for today's research, despite her passing almost thirty-four years ago.

A remarkable life, an outstanding work out of which the most recent books were published in 1998 (*A Transatlantic Love Affair: Letters to Nelson Algren*), in 2006 (*Diary of a Philosophy Student*, 1926 – 27) and in 2008 (*Cahiers de jeunesse*, 1926 – 1930), by her adopted daughter, Sylvie Le Bon de Beauvoir. Simone de Beauvoir wrote books of philosophy, novels, articles and only one travel book: *America Day by Day*. She had the opportunity of knowing America not only by travelling, but also through her American friends, such as Richard Wright, whom she actually dedicated the book, or Nelson Algren, who later became her lover and to whom she wrote letters for more than 20 years.

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America Day by Day describes the United States as seen by the Frenchwoman, the progressive philosopher that de Beauvoir was. She gives the reader a chance to gather insights into the American politics as well as into the American culture and society, but also about what the daily American way of life is.

The objective of this paper is to show how the travel to and arrival in New York enable de Beauvoir not only to discover the city, but also to re-discover her own self, by facilitating her a sort of personal metamorphosis.

2. *America Day by Day* – an insightful read

“In 1947, Simone de Beauvoir interrupted her research for *The Second Sex* to travel twice to the United States for a total of roughly five months.” (Pepchinski, 2020)

America Day by Day is not an isolated book on the topic of *travel writing*; there are also other authors, some of them remembered by the history of literature, having written about America. One may mention William Least-Heat Moon (*Blue Highway: A Journey* – 1982), Henry Miller (*The Air-Conditioned Nightmare* – 1945) and Charles Dickens (*American Notes for General Circulation* – 1842). What makes Simone de Beauvoir’s book particularly intriguing is, according to Brinkley (Brinkley, 1998 :10), related to the “authentic compassion for common people”. She allows the reader to see her humanity, her empathy for all those who are lonely, at every step of her journey, even if she is, at times, rather critical towards the American government’s hegemonic intentions.

As the author confesses in the book, she reaches LaGuardia Airport in Queens, New York, and takes part in some cocktail parties, but also in a symposium called “Women’s Role in Contemporary Society”. *The New York Times Magazine* commissions an article from her, which would appear on the 25th of May 1947, five months after her arrival in the United States. The time she spends there is divided between a previously set itinerary, including her lectures, and some free time that she uses to explore a whole new world:

“I spent four months in America – very little time. Furthermore, I travelled for pleasure and wherever I happened to be invited.” (Beauvoir:1998, 15)

The mixture of social aspects, descriptions and reflections on different topics, such as feminism, culture, drugs, crime, segregation, music and consumerism make *America Day by Day* an insightful read, as it is at the same time not only a document of an epoch and personal diary, but also a philosophy book.

3. The Paratext

According to Gérard Genette (Genette, 1987), the *paratext* refers to the elements included in a published work that accompany its text: the author’s name, the work’s title, the preface or the introduction and any illustrations. The literary critic defines the paratext as a “threshold”.

As far as Simone de Beauvoir’s book is concerned, one may find it useful to analyse the elements belonging to the paratext: the dedication and the preface.

The dedication is a way for the author to bestow honours to a person or to show friendship for someone. In this case, *America Day by Day* is dedicated to Ellen and Richard Wright: Richard Wright, an American-born writer, known for his *Black Boy* (1945) in which he describes his childhood; in 1946, he moved to Paris, permanently becoming an American expatriate and meeting Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus and Simone de Beauvoir:

Wright had met both Sartre and Camus when they first visited the United States as journalists in 1946. He saw them again when he came in France as a guest of the French government that same year. There he made Beauvoir's acquaintance and later escorted her to Harlem on her tour of the United States in 1947. (Kressner Cobb, 1979:362)

When Simone de Beauvoir met Richard Wright, she had already been an admirer of his book, *The Black Boy* "which she praised for its celebration of existential liberty" and they became close friends. It is he who introduced Nelson Algren to Simone de Beauvoir, who would later become her lover.

De Beauvoir's dedication to Richard Wright is a way to thank him for accompanying her to Harlem during her visit in the United States. As far as his wife, Ellen, is concerned, she became Simone de Beauvoir's literary agent in 1951, when she started her agency (Bak, Mansanti, 2019:195), after the Wrights settled in Paris. This friendship started when Richard and Ellen show Simone de Beauvoir New York. The two women get close together during that time, "especially after some marital problems between the Wrights developed". (Ward, Butler, 2008: 35)

"Perhaps it was her close acquaintanceship with Richard and Ellen Wright that permits de Beauvoir's descriptions of her encounters with racial separation to come across as heartfelt and thoughtful." (Pepchinski, *op.cit.*)

The fact that Simone de Beauvoir dedicated her book to Richard and Ellen may be regarded as a way of admitting the important part they had played in her discovering America.

The other important paratextual element is the *Preface*, a direct manner of the author's witnessing her choice when writing what later became a travel book. De Beauvoir is not interested in the industry of the United States, nor in the "New World" as she calls it, nor in its politics and economics, but rather in the way "America revealed itself to one conscious" (Beauvoir, *op. cit* : 15) - hers.

Les éblouissements de l'arrivée assoupis, son journal devient si humain car il s'intéresse avant tout aux gens et ne mentionne l'environnement que pour mieux y situer ceux qui le peuplent. Cette tentative de compréhension des Autres définit l'existence même de Simone de Beauvoir, ce journal n'en est qu'une autre preuve. (Levéel, 2007 :108 – 126, 111)

Thus, she admits from the very beginning that what follows is nothing but a subjective perception, a choice in a wide variety of things she encountered. She clearly rejects any objective, scientific approach (i.e. "a serious study"), offering "a faithful account". She would rather assert this subjectivity, by witnessing her preference for a certain literary form:

Because concrete experience involves both subject and object, I have not tried to eliminate myself from this narrative: it is truthful only because it includes the very personal circumstances in which each discovery was made. That is why I have adopted the journal form. (Beauvoir:1998, 15)

Simone de Beauvoir emphasises the *genuine* uncensored experience that she lived and considers that its *authenticity* comes from the subjective accounting of the facts. In her *Preface*, she uses two adjectives, almost one after the other, with the aim of stressing this idea: “faithful” and “truthful”.

Another characteristic of which the author wishes to convince her readers is the text’s *accuracy*. These results from her having taken notes during her voyage and from having kept letters helping her memorate some of the elements.

Everything she writes about respects the chronological order of what she lived: her “amazement”, “admiration”, “indignation”, “hesitations” and her “mistakes”. She admits her subjectivity at every stage, never denying it, as she expresses different feelings related to what she was experiencing. Her admission goes as far as to even openly include the possibility of having mistakenly recalled some of the facts, despite the abundance of notes that she had taken during the voyage: “Il s’agit au contraire d’un ouvrage rédigé, structuré et recherché établi à partir de notes, de lectures et de souvenirs encore vivaces à l’époque.”¹ (Levéel, *op.cit.* :110)

The writer then proceeds to explain how her opinions about different topics gradually become substantial, as she does not want to impose an already-polarised view on one thing from the very beginning she has contact with. One may encounter a certain **relativity** of accounting of the facts, as she accepts that “no isolated piece represents a definitive judgement”. (Beauvoir:1998, 15) Her final conclusion about a topic arises from “the whole collection of [her] indecisions, additions, and corrections”. (*Ibidem*, 16)

Simone de Beauvoir finally explains that she narrates what she lived, without any other addition or selection; one may talk about a search for objectivity within the frame of a fully subjective account. From the perspective of the *Preface* she writes, the author’s book becomes the statement of a journey and of all the opinions that it generates when being seen through the eyes of the traveller-woman-writer who creates it; it brings “in front of the reader” an America seen through the eyes of a French writer, of a feminist and philosopher. Conversely, the reader is warned from the very beginning that everything he reads about would be somebody else’s perception, thus having the freedom of accepting the text as it is or rejecting it altogether. After all, a diary is first and furthestmost written not only to be read by anyone else but its author, but also to express one’s own feelings, to better understand them; this is, albeit allegedly, Simone de Beauvoir’s case, as well: “Le fait de décrire ce voyage mythique pour l’existentialiste française s’inscrit dans un schéma complexe de compréhension de soi et de son rapport au monde.”² (Levéel, 2007 :108)

¹ On the contrary, it is a work written, structured and documented based on notes, readings and memories still vivid at the time. (our translation)

² Describing this mythical journey for the French existentialist is part of a complex pattern of understanding oneself and one’s relationship to the world. (our translation)

4.Travel and Arrival – Stages of a Personal Metamorphosis

The book opens with a section called *January*, including de Beauvoir's travel by plane to the United States, as well as her arrival in New York. The diary begins on the 25th of January 1947 in a very captivating way: the author chose to start her book with a sentence arousing the reader's curiosity: "Something is about to happen." (Beauvoir:1998, 17) This sets out the reader's expectation while, at the same time, serves as a way of anticipating what is about to happen; terms such as "gala evening", or "late-night party", "my party" draws the reader's attention preparing him for something staggering, special, unexpected or unique, a sort of celebration.

The frame is achieved through visual *colourful images*; everything seems to be light-bathed: "strokes of light", "shining red and green", "the lights of Paris flicker", "sober stars rising", "the red beacons", "a dark blue abyss". This first paragraph also contains auditory imagery, such as "the propellers turn faster and faster" and "the engines engage".

The subjectivity emerges from the very first lines of the book, striking the reader who is expecting a mysterious event to take place soon, impatiently waiting for it to happen: "Something is about to happen"/ "Something does happen." The imminence of the event is underlined by the reiterated use of the verb, as well as by the verbal form: "to be about to", showing an action ready to take place. This idea is further stressed a few lines below through the emphatic "do". Nothing is clearly expressed and the reader is only given a hint at the end of the paragraph: "In the distance, the lights of Paris flicker, sober stars rising from a dark blue abyss." (Beauvoir:1998, 17) The narrator suggests a physical distancing from Paris, symbolically doubled by an intense feeling rendered by the narrator's heart's inability of following the pace of the propellers. Pictures and emotions this is what the first paragraph of the book describes allowing the reader to participate in the *gala* expressed through the third occurrence of the verb "to happen", used in the Present Perfect Simple Tense primarily in order to stress the consequences of the event on the narrator: "It's happened." For her, it seems as if a dream came true: "I'm flying to New York. It's true." This *flying* (or, rather, *travelling*) is the above-mentioned *gala*: the unbelievable event that she is living. The detail of her voice heard in the loudspeaker seems to stress the idea that what is happening NOW is not a dream indeed.

Thus, the reader is brought, little by little, into the universe of travel: a place is left behind: Paris, but a new one will take its place: New York, an itinerary that she describes as a "passage" leading to "America", a destination which is finally clearly stated:

I'm flying to America. There is only one world, and New York is a city of the world.
But no. Despite all the books I've read, the films, the photographs, the stories, New York is a legendary city in my past; there is no path from the reality to the legend. Across from old Europe, on the threshold of a continent populated by 160 million people, New York belongs to the future. (*ibidem*, 17)

This paragraph brings together two elements: *the traveller* and *the place*. The choice of joining them within the same sentence: *the subject* and *the object*, is a means of drawing the two closer to each other. The first-person pronoun "I" arises for the first time in the text in this sentence, being directly linked with the destination. Moreover, America, a large continent, seems to gravitate around a fixed point: New York. This, rather indirectly,

represents a reality which is rather indirectly known by the narrator, through films, photographs and stories seen or heard by her. The city of New York seems to “belong to the future”, when compared to the “old Europe”.

As Janis Stout (Stout, 1983: 14) suggests, the mythical power of *travel tales* resides in “the relation between subject and object, knower and known”. This bifurcation of the travelling Self into “considering subject and considered object” allows for the experiences of the outer world to be transferred to the Self. Thus, the observation of the world is converted into introspection, therefore establishing a *correspondence* between the *outer* and the *inner* worlds.

Travelling creates a *bridge* between the *self* and the *new places*, permitting a two-way trip: “Traveling is an attempt to annex a new object to my universe; this in itself is a fascinating undertaking. But today it’s different: I feel I’m leaving my life behind. I don’t know if it will be through anger or hope, but something is going to be revealed – a world so full, so rich, and so unexpected that I’ll have the extraordinary adventure of becoming a different me.” (Beauvoir:1998, 17)

Simone de Beauvoir explains that *travelling* is generally synonymous with including the *place* in the traveller’s universe. On the contrary, what she feels during this voyage seems to be different through the fact that the new object is not included in the pre-existing universe, creating a brand-new universe in itself, leaving “behind” the “old familiar one”. Under this particular set of circumstances, travelling becomes the process of discovering of a new world, an adventure crafting a new self, “a different me”. *Travelling* not only involves a physical outer movement from a point to another, but also an inner movement of complete reshaping of the traveller’s being, which turns to be an “extraordinary adventure.”

The “flight” about which the narrator talks as if it were “a promise”, symbolises both a real, concrete movement of “leaving behind” and “going to” another foreign *place*, and a way of detaching oneself from what one used to be (“I’ve already escaped myself.”) in order to go higher and higher. Thus, the *flight* becomes a metaphor in itself, echoed by the metaphor of the *promise*, subconsciously associated with America as the *Promise Land*. In fact, the promise that the flight might offer is that of discovering a new *land* and, ultimately, a new *self*. This “elsewhere” the narrator talks about, involves another place (e.g. *the air*), at the very first-level of the analysis, but it also denotes the travelling towards *another* universe, where time and space are *intertwined*.

Before landing, after a long-haul flight, awaking up the narrator discovers world of light: “stars, webs, circles, showers of multicoloured lights.” “But in the distance fireworks explode from a new celebration: a city, a village. It seems that in this country the stones and bricks change at night into blazing spangles; every little village is a glowing Christmas tree.” (*ibidem*, 18)

The departure from Paris and the landing in New York are symmetrically perceived: the lights “flicker” in Paris “in the distance” as the airplane flies higher and higher and they “explode” in New York “in the distance”. An isotopy of light is created here following a gradual movement: “fireworks”, “blazing spangles”, “a glowing Christmas tree.”

The narrator experiences different painful sensations while the landing takes place, but everything is completely neutralised by the fairy tale-like picture:

“I’ve closed my eyes; when I open them again, all the stars in the sky have rolled onto the earth. It’s a glittering mass of gems and precious red stones, ruby fruits, topaz flowers, and diamond rivers. I haven’t known such splendour and such passionate desire since childhood.” (*ibidem*, 19)

This descriptive picture has *light* at its core, seemingly descending from a fairy tale, looking as if it were not real. It immediately connects in the reader’s mind with the magical world of childhood, rendering a sensation of “*émerveillement*” contiguous to a “passionate desire” and to surprise. This picture unwillingly suggests the idea of an exotic space evoked through the title of *The Thousand and One Nights* that names an intangible, inaccessible place. This world opening in front of the narrator’s eyes makes all the unfulfilled childhood dreams emerge in a palette of promises as if everything she could not have at a certain moment of her life might now become possible. It seems as if everything she had desired as a child, all her child dreams and hopes surprisingly came true; all the savours she had been dreaming about seemed to be real or, at least, to become real: “the shining sugary fruit”, the “taste of cassis and pineapple”. This world of physical sensations, appearing all of a sudden from the bottom of her being, stands for the promise that America offers – for the “taste” of wondering that she will rediscover, in a childish-like manner:

“The strings of pearls become streets, the crystal balls are streetlamps; it is a city after all, and the very words of childhood are too impoverished to name its promises.” (Beauvoir:1998, 19)

The plane lands on the LaGuardia Airport and the reality strikes back: the magic disappears as the traveller is confronted with an unexpected picture of America: an overcrowded airport where it is too hot, with people trained to seem kind (“a practiced smile”), giving “sourires en plastique”. This place is, fortunately, only a transit one, as it connects the *foreigner* to the City of New York.

5. Conclusions

The paratext of the book facilitates the reader’s understanding the context of de Beauvoir’s writing the book; the impact of her arrival in the United States on her is meaningful. The flight is the first stage of this discovery process, as it sets out the distance from the departure place (i.e. Paris) to the arrival city (i.e. New York). Thus, the act of travelling becomes an adventure, crafting a new self, “a different me”, as Simone de Beauvoir states, acquiring the dimension of reshaping the traveller’s being, while also serving as “preparation time” for what would come afterwards. At first sight, New York seems a land coming directly from a fairy tale.

Simone de Beauvoir’s first drive through New York is the beginning of an “initiation” taking place when entering a magic world. Her predominant feeling is that of “not belonging” to the place, but little by little, this changes into a “merging” between the French writer and the American city.

She is struck with amazement and the intensity of the discovery has the power of a mystical revelation bringing about her gradual symbolical “dissolution”. In spite of the myriad of impressions that Simone de Beauvoir lives, a feeling still persists: the astonishment. The dissolution of her being, which had previously occurred during one of the first stages of her “getting to know” the city, is replaced by its coming into existence as the writer feels that her process of initiation into the American life causes an almost physical transformation, which, on a symbolical level, is synonymous with her self re-discovery.

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REJECTION, RETICENCE AND ACCEPTANCE IN GEORGE ORWELL'S "KEEP THE ASPIDISTRA FLYING"

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Abstract: *The paper traces Gordon Comstock's journey through life and his attitude to it, beginning with his initial rejection of the standard way of living and ending with his acceptance of it. It also analyses the fight of other characters in George Orwell's novel "Keep the Aspidistra Flying" mainly with themselves in order to get over their initial reluctance to do various things. We will show how in the end of the novel they get to accept everything they used to reject and this acceptance brings them relief and a sense of fulfilment.*

Keywords: *reticence, acceptance, reluctance.*

In 1936 George Orwell published *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*, a book inspired from his experiences in a shop called Booklovers' Corner situated in London's Hampstead district. (cf. Lorcan Greene, 2016) Later, he will look upon it with reticence, claiming it was written only for money and not wanting it reprinted. Reticence is, as a matter of fact, too mild a word to describe its protagonist's attitude to the world subjected to the money-god in which he lives. But although Gordon Comstock, like Dorothy Hare in *A Clergyman's Daughter* and Winston Smith in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, loathes the system and rebels against it, he ends up being swallowed by it. Rejection is dominant in the world presented by Orwell in the novel. Not only do we witness the main character's rejection of what other people term a "respectable" life, with a "good" job and an aspidistra, but we also deal with his and other characters' reluctance to do various things. Most of them, however, seem to go from rejection and reticence to acceptance, whether we speak of Gordon, who ends up living the kind of life that he initially pretended to despise, of Rosemary, who accepts to have a sexual relation with him before their getting married or of Ravelston who agrees to do so many things in spite of his initial reluctance. On another level, we witness Gordon's repeatedly reiterated rejection of the standard way of living symbolized by the aspidistra, translated as a rejection of money, marriage, his family or his friends.

Gordon comes from a family belonging to "the middle-middle class, the landless gentry" (Orwell, 1989: 39), a family in which "*nothing ever happened*" (*ibidem*: 41, emphasis in original). Its key figure is Gran'pa Comstock, who died four years before Gordon was born and who exerted a powerful influence even from the grave. Gran'pa Comstock had managed to save some money, but also to crush out his children's spirit and to drive them into professions for which they were totally unsuited. All they themselves could do was to waste the money their father left them. They were not quite reluctant, but rather incapable of doing anything, being "the kind of people who in every conceivable activity, even if it is only getting into a bus, are automatically elbowed away from the heart

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of things.” (*ibidem*) They could not even have children. Gordon and his sister Julia are the only descendants of a generation of eleven people.

At the right age Gordon was sent to school and his family spent more money than they could afford on his education. While Julia had to abandon school at 16, Gordon continued, since he was “the boy” and consequently the “clever” offspring of the family. His parents put their hopes in his capacity of mending their fortunes, but the only things they got from him were his reticence towards them when they visited him and his reluctance to do what was expected.

His reticence towards his family was due to the fact that they were poorer than his colleagues’ parents. Desperate to hide the state of his finances from his mates, Gordon dreaded his parents’ visiting him at school and his father’s giving him too little money in front of everybody. In those days he hated his parents for being poor and blamed them for that.

Then he realized that “money-worship has been elevated into a religion” (Orwell, *op. cit.*: 46). “Money is what God used to be. [...] The decalogue has been reduced to two commandments. One for the employers [...] ‘Thou shalt make money’; the other for the employed [...] ‘Thou shalt not lose thy job’ “ (*ibidem*). He declared a war on money, deciding to reject the money-code, hence to refuse to succeed and to be rich.

Consequently, everything he did from then on was to sabotage his family’s efforts of finding a good job for him. Their first attempt at that was made when he finished school at 18. Even though his mother and Julia took great pains to keep him in school after his father’s death a year before, Gordon was incapable of seeing he had a duty to them and refused the job found by his uncle. He took it eventually, forced by his mother’s illness, but abandoned it four months after her death. After living for a while in the streets, in utter poverty, he decided to try a second time and got a job in the accounts department of the New Albion Publicity Company. Here, his talent at versification was noticed and he was promoted to secretary to New Albion’s head copywriter. “Gordon watched his new development, first with surprise, then with amusement, and finally with a kind of horror.” (*ibidem*: 58) The horror that he would succumb to the money-god made him abandon that job too and start working as an assistant in a bookshop.

In the beginning of the novel, almost thirty years old, Gordon is a total failure by common standards: small, frail, “moth-eaten already” (*ibidem*: 1), with shabby clothes and always counting his cigarettes and little money. He has a badly paid job in a bookshop where very few people come to actually buy something, lives in a rented room in Mrs Wisbeach’s house, which is full of aspidistras, has a girlfriend whom he can meet only in the street and very few friends since he cannot afford anything. Towards the end of the novel, he is even in a poorer condition. As a consequence of being arrested and spending a night in the police cell after being “drunk and disorderly” (*ibidem*: 200), he loses both his job with McKechnie and his lodgings at Mrs Wisbeach’s and gets even worse ones precisely on his thirtieth birthday.

Actually, Gordon’s dream is to be a great poet and he is reluctant to see that his talent does not go in that direction. He is very talented at composing advertisements, but when it comes to poetry proper things become more complicated. His first volume of poems, *Mice*, was published at the insistence of Gordon’s rich friend Ravelston, after being

rejected by six other publishers. It sold only 153 copies and was reviewed by 13 papers. The fact that *The Times Literary Supplement* considered it showed “exceptional promise” (Orwell, *op. cit.*: 61) was found encouraging by its author who understood only with much difficulty that the volume was actually a failure. Still, reluctant to give up his dream, Gordon insists on working on a new project, a poem entitled *London Pleasures*, intended to be a masterpiece describing a day in London. But though he has been working on it for two years, he is far from completing its two thousand lines, in rhyme royal. All he managed to produce were “just fragments, incomplete in themselves and impossible to join together”. (*ibidem*: 33)

There were not five hundred lines that you could say were definitely finished.
And he had lost the power to add to it any longer; he could only tinker with this
passage or that, groping now here, now there in its confusion. It was no longer a thing
that he created, it was a nightmare with which he struggled. (*ibidem*)

However he clings to it as “a way of hitting back at his poverty and his loneliness.” (*ibidem*: 34), approaching it now and then, now adding some passage, now deleting another, sometimes full of confidence that he is on the right track, sometimes aware that he will never finish it.

Most of the times he feels discouraged, realizing that such an enterprise is too big for somebody who is so poor, and considering that the lack of money damages one’s brain and soul and that one cannot think properly when one lives below a certain level. But when one of his poems is published in the *Californian Review*, and he even gets a little over ten pounds for it, he starts seeing himself as “Gordon Comstock, the poet, famous on both sides of the Atlantic.” (*ibidem*: 171) and starts having “Visions of girls’ faces, visions of cobwebby claret bottles and quart pots of beer, visions of a new suit and his overcoat out of pawn, visions of a week-end at Brighton with Rosemary, visions of the crisp, crackling five-pound note which he was going to give to Julia.” (*ibidem*: 170) All these visions however go down the drain as he spends all the money, including Julia’s five pounds, on a night out with Rosemary and Ravelston which ends, in spite of Rosemary’s and Ravelston’s efforts, in the police cell and in utter poverty.

Gordon has very few friends because though he is pining to go out with people, he finds it impossible to do it without money and he is reluctant to let the others buy his drinks for him. “He was forever snubbing friendly advances. [...] You can’t be friendly, you can’t be even civil, when you have no money in your pocket.” (*ibidem*: 27)

His only friend is Ravelston, the rich editor of the *Antichrist*, a middle- to highbrow socialist monthly, but he shows reticence even to him. He never enters Ravelston’s apartment because he feels out of place there, he never spends more than an hour or two in Ravelston’s company, they never have meals together as Gordon would not let Ravelston buy his meals and he cannot afford to go to restaurants. When they meet, they can only go to pubs because this is the only place Gordon can afford. Actually, the latter displays a similar type of behaviour towards Ravelston as towards his girlfriend Rosemary whom he cannot afford to take out either and whom he does not allow to pay for his fare, meals or drinks.

As a matter of fact, according to Ralph Pordzik, in *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* there is an “impressive range of same-sex desires that never issue into open homosexual

confrontation” (2012: 64), Ravelston being one of the men to whom Gordon seems to be physically attracted. Thus, we are told that he “was extravagantly fond” (Orwell, 1989: 14) of Ravelston and as they go out together, he sidles closer to him. “He would have taken his arm, only of course one can’t do that kind of thing. [...] He adored Ravelston and was never quite at ease in his presence.” (Orwell, *op. cit.*: 90) One evening, when he visits Ravelston, he behaves like a lover visiting his beloved. “Gordon had announced his arrival not by knocking at the door but by throwing a pebble against the window pane.” (*ibidem*: 87) Ravelston opens the window and they talk for some minutes, Gordon staying on the pavement and Ravelston leaning out of the window. Later in the novel, when they have the sexual encounter with prostitutes neither can have sex. Gordon is impotent and blames it on alcohol. Ravelston is panicked about the idea and pays the woman without having sex with her.

Ravelston is Gordon’s opposite in many ways. While Gordon is small, frail, shabbily dressed and moth-eaten already, his friend is very tall, lean and wide-shouldered, well-dressed and, though one year older than Gordon, he looks much younger. As Gordon feels embarrassed about being poor, Ravelston feels embarrassed when reminded that he is rich. He gives up a lot of his money – to editing *Antichrist* or to people, but he still has more than enough and, though ashamed of it, he cannot live on less. Also, much as he tries, he cannot hide his financial situation. Whenever he goes out with Gordon, his graceful attitude and quality clothes betray his class.

Theoretically, Ravelston is a socialist, aiming at equality and trying to “become [...] an honorary member of the proletariat” (*ibidem*: 88). But when it comes to practicing it, he is quite reluctant. He is fond of pubs in theory, these being the places where one can meet the working class on equal terms, but in practice he never enters one unless he is with someone who cannot afford to go anywhere else and he never feels good there. When he goes to a pub with Gordon once, for instance, the smell and the taste of the beer make him sick. Moreover, after parting from Gordon he joins his own girlfriend and together they have dinner in an expensive restaurant.

Eventually, his relationship with Gordon evolves towards the latter sponging on him for a while, living in his apartment, eating his food, wearing his clothes and spending his money. But it manages to survive nevertheless and the end of the novel finds Ravelston a witness to Gordon and Rosemary’s wedding.

Gordon’s lack of money affects his relationships with women as well. He has a girlfriend, Rosemary, a young woman he met when he was working at the New Albion Publicity Company. Initially, he was reticent to her, finding her “distinctly attractive but rather intimidating”. (*ibidem*: 55) That was why “It was a long time before he actually spoke to her.” (*ibidem*) Then their relationship progressed, in spite of many difficulties. He summarizes them as follows in these words addressed to Ravelston:

Don’t you see that a man’s whole personality is bound up with his income? His personality is his income. How can you be attractive to a girl when you’ve got no money? You can’t wear decent clothes, you can’t take her out to dinner or to the theatre or away for week-ends, you can’t carry a cheery, interesting atmosphere about with you. And it’s rot to say that kind of things doesn’t matter. It does. If you haven’t got money there isn’t even anywhere where you can meet. Rosemary and I never meet except in the streets or in picture galleries. She lives in some foul women’s hostel, and

my bitch of a landlady won't allow women in the house. Wandering up and down beastly wet streets – that's what Rosemary associates me with. Don't you see how it takes the guilt off everything? (*ibidem*: 104-105)

While Gordon is reticent about getting married (“But he had taken an oath against marriage long ago. Marriage is only a trap set for you by the money-god.” – Orwell, 1989: 115), Rosemary is reticent about sleeping with him. Or rather her feelings in this respect are ambiguous. “She longed to know the meaning of physical love, but also she dreaded it. It would destroy her youth, the youthful, sexless world in which she chose to live.” (Orwell, *op. cit.*: 122) She comes from a family with 14 children and wants to remain a girl, but she is aware that she cannot remain a girl forever. Moreover, she adores Gordon and would like to be his lover. They attempt to sleep together two times. The first time is during a walk in the country on a Sunday, a romantic enterprise that turns extremely unromantic after they stop to eat at a place that is too expensive. Gordon spends all his money on the bill and this ruins his whole day to such an extent that he becomes reticent to doing the very thing that he had longed for until then. “There was her body that he had wanted so long; but now, when the time had come, it only daunted him. He wanted her to be his, he wanted to *have had* her, but he wished it were over and done with. It was an effort – a thing he had got to screw himself up to.” (*ibidem*: 152-153, emphasis in original) The fact that she rejects him in the last moment because he had done nothing to protect her against a possible pregnancy makes things worse and they end up upset with one another. Still, Rosemary is very reluctant to give Gordon up even when he himself seems to do it. After he spends that night in the police cell and in spite of the fact that he decays more and more with every day which passes, she pays a visit to him, decided to do what she had postponed for so long. This time they manage to do it, but it is even less romantic than their previous attempt.

So it was done at last, without much pleasure, on Mother Meakin's dingy bed. Presently Rosemary got up and rearranged her clothes. The room, though stuffy, was dreadfully cold. They were both shivering a little. She pulled the coverlet further over Gordon. He lay without stirring, his back turned to her, his face hidden against his arm. She knelt down beside the bed, took his other arm and laid it for a moment against her cheek. He scarcely noticed her. Then she shut the door quietly behind her and tiptoed down the bare, evil smelling stairs. She felt dismayed, disappointed and very cold. (*ibidem*: 247)

The coldness is not just in the room, but inside them as well. There is no tenderness in the moment, except for Rosemary's little gestures. Gordon seems not to care at all.

The moment when Gordon starts considering embracing a way of living that he seemed to so thoroughly reject until then is the moment when Rosemary lets him know that she is expecting his child. Even though she offers him other alternatives than getting married – having the baby without marriage, which would have spelt social disaster for her and her family, or having an abortion, with potential terrible physical and emotional consequences – the only possibility he can live with is the traditional conventional one. Actually, it is the money, the financial cost of the abortion that brings Gordon down to earth.

‘A girl at the studio gave me an address. A friend of hers had it done for only five pounds.’

That pulled him up. For the first time he grasped, with the only kind of knowledge that matters, what they were really talking about. The words 'a baby' took on a new significance. They did not mean any longer a mere abstract disaster, they meant a bud of flesh, a bit of himself, down there in her belly, alive and growing. His eyes met hers. They had a strange moment of sympathy such as they had never had before. For a moment he did feel that in some mysterious way they were one flesh. Though they were feet apart he felt as though they were joined together – as though some invisible living cord stretched from her entrails to his. He knew then that it was a dreadful thing they were contemplating – a blasphemy, if that word had any meaning. Yet if it had been put otherwise he might not have recoiled from it. It was the squalid detail of the five pounds that brought it home. (Orwell, *op. cit.*: 253)

The baby establishes a connection between them that they had not experienced before, not even in the very act of conceiving it.

On the other hand, once Gordon accepts the possibility of having a family, everything falls smoothly into place. All his reticence and his reluctance to do the right, expected things are gone. He is ready to do now whatever it takes to support his family. He is ready to do for Rosemary and their baby everything he could not do for his parents, for Julia, even for himself. “ ‘If I marry you I shall have to turn respectable. [...] I mean I shall have to get a proper job – go back to the New Albion.’ ” (*ibidem*: 254) are the first words he tells her after they decide to get married.

In order to get the proper job he does not even flinch when Rosemary tells him to go to the interview nicely dressed, wearing a hat, with his hair cut and he no longer says no to Rosemary's offer to lend him the money for that.

Much to his surprise, the feeling he has at all that is happening to him is not shame, misery, despair or fury because he has succumbed to the money-god, but relief; “relief that now at last he had finished with dirt, cold, hunger and loneliness and could get back to decent, fully human life.” (*ibidem*: 265) He has a strange feeling that he has just grown up, that he rebelled against the money code like any other human being and kept up his rebellion a little longer than others, but now he is done with it. He considers now that “To abjure money is to abjure life” (*ibidem*: 266). And since poetry does not bring money and is not a serious occupation for a future family man, he throws the manuscript of *London Pleasures* down the drain. It is a symbolic gesture, like a throwing away of everything that was important to him until then. The manuscript has become nothing but a burden that he feels weighing heavily in his inner pocket and that he has to dispose of before it drags him further down.

We can consider that up to the moment when he learns that he will be a father Gordon displays signs of what psychologists call “social reticence”, considered a behavioural manifestation of shyness. (*cf.* Couchenour, Chrisman, 2016). Mainly a characteristic of young children, it may also appear in older ones and even in adults. The socially reticent children hang back in the peer group, watch peers from afar, rarely attempt to initiate interactions and back away from interactions initiated by others. Their shy or withdrawn behaviour is caused by their fear that others can and will pass judgment on them. That is why they will “remove themselves from situations that they believe will be discomforting” (Couchenour, Chrisman, *op. cit.*). No matter how hard he tries, without money Gordon does not manage to establish effective relationships with anybody and feels like a fish out of

water whenever he has company. Only after he gets a job does he find his place in the social network.

His childish behaviour up to the point when the perspective of having a child of his own helps him get mature all of a sudden is apparent on other levels as well. Firstly, he lives in the houses of various landladies that impose their rules on him the same way that mothers impose their rules on their children. After he gets married, he and Rosemary move to a flat, with no owners of the flat interfering. Secondly, as Pordzik points out, he denies himself the pleasure of giving away the gift of his poetry in the same manner in which children are reluctant to defecate. Gordon is constipated when it comes to writing his poems, which Pordzik associates with Campbell's "anal habit of retention" (cf. Pordzik, 2012), a pattern that is also obvious in his behaviour towards Rosemary: he wants her, but he postpones the moment of their making love. Thirdly, his refusal of having money can be considered a refusal of assuming the responsibilities that come with it. He wants to remain a child, always dependent on others.

Once he accepts that he is a mature man, he also accepts everything that he had rejected until then. He gets a job at the New Albion, where he produces brilliant stories, "each a realistic novel in a hundred words" to advertise for a product against smelling feet. "He did it very well; he did it far better than he had ever done anything else in his life. [...] There was no doubt about Gordon's literary ability. He could use words with the economy that is only learned by years of effort" (Orwell, *op. cit.*: 272) His apprenticeship with writing poetry served him well. Then, as far as the marriage is concerned, he wants it done by the book: in the church and with their relatives present. It is Rosemary who prefers to keep it a secret mainly because her family could not afford buying presents. After the ceremony they go to a restaurant to celebrate, but a nice cheap one, where they get good food for little money. The ultimate sign that Gordon fully accepted the standard way of living is his proposing to Rosemary to buy an aspidistra. Having realized a little earlier that "The aspidistra is the tree of life" (*ibidem*: 268), he wants one in their new home. Again it is Rosemary who thinks he is joking and she is totally against the idea, but he has even thought of the most appropriate place for it in the house and insists on having it. And as they go to the florist's to order the plant Rosemary feels the baby move, as a sign that "once again things were happening in the Comstock family" (*ibidem*: 277).

Being forced to accept something that you have never wanted is not that easy. But apparently this is not the case of the characters in George Orwell's novel. On the contrary, they seem merely to fulfil their destiny, after postponing uselessly and painfully something that had to be done anyway. The end of the novel finds them not just at peace with the money-god and with the aspidistra, so much despised until then, but also, and more importantly, at peace with themselves and with the world.

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“HORSE GIRL”: THE FINE LINES IN THE FABRIC OF REALITY

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Abstract: *This study follows, with reference to the 2020 motion picture Horse Girl, the way in which reality as people conceptualize it can change, in someone's perception, in such a drastic way as to encompass the existence of alternative worlds and parallel universes. We mean to trace the main character's transformation of awareness, the how of this process and its gradualness, by paying attention to environmental details and what they tell the protagonist, i.e. the manner in which these need to be interpreted so as to yield her final outlook. In other words, we enter the mind of the allegedly mentally disturbed, trying to understand her perception. It is a rupture from regular views and vision, a reticence to embody givens and take things for granted. To this end, we will start from some symbols thrown at us in the very first minutes of the film, in which almost every detail mentioned and seen is relevant and rich with figurative meaning. Then, we pass on to apparently embracing the position of the devil's advocate, in the section dedicated to glitches in reality, showing the evidence that presumably leads to mental insanity as the only valid explanation for the occurrences. We subsequently follow Sarah's imaginary journey through an intricate conjunction of spaces permeated with clues as to what she is experiencing. Towards the end, we reach the reverse hermeneutic regarding her mental state, realizing that, at least in the fantasy world of the film, what she has been envisaging might be the truth. The conclusions summarize the findings and the angles which the concept of reticence may acquire in our context.*

Keywords: *constructs, delusion, schizophrenia, metaphor, fantasy*

1. Introduction

The movie *Horse Girl* is a mystery drama with psychological overtones, first seen in the United States in January 2020 and then distributed by Netflix in February this year. Jeff Baena is part of the team of four who produced it, also being the director of the movie; Alison Brie, who plays the lead female role, is also a member of the production team herself. These tight collaborations make the movie give away a powerful, intense and unitary feel, which, in our opinion, captures the viewers and draws them to the screen, despite the less satisfactory ratings of 5.9 on IMDb (*Horse Girl* (2020), *IMDb.com*).

Sarah, a seller in a shop, is an anti-hero type of character, whose small existence waltzes between the store, the flat which she shares with roommate Nikki, and the farm which she frequents as a horse trainer. Her other passion besides horses is detective thrillers involving supernatural events. This study follows her evolution from a quiet, apparently ordinary young woman into a controversial character with an unconventional perspective on reality.

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2. Cutting the Fabric – Getting Acquainted with Metaphors

The *cutting of fabric with scissors* is a recurrent image in the first five minutes of the movie, which draws our attention to it, determining us to invest it – and duly so – with a more complex meaning. It takes up the whole screen, it is filmed from above, suggesting that the cloth stands for a whole, an entirety – which is actually that of life and reality itself – an idea reinforced by the obsessively repetitive nature of this image. The fact that the material is cut hints at the way in which reality, life or even someone's mind or personality may become split. The division is made through the middle, showing in this way that no piece is more important than the other, that no part is in control subsuming the others; differently put, if we read the whole as one's mind, at some point one may lose oneself into bits over which there would be no control. However, this interpretation is proven later, and it has a higher degree of subtlety than the rest of the readings for which the cutting of the fabric is a metaphor. We shall now have a look at these simpler interpretations of the symbol first, before analysing into more detail the profoundest of implications.

First of all, we cannot escape noticing the fact that, visually, cinematically, the recurrent image of the material cutting separates various interactions of the protagonist's in her life. By putting the bits together, we compose an identity, we find out more about who she is. The cuts in the cloth symbolize, in this first instance, the various aspects of her job or occupations that Sarah has (but also, implicitly and figuratively, her split personality or dissociative tendencies that will become apparent later in the story). In the first scene, at what appears to be the shop where she is employed, Sarah is talking to a colleague who seems to be a seamstress like herself; hence, we are privy on one of her occupations. Then, in the second, she is selling watercolours to a man, explaining the difference between acrylic and tempera and trying to help the client make a decision which is better. In a third hypostasis, she is talking to a teenage girl who recounts her about the incipient stages of her love affair with a boy her age, which involves sending colourful post-its with romantic messages to each another. Sarah is a trainer as well, teaching, in the fourth scene, a young girl to ride a horse. Here the setting is completely different, outdoors, resembling a farm. She is then explaining to the girl the opportunity of learning how to ride the English style, which involves jumping hurdles, as opposed to the western style, which her client says she wants and which excludes this type of action. Needless to say, *the existence of choices and preferences between tempera and acrylic, as well as between horse riding styles also points to the concept of separation of perception.*

If we get into more detail, and think about the topics of conversations above, we realize that the notion of fragmentation is present in the tiniest of facts of the story/film. We have already seen the oppositions that some of the discussions mentioned have introduced. Before even suggesting the multitasking of the protagonist in her occupational endeavours, the cut in the material parallels, in the very first scene, the discussion about the *DNANU testing that shows one's plural origins and genealogy*, which Sarah's colleague is bringing up. Enthusiastically, she tells the protagonist that, simply as a consequence of spitting into a phial, she has found out her roots, realizing in amazement that she has, besides her expected Irish blood (in a proportion of ninety-six percent), three percent Finnish and northwest Russian, as well as some Senegalese (so West African) one, in the amount of one percent.

This mixed origin suggests, from the very start, the idea of unit division, of a fragmented whole. Before mentioning the DNA test, Sarah's colleague discusses *Michael Flatley's Riverdance* show she has (partly!) seen on television, noticing the strange sensation given by the perfect, rapid and abrupt moves that the dancers make from the chest down while the upper part of the body remains almost immovable, which gives them an uncanny, robotic air. This dance-related insight is also about the split of the whole, it also means to point to the way in which fragmentation exists in something that is supposed to be unified, homogenous and seamless. Hence, only the first scene, which lasts two minutes or so, brings together this same idea expressed in three different ways simultaneously: through the *Riverdance*, through the DNANU test results and through the cutting of cloth. Then the shop space, in which Sarah unfolds her different occupational aspects, and the farm as alternate job space come into the picture. The appearance of a horse in the street where the shop is, merely glimpsed at by Sarah's colleague, functions as a cue to separate but fluid realities mixing together at some point. But the illustrations of the same concern do not stop even at that.

In the household scene which follows, in the apartment that Sarah apparently shares with a *roommate* – *another division* – she watches the science fiction *horror series Purgatory*. We are allowed to watch a short bit with her, which contains so many divisions of reality and perception that this idea now officially becomes obsessive. The very title of the series-in-the-film, the concept that it invokes, i.e. Purgatory – is about being in-between two more marked and clear spaces, namely heaven and hell, if we refer to Dante's work as well as religious mythology. Besides evoking the existence of opposites, it also puts forth the reminder that there is also a space (both literal and figurative) of indecision, where extreme poles meet in a way. This announces the future reciprocal invasion of different partitioned spaces (realities/perspectives), as well as the way in which indecisiveness or blurred lines of perception may flow into and reign over one's life. Also, the series-in-the-film shows two characters, a man and a woman (they are of different sexes!), chatting over a dead female as to the probable cause of her death, while the cadaver is on a dissection table (an operation that entails definite, multiple splitting!), also speaking of various other supernatural beings (demons and skyers (?) or clairvoyants, which are naturally in contrast with humans) and implicitly of another reality permeating ours as we know it. If we also mention the battle between good and evil as an implicit underlying principle of the series-in-the-film, we have yet another division.

There is a detail that has a chief importance in the economy of the movie and which may pass unnoticed at a first look. While watching the series, Sarah *plaits two or three threads that she has attached to the big toe of her right foot* in order to make an ankler. This activity is a metaphor for the way in which both identity and the story are woven to contain ambivalence and a double meaning, and for the already existing and future splits of all kinds. It points to both fragmentariness and composition, but the latter being out of bits and pieces that will not fit harmoniously but will show their stitches and sewing-together as the seams of clothes do.

3. Glitches in Reality

The fortune teller who visits Sarah's store and is in search of cloth tells her that colours have energy, and gives her a name card in the form of a small papyrus. This suggests the existence of alternative ways of interpreting reality. Also, the insistence on checking various fabric patterns in the shop, and on the concept of pattern itself connote the possibility to witness the pattern or order of reality modify, i.e. to envisage and experience a change in the customary ways in which reality presents itself. This is precisely what happens next in the film, and for which the scene with the strange fortune teller is a preamble.

There is a family history of mental disturbance, with both Sarah's aunt Helen, who seems to have been worse than Sarah's mother, and the latter, who struggled. Hence, we tend to interpret her erratic behaviour through this filter, suspecting that her genes carry the possibility of a breakdown – something that she is wary of herself, as she asks her stepfather about the time when her mother started having symptoms and how it happened. There is a series of signs of such a potential illness in Sarah, which start manifesting.

Brian (Nikki's boyfriend) finds her sleepwalking in the middle of the night, facing a wall of the flat, in an apparent catatonic state; later, Sarah and her roommate realize that the wall is scratched, and there is suspicion that Sarah might have done it in an effort to communicate, although the deed would have required a lot of physical strength. Later, Sarah finds herself in the middle of the night in a public phone booth in her pajamas, with no clue as to how she got there, which combines time loss with sleepwalking. Upon looking again at her watch, she realizes that only two minutes have passed despite her feeling that they have been twenty-five. She watches a documentary about "accidentally slipping into parallel universes" which have different timelines and perceptions of time (Eslyn, Carithers, Baena, Brie & Baena, 2020). One morning, she finds that her car is missing and reports it stolen, only to be called by Gary (her stepfather), the actual owner of the car, who tells her that it has been found somewhere else; as she goes there to retrieve it, she finds the wheel blocker on the right front seat, which probably means that she has driven there herself during one of her time loss instances. The time disorientation and sleepwalking could also suggest seizures, especially since Sarah starts suffering from nose bleeds, which intensify. Moreover, she starts hearing voices at night, which is strange since her roommate assures her that she and Brian were away at his place at the time.

Sarah starts having peculiar, vivid and recurrent dreams, in which she lies on a white floor together with others, who are aligned at a distance, and in which, when she moves her head to the right or left a strange sound can be heard. Stranger still is that she sees the same man over and over in her dream and then in real life, passing the store window. He gets in the car of a local-brand plumbing store; Sarah follows him and talks to him, with the thought of appealing to their services, as the voices she heard arguing at night were discussing the necessity of re-piping the apartment kitchen. Here, we realize that what initially seems a mental condition starts looking like a mysterious context as well. Of course, it is still possible, theoretically, that she may have seen the man and his store van before, and she has registered this information unconsciously, perhaps against the

background of knowing that she needed repairs in the flat. But it is unlikely, and there is no previous discussion with her roommate on such a topic.

Strange occurrences and coincidences pile up. Darren, Brian's friend brought as Sarah's date on her birthday, is named like the main character in *Purgatory*, which is one of the reasons why Sarah and he hit it off. The thread she made for the mare Willow and which she attaches to her mane is not there the next day; the caretaker apparently knows nothing about it, although he was present when Sarah put it on the horse. Brian's album is called The Baker's Dozen, and the girl Sarah visits (who fell from the horse Willow, which affected her neurologically leaving physical and mental scars, something Sarah feels responsible for) gets hired at a bakery. This girl compares the colour of the mare's mane to Darren's hair, after asking Sarah if she has a boyfriend. All these happenstances make us wonder if they could be more than the figments of a sick person's mind.

At the time when she visits a nose, ears and throat doctor for the bleeds, she makes a speech that really shows a worsening of her state. It is a turning point in how the viewer perceives the protagonist. If so far we have been inclined to give her the benefit of the doubt, i.e. to take her statements as potentially pointing to a mysterious but somehow still logical reality, it is in this conversation that we feel the line towards insanity has been crossed. Sarah oversteps the border of common sense. The statements that she makes are far-reaching. She has bruises on her body, and, even though the doctor conjectures that they may be the effect of a blood disorder, she has her own, very different theory: she believes that her dreams are real instances of alien abduction and testing, which explain the signs on her thighs and torso. She believes that she may be a clone that aliens use to get information from the planet, a "human thermometer" (*ibidem*). She tells her boyfriend that her DNANU test result is being delayed because the scientists cannot figure her out, since she is a replica of either her grandmother or mother, and her DNA is consequently very strange. Sarah also thinks that the clones somehow malfunction after some time or go haywire and need to be replaced. She gets this idea of the clones from the series that she is watching, *Purgatory*, which is permeated by such beings. She takes Darren to the cemetery and means to dig up her dead grandmother to prove that her DNA is a copy of that of her ancestor (because the doctor told her that, theoretically, this is how one checks for clones, by performing a comparative DNA analysis). She starts connecting and weaving all details in one psychotic story that becomes more and more complex, involving government conspiracy. The Satico satellite is in fact an invention of the aliens, which gave the technology to humans (just like in the case of the pyramid building) to be able to keep in touch with them and even control them. When Darren does not want to go along with the plan of digging the grave, Sarah becomes suspicious of him, accuses him of deceit and then asks, screaming, who he works for in spying on her; in a fit, she attacks him with the pair of scissors meant to be used to dig in the churchyard. Back at her apartment, she is fuming with the papyrus given her by the fortune teller, in order to chase away some mad spirit, while the radio is on, as electricity is needed to daunt maliciousness in the spirit. Sarah shows up at work naked and, as she picks up a call while Joan, her co-worker, calls the police, she realizes that she hears in the receiver a voice that utters everything that Joan says, but beforehand; consequently, Sarah believes she has gained the gift of premonition. All of Sarah's attitudes point to schizophrenia: psychosis, altered perceptions, hearing voices, believing in conspiracy

theories, the sensation of being taken, abducted and watched, the defamiliarization from her own body, estrangement, violent behaviour, anxiety, feeling that one can read the future/clairvoyance (Bhandari, 2020; Parekh, 2017).

4. The Uncanny Achieved through Spatial Imagery

As Sarah is put to bed at night in the support care facility where she has had an interview with a psychiatrist, a chain of strange and rapidly successive occurrences starts. Sarah seems to traverse odd spaces, which are not normally contiguous, in an equally anomalous manner, as if passing from a timeline to another or crossing parallel universes. This passage takes place through doors which seem to separate reality not only in the sense of a compartmentalization within the same world, but also in the sense of marking the boundaries between different worlds. At this point, we assume it is a dream, but it may also be a hallucination.

As the door to her facility room closes, it immediately opens again ajar, with a bright light emanating from the other side. Sarah gets out of the institution unhindered, but we see a different Sarah watching herself exit the front door from the window. The escaped Sarah goes to her home to find the girl in her dreams impersonating her roommate Nikki; scared, she takes refuge from this woman (who aggressively asks for explanations) to her room, barricading herself in. The same phenomenon of a bright light behind this door occurs, then she looks for another way out, pulling the curtains from the windows in order to open them. As a relevant detail, these curtains are in fact from the same peach cloth that the fortune teller who entered her shop liked and remarked positively on, saying that the colour functions as a protective charm. Indeed, orange is said to stimulate mental activity and, in heraldry, it symbolizes “strength and endurance” (Cerrato, 2012: 6). As Sarah gets out of the room through the window, she is in a backyard with yet another door leading to what looks like a basement. As she goes through it, she breaks into what we presume to be her shop and extracts the peach cloth, pulling it with her until she reaches her home. Here, she sews it into a costume for herself, also making a mantle with which she covers the mare, Willow, for protection – as she makes a stop on her way by the stables as well. We notice better the texture of the peach material, which seems to form countless compartments, like a honeycomb. Then, she passes by Ron’s house (the man in her dreams), whispering to him to wake him up from his sleep. Subsequent to crossing multiple stone corridors and going under various doorways which no longer look like any normal habitation quarters, she gets to Brian’s. While she makes love to him, he becomes another man, who then sews his own costume from the same cloth as hers. As Sarah looks up at him again, he disappears from the room (or was he never there?). As she cuts another piece of cloth placed on the carpet and separates the halves, another lit passage opens downwards in the floor, marked by plumbing pipes. She goes through it, and notices aliens whose hands work on human beings, who are lying down, as if a sewing machine’s needle would work a cloth, puncturing it countless times to put it into a finite garment. The scissor-and-needle-like claws of alien creatures seem to be what was causing her bruises. Climbing up after witnessing this process, she gets to the room of the differently-abled girl who had an accident falling off

Willow. Sarah falls asleep near her and wakes up in a mental institution bed, next to the girl from her dream, the one who was impersonating her roommate Nikki.

5. Beyond the Mental Illness Interpretation

Cloth and cloth pattern is a metaphor for the interconnectedness of bits which are, materially, threads, and, symbolically, details and events, i.e. clues and story threads that converge. Also, the symbol of the cloth points to an invisible, hidden meaning that we cannot grasp, which seems to evade us constantly, but which we feel to be there, holding together all the elements. We expect the bits of reality to fall into place and render a clear, comprehensive and all-inclusive interpretation in which all the bizarre phenomena will become logical. *The vortex made by the sewer in the sink or bathtub* points to the same thing. Depending on the perspective and degree or intensity with which this idea is considered, it may be interpreted as either spiritual feeling or schizophrenia.

The “*fabric is not working*” is Sarah’s conclusion when details in reality seem to connect but nevertheless do not add up as they are supposed to in order to create a coherent reality (Eslyn, Carithers, Baena, Brie & Baena, 2020). This is apparently a statement made in order to transmit the fact that the peach cloth, which Joan uses to cover her up when she makes an appearance at the shop naked, is not enough to either make Sarah feel less ashamed or protect her from harm. On a second level of interpretation, the peach material stands for the fabric of the reality that most people know, which is not sufficient to explain what is going on, to help her figure out things, as well as prove her beliefs before the others. In other words, the world as others know it is not enough to encompass Sarah’s experiences. Reality seems too poor to render what she has been perceiving. The peach fabric is only the canvas of this poorer world, but what she has gained access to is a more complex reality, which this world is merely part of.

The peach material appears in other instances in the story. As we have mentioned above, it is what the curtains in her room are made of, marking the alternative way out and, at the same time, the way that she is supposed to go next, as a clue to the right path, or the proverbial breadcrumbs in fairytales. Moreover, she pulls the cloth behind her, from the shop to her home (in the context in which the curtain fabric seems to become elastic and expand to accommodate this action) as if it were Ariadne’s ball thread (given to Theseus to find his way in the labyrinth which he entered in order to kill the Minotaur) (Augustyn, 2020). It is a thread that serves manifold purposes: it ensures account continuity and memory (read in this way as a narrative thread or the storyline), it constitutes evidence against insanity, linking the parallel worlds and in this way demonstrating that they unify somehow, and that Sarah’s identity is not completely shattered; it is also meant as a good luck charm and a means to prevent her from losing her way. It is ultimately a binder of worlds and of pieces of a person’s psyche. It functions as a hint of the old world, an element that keeps Sarah connected to it and which she takes with her in her exploration and trekking of unbeaten tracks and of new territory which she is trying to map.

The cutting of fabric that the movie begins with reveals its ultimate metaphorical interpretation. It becomes clear that it does not refer only to a destruction of the psyche, or the breaking to pieces and falling apart of a world or reality. It may, ambivalently, if we

accept the theory of plural worlds proposed to us, represent an enriching mode, a wider perception – provided we are prepared to give credit to the protagonist.

The moment Sarah gets to the psychiatric facility, the turn of events seems clear. She is openly acknowledged to have a problem, and she even realizes and admits to the interrogating doctor that what she is saying feels unnatural. Just as it appears that nothing could deter us from the medical problem lens, other elements come into play to counter it again, this time more forcefully.

It turns out that the girl who claims to be Nikki, who resembles the one in her recurrent dreams, and who Sarah wakes up next to from her long journey through various spaces, is an inmate in the facility, but they can remember the same things from their slumbers. Upon Sarah recounting her experiences, both of them realize that they have common memories (or common delusions). The girl has also seen the aliens and the white space in which these acted, as she recognizes details from it in Sarah's account, such as a lit ramp floating over water. This patient reluctantly admits to having fallen asleep in 1995 and then waking up in the present. Sarah shares with this girl her interpretation of events, which takes shape as she receives the new information: they are being abducted and made to jump the timelines simultaneously. In support of her theory, Sarah brings the detail of her grandmother's firm belief that she came from the future (for which the woman was institutionalized at the time); Sarah being the spitting image of the lady, the conclusion seems to be that she and her grandmother are one and the same person. Instead of being a clone of her predecessor, she is in fact her grandmother who escapes chronology and bends the time continuum.

As Sarah leaves the clinic, she makes herself a dress from the peach material that is just like the one her female ancestor wears in the photograph she keeps in her room, also arranging her hair in a likewise manner and taking Willow the mare to the outskirts of the city. Sarah passes with her horse by the shop window, and Joan gets the same glimpse at the horse's back that Sarah got in the beginning of the movie while at the shop – another detail that supports the chronology bending interpretation. As the woman and the horse reach a glade, Sarah lies to the ground and watches the sky; the perspective that we get of it is identical with the very first frame that the film starts with. The sky, the glimpse of the horseback and the heroine's physical resemblance with her grandmother render the idea of cyclicity and convergence. In the end, an alien ship lifts her up in the air.

In her book *Ariadne's Thread*, Mary E. Clark puts forth a bold and comprehensive outlook on reality from manifold points of view – cultural, historical, political, social and economic – always bearing in mind nature, biology and mentalities. Within it, she tackles upon modes of thinking and, pondering on the notion of causality as a natural human tendency to make sense of reality, she refers to the unsolved paradox of, on the one hand, the existence of predetermination, entailed by a primary cause (be it an omnipotent God or a given state of energy-matter accumulation), and, on the other hand, the validity of free will (Clark, 1989: 214-5). She goes on by comparing two world views: the Skinner box perspective, for which the underlying assumption is that a being merely reacts to conditions existing in the environment, so a determinist outlook (*ibidem*: 217), with Einstein's conjecture that we first invent forms/worlds, i.e. use our imagination to make constructs that are independent from reality as such, together with visions and interpretations of them, and

which may or may not exist or come into being, which is also a manifestation of free will (*ibidem*: 218). Clark goes on to say that our knowledge in general is of two types: fed to us by other people (which inherently and implicitly contains the notion of what cannot or could not be there in reality), and direct, through the senses (*ibidem*: 218-9). However, in the case of directly perceived things, the problem is that even this type of perception is programmed beforehand: we select and ignore, we pay attention only to what has significance, and what has significance or makes sense is already dictated by what the others feel and think; in other words, “Culture selects a world for us!” and a human being is a “cultural animal”, i.e. “much of the meaning and importance of our primary observations of the world are interpreted to us by others”, i.e. the first handedness of our experience of the world, or directness of perception, is questionable as well (*ibidem*: 219).

Perhaps what Sarah does in the film is to escape her condition of a cultural animal or the Skinner box determinism, or the knowledge that is already filtered by other people. In this light, what she does is exercise her free will, envisaging the possibility of another world, reading her encounters with alien beings as real, and all the signs she gets as clues of this broadened view and not of mental disorder.

6. Conclusions

The paper has started from the obviously insisted-on image of the cutting of a cloth at the beginning of the film as a metaphor for the decomposition of reality or human psyche. The study has investigated the initial interpretation of, apparently, a person who is gradually losing her mind, tracking the abnormal hints to an altered state of consciousness, seen as glitches in reality, and considered, initially, through the lens of mental insanity. However, we have then passed on to looking at them from another angle, in a more complex and intricate logic provided by the developments in the story, to reach an alternative interpretation of reality and of the protagonist’s transformation altogether. This analysis has meant to capture precisely this road from one decoding to the other, and offer them as two sides of the same coin.

In the process, we have also analysed both major metaphors, such as the cutting of the cloth, the idea of cloth/fabric/canvas, that of pattern, and the water draining from a sink or tub in a whirlpool, and the symbolical small details resorted to in the film at the beginning, such as those of making a choice between watercolours, DNANU testing, the Irish *Riverdance*, the horror series *Purgatory* and its fantasy world, and bracelets and anklets.

We notice that a recurrent and common theme to be found in several of the symbols above is weaving reality. The way in which reality can be weaved is implicit in most metaphorical objects and actions mentioned in this paper – cloth, the tailor business (with its cutting, and sewing using sewing-machines), the concept of patterns, the craft of making plaited string-formed objects – even in plumbing, which is weaving done with pipes. The fact that Sarah is a seamstress suggests her ability to decompose and compose/weave versions of reality.

The concept of reticence, in the light of the analysis that we have performed, may initially be read as a gap or break in reality – paralleled by the tailor’s cutting of the cloth. It

is the suspension of continuity, and, hence, the implicit emergence of a space of free-flowing imagination in which anything else, which has not yet been patterned, may come into being. This creative act is materially like that of a sewing lady patching together the pieces of cloth into some new raiment. Reticence is the difficult decision of whether Sarah's actions are to be read as the sign of her going mad or just heightened perception, i.e. the indefinite postponement of this interpretation, the vacillation between a definite answer on this. Here, we can also speak of another manifestation of reticence – to be read as rejection and fear – coming from various characters, including Sarah herself, in believing that what she experiences is real. Finally, reticence is Sarah's ultimate rebuff of the things learnt as a cultural animal and her embrace of an alternative universe.

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REPRESENTATIONS OF BETRAYAL AND HEROISM IN DISTINCT CULTURAL SPACES IN JOSEPH CONRAD'S NOVEL "LORD JIM"

Flavian PALADE *

Abstract: *The current paper is intended to analyse the course of the title character Lord Jim starting with his childhood ideals of becoming a naval officer and a hero, continuing with his act of betrayal that consists in abandoning the passengers of his ship called the Patna and ending with his honourable death as a consequence of his naivety of letting alive a group of pirates. The main character of the novel is presented going through various stages of his existence and facing numerous obstacles in his attempt of defining himself as a man and a real leader. In his process of evolution, he has to learn to accept his failures including the decommission of his officer's certificate which practically forces him to leave England and try to integrate into an extremely different society that is run by completely other rules and principles. But it is in that remote territory that Jim achieves people's recognition as well as he manages to reach a state of inner peace and regain his self-confidence.*

Keywords: *betrayal, heroism, cultural space, intercultural exchange, beliefs.*

Various forms of betrayal

Central to the novel's plot is the theme of betrayal which will largely be dealt with in the following lines of this paper. Jim is a young seaman who is strongly motivated by the desire of becoming a ship's captain because he dreams of "saving people from sinking ships, cutting away masts in a hurricane" and other memorable deeds. (Conrad, 1905:4) Thanks to his innate qualities and devotion to his goal, Jim is hired as a first mate on a steamer called the Patna which transports eight hundred pilgrims "of an exacting faith" to a port on the Red Sea. (Conrad, 1905:9) These pilgrims are Muslims who are on their way to Mecca. One night, the vessel hits something and begins taking on water. The captain together with other members of the crew decide to abandon the steamer and its passengers, thinking only about saving their own lives. By choosing his survival without caring about the other people's physical integrity, Jim betrays both his ethical code as an officer and his intimate personal convictions regarding his mission of committing heroic acts.

In spite of the poor weather conditions in the night of the above-mentioned incident, the passengers were rescued by the crew of a French navy ship and brought safely onto the shore. An official inquiry immediately begins and all the officers involved lose their right to sail. For Jim this decision represents an important landmark in his development because, on the one hand, he sees his career plans ruined, but on the other hand this event marks the beginning of a new stage in his existence. Being left without his officer's certificate is practically equal to his expulsion from his home country and this is perceived

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by the young seaman as the greatest humiliation ever possible. He feels estranged from his compatriots and considers that he has betrayed not only himself, but also the entire nation.

Being haunted by the fatidical Patna incident, Jim's destiny is strongly influenced by his encounter with the narrator of the story, a more experienced and wiser ship's captain, Charles Marlow. The latter proves to be sympathetic to the unfortunate state of Jim and perceiving him as "one of us" decides to help him obtain several jobs. The young seaman works as a ship chandler's clerk in ports of the East Indies but when the Patna's abandonment is mentioned he quits job. Then, Marlow realizes that the best way for Jim to continue his life is to go somewhere nobody is aware of his past. So with the aid of Stein, an expatriate trader, Jim occupies the position of manager of a remote trading post in the Far East territory of Patusan.

The theme of betrayal is brought again into the spotlight towards the end of the novel when Cornelius, the man Jim replaced as manager of the trading post and also step-father of Jewel, the young Englishman's lover, chooses to conspire with the fearsome pirate, Gentleman Brown in order to take revenge on Jim for considering him guilty of his decay. Jealous of Jim's success in leading the tribe that adopted him since his arrival in Patusan, the Bugis Malays and annoyed by his personal failures, Cornelius reveals to Brown the existence of a side channel and thus an ambush is prepared by the pirates so as to escape from the armed native people that were guarding them. During the fight, Dain Waris, Jim's best friend and son of the local chief of the Bugis is killed and the former British naval officer takes responsibility for Dain's death by consciously accepting his punishment which results in his own death. Jewel feels betrayed by Jim's decision of presenting himself to Dain's father and for not taking into consideration the consequences of this act. The half-Malay woman is devastated by the fact that she is left alone and she never manages to forgive Jim for his death.

Although Jim and the other members of the crew who betray the officer's ethical code by abandoning their ship in the middle of a storm are supposed to be part of a civilized society which is expected to possess high norms of morality and human dignity, their behaviour proves to be in no respect superior to that of people living in an isolated region in the Far East. This cruel reality demonstrates that acts of betrayal are not specific to less educated people and the lack of morality has become a generalized phenomenon which applies to all social categories. As a conclusion, it is worth mentioning that the occurrence of such cases of betrayal is not particularly influenced by the cultural space their protagonists come from and that is a matter of people's own conscience not to appeal to this kind of unfair conduct.

From cowardice to heroism

The theme of heroism has started playing an important role in the novel since its early beginning. In his childhood Jim was fond of reading sea adventure books which stimulated his imagination and desire of becoming one day a real hero. But his immaturity soon comes to surface when he is confronted for the first time in his life with a real danger. The young man's reaction is a deceiving one as he is not able to think clearly and his

judgment is altered by an inherent fear. Thus, his instinct of preservation proves to prevail making him forget about his heroic dreams.

In contrast to the cowardice exhibited while living with his fellow citizens, when he moves to a completely distinct cultural environment, Jim seems to be passing through a process of metamorphosis as he manages to convince the chiefs of the Bugis Malay tribe to attack the so-called “impregnable camp” of the bandit Sherif Ali who is known for stealing crops and resources from all the tribes in the region. The British sailor demonstrates a very well-thought military strategy as he takes his enemy by surprise and leads his men to victory putting an end to the tyranny of Ali and eventually bringing peace to the island of Patuan. Consequently to this act of bravery, the native people begin considering Jim an extraordinary being possessing supernatural powers and recognize him as their spiritual and administrative leader. (Gale, 2002)

By defeating the Bugis Malays’ greatest opponent faction and re-establishing order in that part of the world Jim gains the respect of the local people who call him “*Tuan*” or “*Lord*”. This accomplishment is of high importance for the Englishman not only from the point of view of his increasing popularity whose inherent material benefits are also significant, but also because it enables him to restore his self-esteem and have the feeling that he keeps being useful for the community. Hence, Jim’s childhood dreams of committing heroic deeds are no longer pure fantasy as they have started to come true.

In addition to the acts of heroism that have already been presented, it is worth emphasizing the sacrifice that Jim is capable of at the end of the novel. Due to his kindness, Jim refuses killing a group of pirates commanded by Brown, a low morality individual who is capable of any mischief in order to achieve his goals. Considering that even these despicable people deserve a second chance, the former officer states “that it would be best to let these whites and their followers go with their lives. It would be a small gift.”(Conrad, 1905:369) As Jim realizes that he fell into a trap by not sentencing the pirates to death, he maintains his sense of dignity and prefers remaining faithful to his code of beliefs by choosing to make himself accountable for Dain’s death rather than giving up to his honour like he did at first when his survival proved to be more important than anything else. Jim’s clear choice is best illustrated through the words of one of the Malays that stood around Dain’s body “He hath taken it upon his own head”. (ibid.390)

Taking into consideration the fact that Jim succeeds in fulfilling part of his heroic ideals in a remote territory, very far from his home country is what makes his achievements even more valuable. Jim arrives in the Far East as an outcast who no longer has a future inside his nation and whose last chance is to overcome all the forthcoming obstacles in order to make his way in life. Being acknowledged as a leader by the citizens of Patuan who fully trust his good intentions and rely on his impartiality in enforcing the justice, the English sailor demonstrates that sometimes an apparently hostile environment which is in many respects totally different of the typical European society can transform into a space favourable to personal development. It is in this distant part of the world that Jim comes to know himself better and define his personality as a mature individual.

Jim - a controversial representative of Imperialism

The main character of the novel, Jim is regarded, on the one hand, as “one of us”, meaning as a representative of imperial Britain, while on the other hand, he is depicted as a failure who abandons his duty as a seaman and causes the destruction of his best friend and of himself thus leading the Patusan territory to leaderlessness and deprivation whereas imperialism was represented as a Romantic idealism having a vision of a transformed earth in the travel and adventure accounts of the time. (Gale, 2002)

At the time when *Lord Jim* was written, Great Britain was a large colonial empire in full expansion which controlled vast territories from Africa, Asia and Latin America. Its dominance of a significant part of the world trade ensured its financial prosperity transforming it into the greatest economic power of the world. Britain’s increasing political influence in numerous regions around the globe at the end of the nineteenth century represented the confirmation of its clear supremacy on the international scene and its intention consisted in taking advantage of this status in order to exploit the natural resources located in certain parts of the world.

At the center of imperialism stood a doctrine that apparently promoted a process of civilizing the less-developed countries by means of sending educated and well-trained people from western Europe to distant regions of the world in order to popularize new cultural models and create there prosperous businesses whose goal was to ensure the financial stability of the local population. Although the previously mentioned aims were extremely noble, the real purpose of the European nations was to impose their will over the natives and exploit their workforce so as to obtain huge profits from the extraction of several precious metals or from trading various kinds of merchandise.

The theme of imperialism is largely dealt with in one of Conrad’s most prominent works, *Heart of Darkness*. This novella presents the way in which a typical European white man perceives the harsh reality of the African society. It also depicts the emotional impact that imperialist practices have over the narrator of the story, Charles Marlow, an Englishman who is appointed as captain of a steamer traveling up the Congo River. He is terribly impressed by the cruelty of the treatment applied by the agents of the Company collecting ivory from that part of the world to the indigenous population. Similar to the intercultural encounter described in *Heart of Darkness*, *Lord Jim* also has as a subject the relationship between a European white man and the Malay community.

Even in its externals, *Lord Jim* is more closely related to *Heart of Darkness* than is commonly supposed. Like its predecessor, it is concerned with the relationship between two men- Marlow, more experienced and subtler than the navigator of the Congo, but recognizably faithful to his maritime values, though with a fidelity tempered by experience; and the young naval officer Jim who recalls the character of Kurtz from *Heart of Darkness* in at least one significant respect: his failure to come up to the expectations he professes. In the latter work, however, Conrad makes a radical change: he shifts the emphasis from the narrator to the protagonist. Obviously, in *Heart of Darkness*, Marlow is placed into the spotlight being him the storyteller and the person whose feelings and reactions throughout the entire novella are the most eloquent for the reader to understand the specificity of the African culture. In *Lord Jim*, the title character plays the main part as the novel practically

revolves around his evolution from the moment of his abandonment of the Patna ship to the supreme sacrifice consciously acknowledged in the end. (Berthoud, 1978)

As previously mentioned, Jim and Kurtz are two men who share several traits of character. A parallel drawn between them shows that both project for themselves a future that never gets to turn into reality. They have high expectations concerning the way they are going to be perceived by their fellows being interested in becoming leaders of their communities and even more than that. They consider themselves to be capable of heroic deeds and strive to demonstrate they possess the necessary skills for putting that into practice. The fact they have been educated and lived in a prestigious society like the British one confers them a sort of superiority in comparison with the people encountered during their travels who in their vast majority are seen as irrational beings unable to distinguish between good and evil.

In *Heart of Darkness*, Kurtz is described as a very talented man and to this statement stand as a proof his artistic qualities among which are worth to be highlighted his abilities to sing, paint and above all his exceptional charisma which enables him to be accepted as the chief of a large mass of people. He is also a master of words and his writings are characterized by an eloquence that manages to alleviate their extremely controversial and often harsh message. Kurtz's initial voyage to Africa was motivated by his adventure spirit and philanthropic intentions such as "*humanizing, improving, instructing*" the native population. As it is generally known, power and especially power over other people can very easily corrupt someone and this is precisely what happened in the case of Kurtz. His inhumane and degrading treatment of the natives depicted throughout the novella betrays his obsession with collecting more ivory than all the other stations put together. In essence, his behaviour reflects the view of the Belgian Company which hired and sent him to that part of the world in order to represent their interests. Kurtz's lack of diplomacy and his refusal of using hypocritical methods of hiding the real intentions of the Company lead to his downfall. It is striking the transformation he suffers from the moment of his arrival in Congo when his main preoccupation was how to bring the "*light*" of civilization to that territory to the last moments of his existence when he believes that Europeans should "*Exterminate all the brutes*". (Conrad, 1988:52)

Although apparently both Kurtz and Jim are quite successful in their attempt of mastering cultural spaces that present a long series of particularities, overall they do not manage to meet their expectations and achieve the goals they had previously set. There also exists a difference regarding the moment the two characters are aware about their failure. Jim realizes that he is not capable of attaining his aims much earlier than Kurtz does. For the former the ship's abandonment represents the crucial point in his development as an individual. From that moment on he is constantly seeking redemption as he is going through a process of self-discovery that helps him to define his personality. Contrary to Jim's realization stands Kurtz's illusion of almightiness that drives him to a state of profound moral degradation which lasts almost up to his death. Only then he seems to become conscious of the gravity of his acts and starts repenting his sins. Taking into account all his actions he has been characterized as a "petty tyrant, a dying god, an embodiment of Europe and an assault on European values". Even though it would be easier to call Kurtz a morally

“sick” man, in fact he is considered to be “an exaggeration of the impulses harbored in the hearts of men everywhere”. (cliffsnotes.com)

An even more relevant difference between the two protagonists consists in Jim’s affiliation to the Merchant Navy. One of the main reasons of Kurtz’s failure in mastering the wilderness of Congo is considered to be his lack of training in “the unthinking and blessed stiffness before the outward and inward terrors” which is seen by Marlow as an essential condition of a successful sailor. On the other hand, Jim is obsessively referred to by the same Marlow as “one of us”, being initiated in the craft of the sea and consciously committed to its standards. In the light of this aspect, Lord Jim can be regarded as an advance on Heart of Darkness. This time the Merchant Navy itself is affected by errors committed by its own representatives and they do not take place any more in the middle of the jungle, but aboard of a ship. Consequently, Jim’s leave from the ship where he was a first mate results to be not only an act of failure, but an act of betrayal. (Conrad quoted in Berthoud, 1978:66)

Critical reactions to Conrad’s approach of Imperialism

The fact that the themes of imperialism and colonialism are reflected to a considerable extent in Conrad’s work has generated throughout the history various types of reactions coming from experts in the fields of international relations and postcolonial studies. Firstly, it is worth emphasizing that in the study called “An Image of Africa: Racism in Conrad’s Heart of Darkness”, the Nigerian novelist and professor Chinua Achebe states that Conrad contributed to the legitimization of European imperialism in Africa by providing “comforting myths”. Achebe goes on by naming Conrad a “thoroughgoing racist” because “he neglects to hint, clearly or adequately, at an alternative frame of reference by which we may judge the opinions and actions of his characters”. The former thinks the reason for which the English writer does not provide an alternative frame of reference is because “he could not imagine an Africa populated by human beings”. (Achebe quoted in Henthorne, 2000)

In his work called *Culture and Imperialism*, Edward Said, the reputed professor of English and comparative literature and a founder of the academic field of postcolonial studies claims that Achebe’s criticism is totally justified and “does not go far enough”. Said considers that Conrad “writes as a man in whom a Western view of the non-Western world is so ingrained as to blind him to other histories, other cultures, other aspirations”. He adds that “All Conrad can see is a world dominated by the Atlantic West...He could not understand that India, Africa, and South America also had lives and cultures with integrities not totally controlled by the gringo imperialists and reformers of the world”. (Said, 1993:277) This statement is intended to underline the Polish-British’s writer incapacity of perceiving other peoples’ customs and traditions as independent ones which were not introduced to those territories by any occidental power. He is also depicted as being unable to acknowledge the existence of a proper cultural identity in each of the regions he deals with in his writings.

Furthermore, Edward Said argues that

Conrad does not give us the sense that he could imagine a fully realized alternative to imperialism: the natives he wrote about in Africa, Asia, or America were incapable of independence, and because he seemed to imagine that European tutelage was a given, he could not foresee what would take place when it came to an end". (ibid.25)

The professor's analysis also alludes to Conrad's failure in imagining the native populations set free of the constraints imposed by the colonial empires. In this sense, an important accusation concerns the lack of solutions provided by the author in order to show that European tutelage is not the only way of governing and that it can be replaced by other means of running the previously mentioned parts of the world. Conrad does not seem to conceive how the natives could handle without being instructed in their actions as they are portrayed as mere slaves whose duty is to obey their masters represented by the white people.

Inspired by the publication of Chinua Achebe and Edward Said's biting commentaries regarding the ideas exposed in his books, several critics label Conrad as a racist and imperialist. A professor of English at Duke University, Marianna Torgovnick says that Joseph Conrad is widely perceived as a "Western demon" considering that "the only value in reading Conrad is to expose the rotten Western attitudes he articulates". As a reaction to this type of viewpoints, traditional literary critics, like Patrick Bratlinger, claim that Conrad was a racist but not an imperialist. Others state that he was neither racist nor imperialist. (Torgovnick quoted in Henthorne, 2000) There are also critics who persist in their conviction of treating Conrad as an anti-racist and anti-imperialist. In the essay known under the title of "Kipling and Conrad: The colonial fiction", John A. McClure "identifies Conrad's efforts to subvert racist stereotypes of subject peoples as the often disguised social project of Conrad's serious colonial fiction". To support his opinion, he brings into the spotlight the example of Conrad's treatment of Dain Maroola in *Almayer's Folly* which reveals "that the Malays' traditional precolonial culture was superior in important respects to that of modern Western civilization" and that by "acknowledging the influence of social forces on human character, Conrad implicitly rejects the racist theories of inherent differences and inferiority supported by many imperialists". (McClure, 1981)

In terms of the capacity of the natives described in Conrad's stories to become independent, when it comes to *Lord Jim*, McClure asserts that the inhabitants of Patusan "have lost their self-reliance", that "they have projected all their powers, all their faith, onto an alien master". (ibidem) They are considered to be unable of creating a society on their own forces and because of this they have started perceiving Jim as a providential man who is entitled to control their destinies. It appears that Conrad cannot imagine the natives ruling themselves according to a set of principles imposed by their own will and that is why he allows Jim to become a sort of spiritual mentor for them. In comparison with Edward Said who believes that the ending of *Lord Jim* is "deeply pessimistic" due to Conrad's imperialist prejudices, McClure argues that the unfortunate events in the end of the novel are used to symbolize the destructive nature of imperialism.

Conclusion

In spite of the wide gallery of characters and numerous events that occur throughout *Lord Jim*, the one that has the biggest impact on the plot still remains Jim's abandonment of the Patna. With reference to this incident, the novel is divided into two main parts: the first one deals with the immediate consequences of the protagonist's irresponsible act by presenting his attitude during the investigation initiated by the Court of Inquiry which is in charge of establishing the guilt of each of the crew's members and the second part that looks into Jim's endeavours of rehabilitating himself by starting a completely new life in a remote province situated in the Far East. The vast majority of the characters have an opinion about this event so the novel can be regarded as a collage of verdicts. The most influential perspective pertains to Marlow who pays a particular attention to his attempt of understanding Jim. This process also consists of two stages: in the first one, Marlow behaves more like a judge focusing on the gravity of the act of betrayal while later on he displays more imaginative sympathy, trying to show a friendlier attitude towards the main character. In each of these phases it appears to be a secondary figure that represents a certain aspect of Marlow's point of view. On the one hand, there is the "realistic" French lieutenant of the ship that managed to rescue the abandoned passengers of the Patna and on the other hand there is the German "romantic" Stein who is confident that Jim can overcome all the obstacles encountered in his path and this is why he deserves to be given the chance of demonstrating this into another social and cultural environment. (Berthoud, 1978:66)

It is worth emphasizing that Conrad's novels in general are characterised by a process of systematic patterning. This also applies to *Lord Jim* as the main character who betrays his officer's code of conduct is connected with three major father-figures who have succeeded in life. These are the Englishman Marlow, the French lieutenant and a successful German trader. According to the Swiss-born academic, Jacques Berthoud, "this structural regularity represents a determined attempt to achieve overall intellectual coherence". (ibid. 67)

To sum up, the present paper focuses on the initiatory route of a European white man from the time of his childhood heroic dreams to his evolution as an adult through multiple cultural spaces culminating with the final part of his life as a respected leader of a tribe in a distant corner of the Malay Archipelago and eventually with his death that comes as a punishment for his kindness in treating a group of pirates. Throughout this journey of self-discovery, the themes of betrayal and heroism are prevalent and their occurrence in various instances regardless of the level of civilization of the respective society demonstrates that they are not innate traits of character, but they depend on each individual's capacity of discerning between good and evil. Imperialism also represents an important topic in the context of Jim's departure to the Far East so as to be named the manager of a trading post that belongs to a company which does commerce in that part of the world. Under the appearance of a fair economic enterprise the material goods and consequently the native population of Patusan are exploited by the Europeans.

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MULLER'S "ATEMSCHAUKELE" ("THE HUNGER ANGEL") BETWEEN CASSANDRA AND LAZARUS: A NARRATIVE OF SILENCE COFFINED IN A BROKEN GRAMOPHONE

Basma Hosney Ahmed SALEH *

Abstract: *Totalitarian regimes whether before, during or after the wars had and will always have their megaphoned commanding tone which devours the individual voices, liquidating them, and under their heating pressure, suppression and violence digest them, thus finally breathing them out in a form of ascending vapor, oblivious of the fact that in their attempt to fashion a political and economic monopoly in which the individual is nothing but a shadow, they have unconsciously and unwillingly elevated it to the collective level where even though temporally suffocating, it is sure to come to voice its deadly experience with the second turn of history. In a counter allegorical literary fashion of the totalitarian regimes, Herta Muller together with Leo Auberg representative of Oskar Pastior has managed to double wrap her hero in allegorical silence, leading the reader steadfastly in a mythological narrative of Leo dressed in Lazarus visiting the land of the dead humans in the Russian concentration camp, accompanied by the hunger angel and his heart shovel, digging in the dark recess of humanity, tilling the collective memory just to resurface the dead images so that they may have another chance of voicing their story. This paper is intended to trace Muller's attempt to give both voice and image to the defaced identity of humanity in the character of Leo Auberg, to allow this no-word land to breathe out its absence in a twilight world of myth, image, and narrative in a desperate attempt to contain the predatory totalitarian and material ideology, to coffin it to the memory of humanity so that it can find its final destination where it raises a mast of the shipwreck. The paper makes use of three basic elements: allegory, the angel of history as both a picture and a concept used by Walter Benjamin and the Jungian psychology of the self. These three tools will be used to voice the painful silence coffined and buried in each individual suppressed self and mirrored in his defaced identity.*

Keywords: *allegory, angel of history, the totalitarian systems, Jungian process of individuation, dialectics, ideology.*

In a similar fashion to Klein's painting "Angelus Novus" which depicts the angel of history about to leave something he is contemplating; the past he is deeply tied to, while his wings and feet are blocked by a blowing storm from paradise; the progressive wind of the future (Barglow 1), Leo Auberg is packing his gramophone suitcase and departing his home town. Unlike the angel of history, Leo doesn't yearn to the past he is dropping behind. He is escaping it as a hungry place eager to devour its inhabitants. It is a fearful place where even stones have starving eyes (Atemschaukele,1). It is a strange type of hunger; one of identification. To the reader's surprise, the situation is turned into a bargain where Leo willingly gives up his identity "I simply wanted to go to a place that didn't know who I was" (1) and nature is, as the rest of the novel shows, more than willing to receive it.

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Ignorant and foolish as he is, he can't perceive the idea that what is left behind is on its way to meet him midway in a megaphoned collective identity he is all the time muting in the concentration camp of a gramophone turned into a suitcase. Muller's *Atemschaukel* is a process of individuation in which both the author and her hero are trying to elude the clutches of any totalitarian system, whether it be a political, social, natural and most essential linguistic, by confining them all in a world of silence, of interior monologue where the self is devastated to discover that it has succeeded only in creating a typical image of the totalitarian system with one minor change: now it plays the dictator in disguise, a defaced identity for the reader to conceive what it would be like to live your own death in a fascist regime. In his discussion of working through the totalitarian past, Adorno warned that "the organizational power of totalitarian systems imposes some of its nature upon its adversaries" ("The Meaning" 94).

The present research is intended to trace both Muller's and Leo's journey of individuation which is evident to be not a personal but a collective one of humanity. It is an archetypal journey that turns into a unique piece of art at Muller's and Leo's hands. When asked about his new job in the factory, deadening labour under the ground, Leo responds: "Every shift is a piece of art" (*Atemschaukel* 81). This journey's particularity lies in its being one of living death. In a dream which visits Leo on his way to the camp, and the novel abounds with dreams which Muller captures on their way to be a reality, he finds himself in a cemetery with his mother before a freshly dug grave in which there is a plant with a bud in the form of a suitcase. His mother asks him to bring a piece of chalk which, to his surprise, he discovers he already has, to write that Ruht rests there. Leo comments that he realizes that he is already dead. This is the essence of *Atemschaukel*; a swinging movement between Muller's prediction of mutated humanity under a totalitarian regime, a Cassandra with her deep penetrating eye into the conceptual mind of humanity and the deep recess of the psyche in pain, and a disappointment at the discovery that the total self she tries to rescue artistically is nothing but a resurrected Lazarus, dump and defaced, the same way Leo ends at the end of the novel.

From the very beginning, the reader is introduced to a journey of initiation to the world of the dead, of Hades in which both the author together with her hero are deliberately deconstructing the familiar world of language, something which is symbolically referred to in Leo's and the mother's transformation of the gramophone into a suitcase. Inside the pigskin suitcase, he coffins remaining items of the surrounding environment in the form of clothes, books, and toilet kit. He divides these into two types of possessions: things he carries on and others that accompany him. This classification indicates that these constituents of his confined self are partly a burden and a painful load and partly friends of real help. These two conclusions lead the reader to imagine that the world Leo is departing is only condensed into clothes taken from others he is supposed to wear as different identities in the dead world of the camp, but the ideas of the people themselves are left behind" kept their thoughts to themselves"(1), books full of conceptual theories of Zarathustra, Faust, Weinheber and volumes of poems, the books themselves are going to be sold for food in the camp, and a toilet kit reminding the reader of the camp barber, the shadowy part of Leo's character and who is going to be his informant of the deportees 'news after they leave the camp.

Now let's see how he comments on the scene "And I took what was offered-leather gaiters with laces, knickers, the coat with velvet collar- even though none of it was right for me. Because this wasn't about clothes, but about the time that had been set in motion, about growing up"(3).This quotation makes it quite clear that he is aware of the journey set with the packing process. He is just like every one of his age accumulating superficial identities in the wardrobe of his memory. Here, the question is: does a dead man need clothes? The logical answer is no, but Leo and behind him Muller in a counter-strategy to the totalitarian regime is allegorically stripping the world of its superficial language. This is a typical attitude of a teenager who opposes the world to establish his own identity. In a deconstructive manner, Muller is using youth phase which is traditionally associated with the birth of character and a blooming future of a coming life to signify the beginning of death which is imagined to be a stagnant phase but turns out to be a process in which she and her hero strip everything of its traditional natural identity, of its natural sound and sap of life, wrapping it as hollow in a silent coffin for others to see in terms of a miracle of the totalitarian system that has managed to create a world of silent hollow men. This is the essence of allegory which usually flourishes in deteriorating conditions in which people have despaired of finding a solution to their nightmare life (Morss 168). See how allegory has managed to turn a death scene into a beautiful artistic image Muller shows in Leo's thoughts" strangely, the orach isn't really beautiful until it begins to change color, long after it ceases to be edible", then he adds" I never knew whether the orach should be reproached for being inedible, for turning woody and refusing to cooperate" (8). Artistically speaking, allegory works by emptying things of their filling matter, thus involving them involuntary and permanently into a state of hunger willing to be filled with whatever the dominant dictator wishes, simply because such filling provides a pseudo feeling of life. Throughout the novel, Leo, with the help of Muller, is making use of this strategy, and this is one of the reasons behind the difficulty of reading the novel and of deciphering its enigma.

With the help of allegory, Muller teaches Leo as well as the reader one of the basic principles which he conceives as fundamental as silence in the allegorical world of the dead:" Absolute zero is that which can't be expressed" (133). This simply means that before death, the language of understanding stands helpless and useless because even if you understand, there is nothing you can do except to step from the world of the dead like Lazarus and to show the second fundamental principle that the emergency exchange and the linguistic world constitutive of our being is only a temporal" visitor from the other side" when seen side by side with the original permanent world of silent camp. This is the lesson Leo learns after he is back at home.

By now I've realized that what's written on my treasures is THERE I STAY. That the camp let me go only to create the space it needed to grow inside my head. Since I came back, my treasures no longer have a sign that says I WAS THERE. What's written on my treasures is THERE I 'M STUCK. The camp stretches on and on, bigger and bigger, from my left temple to my right (148).

The quotation directs the attention to the idea that the allegorical strategy of emptying is a principal fact of life through which time in the form of experiences dig its way into our identities, turning them into tunnels for competing and conflicting desires, struggling to get out to be married to the linguistic world of words, thus gaining a sort of identification and

external recognition. But the totalitarian world of the camp with its enforced silence, recalling the silence Muller herself has suffered, has turned the process outside in, in the sense that it is the internal dead world of desire which has magnetically attracted the external flying words in as a cosmic black hole does. Consequently, the reader is frequently reminded of Prometheus Leo who describes himself all the time as a thief and of Muller who constantly refers to the fact that language “turns you in” (Beiber 13).

Muller delivers the same idea in Leo’s allegorical description of the dead hungry world the totalitarian regime has created and which paradoxically keeps accusing its victims of being thieves, while the shocking reality testifies to the opposite: “The cement and the hunger are accomplices. Hunger pulls open your pores and crawls in. Once it is inside, the cement seals them back shut, and there you are” (Atemschkaue 15). Cement used in construction is, as Leo says, the thief because it robs them, their identities, and not the other way round. The totalitarian system is establishing its identity by crushing the individual identities of the deportees, transforming them from private individuals into numbered labourers (10). This transformation from material bodies of flesh and blood into abstract numbers isn’t allegorical, but a real one of losing the flesh to the extent that their bones become a heavy burden pulled down to the ground where the coffins of silence and death are waiting, and are forced psychologically to forget themselves as a defense mechanism to the absolute pain of the totalitarian invasion of the self: “I practiced forgetting myself during the roll call to the point where I couldn’t tell breathing out from breathing in”(9).

This blunt and slow assassination process of defeated selves is directly tied to the orders of one mouth which marks the same stamp of the construction site: Stalin “Stalin’s cheekbones and voice may have been made of steel, but his mustache was pure cement” (16). Stalin’s voice turns into action embodied into a construction site of a cemetery, an eternal residence receiving the dead bodies and empty skulls. Here, the reader is reminded of how totalitarianism is a linguistic project, an air surrounding the suppressed, robbing their souls as Muller believes (Bradatan, 2). This leads to the third principle which is as fundamental as silence in the camp “Perimeters run deep” (133). The regime is all-surrounding and no way to escape, no wonder that Leo associates cement with homesickness. The camp is some sort of eternal time and permanent place, the same way one feels about his home, but it also huddles hell inside similar to the burning yearning you have for your home. This is Leo’s treasure in which his whole life is stuck. Moreover, the idea of deep perimeters also brings to mind how Stalin’s system has managed to create a fastening ideology that runs deep in people’s lives on the one hand and gives determination and steadfastness to its leaders on the other (Solzhenitsyn 119).

Imprisoned in this encircling camp of death, Leo’s breath keeps swinging between the totalitarian world of the blazing sun which keeps pushing his deformed self to work with the excuse that there is no time, and the crooked reddish” half-moon self, already setting” long before he joins the camp, the guilty silent self of a homosexual. Now it seems that the perimeter of the camp also runs deep in time to the extent that it defaced him long before he steps in. Does this mean that he is psychologically predisposed for this fateful unity with the collective self of his age?! Or it is just a natural deviated regression to the collective unconscious to pick from its archetypes what sustains Leo a sort of strange silent life in

death? The answer to these questions requires a meticulous tracing of his individuation process.

In her Ph.D. thesis entitled "From Injury to Silence", Pavlo Shopin has been trying to prove that Muller's strange metaphors which appear to follow an inconceivable and inconsistent line of thought, when analyzed in light of modern linguistic theories of conceptual metaphor, are evident to be coherent since they take the physical world as their source domain and build their target domain of silence as its parallel shadow (10). If the whole thing of conceptual metaphor stops at this, it will be quite easy to see literary language as a mere reflection of the surrounding physical environment, but when remembering that this reflection is controlled both consciously and unconsciously by the mechanism of both the mind and the human psyche which all the time work as editors and censors, we are in a better position to see how difficult to mark and trace this reflection. Added to this is that the world of speech is just like a light produced by the speaker to show something and falling on the eye of the listener who understands, in the sense that it is a bi-collaborative process trying to limit and to control the light of speech to reach communication, but that of silence is different. Muller's and Leo's world is a vast hollow space in which words are dispersed in what Muller calls a "vicious circle" (Banmasche, 103). The image recalls the Babel Tower and the dispersal of languages because humanity transgressed the safeguarding line separating them from divinity (Gen 11. 9), a fact Muller has been careful to hint in *Faust* being among the books Leo carries in his suitcase and which has another translation on the sexual level in terms of homosexuality he is plagued with. This transgression has its megaphoned image in Leo's destination: the camp with its totalitarian fascist and dictator system in which one is controlling many, or as Leo states it as one of the five fundamentals of the camp "Inside the camp, we- form is singular" (133).

If this is the case if what Muller presents to the reader in several words and images flying in the vicious circles of hollow men, how is the reader supposed to connect these inconceivable patterns to be fathomed by the mind and for their basic defaced lineaments to remain glaring in his memory?! The answer necessitates a concentration process similar to the camp experience for the solid facts to drop to the bottom. This is what Muller achieves once it sends Leo to the boiling pot of the camp where humanity is exposed to its zero degrees of dignity. Once there, he is qualified to work as Lazarus starting a journey of initiation to a very special world that lies on the verge between life and death, between language as a symbolic system and the dead world of material nature, where his swinging breath keeps mingling the two realms to create a unique shadowy world of speaking silence. The mechanism of this shadowy silent world follows the emergency principle of exchange between language and matter where language lends its signifying function to matter in return for its essence to give life to its absence. But what does this exactly mean concerning Leo? It simply indicates that the individuation process long explored by Carl Gustave Jung and other psychologists divided into phases, each of which has its embodiment in specific character will inhabit the physiological organs of speech, or to be more accurate will pass through his organs of speech, same way air does to formulate the psychological makeup of his defaced identity and his silent speech. The resulting language is similar to that of dreams and no need to remind the reader that Muller is occasionally presenting them to the reader as an anticipation strategy for what comes next.

Now, it is time to see the magical reality of these conceptional mechanisms in Leo's character. In Jungian psychology, the human psyche is composed of four basic parts: the self, anima and animus, shadow, and wise old man. If we conceptualize the psyche in terms of a circle, same way linguistics sees a word as a circle and let us remember that man is conceived religiously in terms of a word, the self is the nucleus and the external sphere (Jung et al, *Man and his Symbols*, 161). From Jung's point of view, the self includes all the other parts exactly like a seed that latently contains the coming plant, hence the difficulty of explaining it. It is nothing to be seen as an atom, but again it is everything. The self is responsible for organizing all the experiences of the psyche, that is why Jung says that one can claim it to be "the inventor, organizer, and source of dream images" (161). Moreover, he makes it clear that this creative aspect of the psyche can come into play only when the ego gives up its wishes and try to get deeper into the basic form of existence (162). The camp conditions have provided Leo with the perfect environment for such experience with the zero degrees of the human psyche. This sphered DNA which is both the seed of the personality and the total of its life experiences has led Leo to imagine himself in terms of a piano. He has been given the name in the park among his homosexual partners. The idea that he is a piano and not a pianist hints at the loss of control over the totality of his self, he is only a musical instrument for the others to play. At the end of the novel and in a chapter entitled *I'm still the piano*, he says: "The eye hunger says: You are THE PIANO. Yes, I say, the piano that no longer plays." (148). Immediately after, and in the concluding chapter "*On Treasures*" in which he speaks of the self, not in terms of a name, the piano, but in terms of several treasured experiences, he operates the exchanging emergency principle learned in the camp and turns his audio identity of the piano into its corresponding physiological organ "I WAS THERE was what Tur Prikulitsch claimed should be written on treasures. My Adam's apple bobbed up and down under my chin as though I'd swallowed my elbow. The barber said: We're still there. That's five coming after nine for you." (148). Leo's treasures constitutive of his identity and his self is embodied materially in Adam's apple, one metaphor uniting personal voice with the collective one of humanity and reminding the reader of the damned apple tree. Muller brilliantly ends this silent speech enigmatically with five coming after nine to remind the reader that if nine denotes a pregnancy process ending with life, five, that's the span of the camp experience is heading to death sphere. At the bottom of the page, he speaks of treasures as memories, thus again wrapping his self in silent language, but the voice of this language points at a defaced contradictory identity

I've been using them {memories} for over sixty years. They are weak and pushy, intimate and disgusting, forgetful and vindictive, worn and new. . . When I list them, I start to stumble.

My proud inferiority

My grumbled fear- wishes.

My reluctant haste, I jump from zero all the way to a hundred.

. . .

My steep-sided hollowness, I'm spooned out, hard-pressed on the outside and empty on the inside ever since I no longer have to go hungry.

My lateral transparency, that I fall apart by going inward (149).

Leo's deep atomic self knows no moderation; it is either nothing" zero" or everything" hundred", proud inferiority as he says. The voice of his Adamic apple is either total silence or it is the whole universe personifying itself through the dead materiality they lend the physiological makeup of his throat, thus producing a hasty speech. This fluctuation of the self is a kind of lateral burden, dividing his circular being into two adjacent halves; and while one of them is identifying itself with the oppressing dictator in a form of a tomb, the other is the oppressed corpse of silent Lazarus. This unique environment of the self has its special day and night. While suffering from working with cement and being accused all the time of stealing it, Leo holds a piece of cement paper and writes in capital magnified letters, relating what is written to the Alder Park partners who are all referred to in capital letters as animals

SUN HIGH IN THE HAZE

YELLOW CORN, NO TIME

Followed by a declaration that he wanted to write something quite different

Deep and crooked and lurking reddish

The half-moon stands in the sky

Already setting.

The self's day is dominated by a warning sun, threatening of disappearance, thus forcing the corn to haste its steps, while its heavy night of silence reminds the corpse that it is already setting. The two conflicting parts of the self are pulling it apart, one is pushing it forwards to catch the sun of life, to identify with it as one of its rays" yellow corn", but the lagging part reminds it that there is no hurry and that the blazing sun behind the haze is no more than a lurking opaque half body of an already setting moon. This oscillation in the speed of movement is what constitutes the beating dead heart of Leo as Lazarus. Muller delivers the same idea in her chapter entitled "Exciting Times" in which Leo speaks of his begging experiences in a Russian village and his encountering of a saleswoman checking her head for lice and listening to the gramophone" I recognized the melody from the radio back home" (23). Immediately after, he speaks of his experience with physical education lessons, of how he was a chubby boy, that is why he was sent to private gymnastic lessons in which he proved to be a total failure. In a strange twist, he returns to the world of the camp and to the officer's belief that physical education strengthens the heart" And in our hearts the heart of the Soviet Socialist Republics. Fusskulture steals the strength of the working class" (23). Collective material movement imposed by the sun of the totalitarian regime which tries to unite the individual hearts in the collective heart of Russia is taking away the strength of their life, collapsing their physical existence, leaving even no space between the corpse and the tomb for a pseudo-life of dead silence. It is as if the collective self is crouching on the individual dead self. Muller subtly reflects the idea orthographically in leaving no empty separating spaces among words constituting a sentence signifying death as she does in declaring the death of Irma Pfeifer "onedroptoomuchhappiness" (30).

The same idea of marrying the individual and collective selves, thus forming a strange death environment for the self, is repeated in Muller's image of the cuckoo clock she introduces in her chapter "On the Phantom Pain of the Cuckoo clock". The cuckoo clock is hung on the wall of the camp above the bucket of water they drink from. As Leo mentions, none knows how it gets there and it belongs to none but the barrack, the wall, and the nail it

is hung on. First, he reckons the non-functional status of it to measure time, in the sense that it announces time incorrectly and they depend on the anthem to do so. Second, Muller moves with her hero to describe the clock in a particular way to establish a hidden latent similarity between its parts and Leo's psychological self. The clock has a cuckoo fixed by a handle on a door. When it strikes, the handle is supposed to open the door set between two cones, thus allowing the bird to get out, animating it to sing the time. Someone tore the handle out of the clock, so when the clock strikes, the door opens partly, and instead of the cuckoo "all that came out of the housing was a small piece of rubber, like an earthworm" (45). So far, the reader is introduced to a dysfunctional means of measuring time, setting it in motion, an image that recalls the image of the saint carrying the sheep around his neck and the alcove beside him on which is written: "HEAVEN SETS TIME IN MOTION" (2). Leo comments on the image he sees in the church he enters on his way back from the Alder Park "I saw the time that was coming" (2). The forbidden freedom Leo has stolen in his rendezvous results into a corresponding religious image of a sinful man still having faith in redemption in the image of the carried sheep around the saint's neck. Until redemption takes place, the act is a heavy silence around the linguistic wall of the neck in a form of a half-circle; an animal, non-porous one to be sure, thus denying him his due frontal free space for speech. This is the torn hand that kills the cuckoo-notice that it is the one bird said to see angels-turning it into soulless rubber of an earthworm eating his voice up. The ticking it produces only lulls the mind to sleep and creates of his movement a creeping motion in which the massive stolen freedom keeps pushing the frontal silence. Interestingly the image of the self in the form of an earthworm has been reflected upon by Leo himself when describing his childhood playing with other boys, with their arms interlocked in the form of a worm. Therefore, his childhood experiences are intensified in the camp, revealing his identity as an earthworm, a reptile belonging to the world of the dead, and feeding upon them. Indeed, this is what the fascist regime has led Leo to; a creature whose life is based upon the compulsive movement of dead matter producing a silent language; one of the shadowy images. listen to how he describes himself in the concluding paragraph "What I like best of all is sitting at my little white Formica table, one meter long and one meter wide, a square. When the clock tower sticks half-past two, the sun falls into the room. The shadow on the floor from my little table is a gramophone suitcase. It plays the daphne song or the pleated Paloma" (149).

The squaring of the circle is a sign that the individuation process is complete. Leo's self and the world are complete, unfortunately, it is a shadowy one of a non-working gramophone suitcase. It is the shadow of the table on which his blueprint lies. At least he has managed to draw with compulsive movement what his Adam's apple with its torn cord couldn't give voice to, thus reminding the reader of Muller Noble's speech "What can't be said, can be written" (Punitha,16).

Among the phases of the individuation process is the confrontation with the opposite sex-anima /us in the unconscious which is always projected on real characters or objects. They are functional complexes concerned with the adaptation to the inner world of the unconscious. For Jung, the anima/us should be conceived of as a bridge or a door leading to images of the collective unconscious (Stein 117). In *Psychological Types*, Jung explains how the anima/us refer to those feelings, thoughts, sensations, and dim stirring

which flow on us not from any conscious experiences but well up from the dark inner depth of the archetypes (qtd in Jung's Map of The Soul 118). So, to trace Leo's individuation we should stop at this stage which again, and due to the defacement imposed by the fascist regime experienced in the camp, will have its peculiarity. First, we should consider Leo's view of their gender status under the dominance of the hunger angel

In the trinity of skin, bones, and brown water, men and women lose all difference and lose all sexual drive. Of course, you go on saying HE or SHE but that's merely a grammatical holdover. Half-starved humans are neither masculine nor feminine but genderless, like objects (75).

Leo's commentary, when set side by side with the fact that he has practiced sex with both genders as the novel denotes, should logically lead to the fact that unlike normal characters, Leo should encounter both the anima and the animus of his unconscious because the personal unconscious of his personality and collective one he gets in touch with once he steps into the camp have created of him a bisexual Tiresias. Recalling the first analogy of the self in terms of a center embodied in Adam's apple and a perimeter of a neck carrying the silent burden of homosexual past, now with the exploration of both the unconscious anima and animus, we are just adding the two vocal cords through which the paper explores the silent language of both Leo and the communist community. According to Jung, there are four phases of the anima and similar corresponding four stages of the animus. The anima is a personification of the feminine psychological tendencies in man's psyche: moods, irritations, feeling to nature, capacity for love. Usually, the anima is early shaped by the mother (Jung et al. 178). Similarly, the animus is influenced by the father figure. In their first stage, the anima is just Eve, a physical female and so does the animus who exposes physical power and athletic appearance. Leo refers to this phase in speaking of how his mother used to take sunbathes at the roof of their house and mentions a neighbor following her with his binoculars. On discovering this, the father brings a hammer and smashes the binoculars. Sarcastically, Leo describes his father doing the same thing in gym classes

In these exciting times, my father photographed girl gymnasts.... He had even purchased a Leica to do so. And he became a Sunday hunter. On Mondays, I'd watch him skin the hares he had shot. Stretched out without their fur, stiff and tinged with blue, the hares looked like they Saxon gymnast girls at the barre (24).

In a linguistic switch, Leo has managed to dress his father in a hunter who with his Leica runs after gymnast girls as if they were hares, killing them with his lustful camera, drying their pelts and selling them to a "reddish-blond Jew". Hares are always associated with moon deities and they are a symbol of procreation and speed, but they also signify impatience. All of these characteristics apply to Leo's mother, but Leo is careful to stress the last one. So, with the first stage of the anima or Eve embodied in the mother and the animus as an epitome of physical strength, Muller is referring indirectly to the dysfunctional family pattern as Roxana Ivasca says (153). Leo remembers how his mother used to

call down to the courtyard where I was playing: If you don't come right away, if I have to call you one more time, you can just stay where you are. But I didn't always come right away and once, when 'I finally went upstairs, she said: why don't you just pack your satchel and go into the world . . . She pulled me into my room, grabbed my

woolen cap and my jacket, and stuffed them in my little backpack. I said, but I'm your child, where am I supposed to go (3).

This unnoticed silent and hasty movement of impatience which recalls the setting of time by the alcove is contrasted not only with the arresting movement of the hunter or the laggard one of the son, but also with the torturing and stretching one of Tur Prikulitsch The capo in the camp. Prikulitsch used to keep them standing for hours in the roll call. So, Muller has managed to create a silent conversation between the physical anima and animus in terms of time movement. The hasty movement of the hare mother running under the blazing sun reminds Leo that there is no time and he has to leave to another place, while the slow arresting movement of the physical animus forces him to forget himself as he says to pass the time." I practiced forgetting myself during the roll call, to the point where I couldn't tell breathing out from breathing in" (9). The same strain of movement marks the steps of the hunger angel who when hunger is most, jumps to the cheeks in a form of a hare and when it is still within control leads Leo to the stretched fields of the imagination where he used the watercolours of his father to draw a vast field In which he eats slowly even the smoke of his imagination. The contrast between the two has left its emblem on his gramophone suitcase which he is careful to mention in a pseudo-sexual manner that he keeps its dog facing its horn.

Leo's physical building as a chubby boy gives the impression that he is more inclined towards the father's position. Moreover, the progress of the novel shows that he will be involved in chasing and hunting dogs out of hunger but ending without eating them. This last observation transfers the reader to the second phase of the animus as a planner, a silent intellectual activity he is evident to practice all the time: planning to convince his partner to eat the dog, planning to drink Paul Gast's wife's soup, even planning to deceive hunger angel. In a tiny chapter entitled "I have a plan" Leo plans to deceive the scales of hunger angel if the latter comes to weigh him "I will be just as light as my saved bread. as just hard to bite. I tell myself, it's a short plan with long life" (112).

The beautiful face of Helen reflected on Bea Zakel is the parallel anima with the planner. She always drifts her eyes to the side because this makes her more striking. The strain between the hasty and slow movements of Adam and Eve has its silent resonance in the play memories of Leo and Bea Zankel. She recounts how she used to play the horse for tur Prikulitsch in her town and he in turn speaks of playing the millipede with other boys. Jung observes that encountering the anima or animus makes you more self-conscious of yourself. Leo comments on Bea's beauty that it makes him more self-conscious. Franze says "Whenever a man's logical mind is incapable of discerning facts that are hidden in his unconscious, the anima helps him to dig them out. Even more vital is the role that the anima plays in putting a man's mind in tune with the right inner values" (Jung et al 180). On her part, she is more aware of life's laws and states that you are what you play. This is a law. Suddenly and with determination, she decides to revolt, stating that she isn't a horse and Leo isn't a millipede. Now as Franze says, Bea is setting Leo's tune to a certain tune length, working as a mediator, thus helping him to discover himself. Bea reminds him that he has to be punished for his play, for this is the unbroken law of life. This absolute law forms an invisible pre-planned web that will be seen over and over again in the novel. Leo summarizes the idea in a book his father presents him as a Christmas gift. In *Physics and*

You, Leo discovers this plan in what is called Minkowski's wire. According to this wire, everyone and everything has a time and a place and a reason for being. It moves with a wire fixed at the head. The reels spin at sixteen frames per second. This simply means that every person or object is both a particle and a wave, thus recalling Jung's notion of the self as an atom and a full entity. Moreover, the waves imply, as Leo says, the idea that you can be simultaneously in two places and two different shapes. These circles are interlocked, consequently, in a sense, they constitute rippling currents, shared spaces, or places of memory as Kiss says (2).

In addition to her beauty which unites her to Helen of Troy and which controls Leo's conscious planned steps in the camp, Bea marks a sort of conflict between material and ethical values, a war between two contradictory forces which has left its mark on Bea's body form as described by Leo "Her shoulders were narrow, her arms thin as sticks. But her hips and backside were impressive, a powerful foundation of hefty bones. With her delicate torso and massive lower body, Bea Zakel looked as if she'd been put together out of two different women" (86). Once more this problematic contradiction is reflected in her social and authorial status in the camp. She is Tur Prikulitsch's mistress, that is why she is privileged over the others in work and facilities, nonetheless, she wants to be like the others rather than be humiliated at his hands. This war- evoking the beauty of Helen in Bea occupying a midway position between the oppressor and the victim will be responsible for teaching Leo the basic language of the camp world: dialectic materialism. In the absence of absolute beauty or truth, the basic code to decipher this full-of-contradiction world is dialectical materialism; a ceaseless movement of exchanging positions between material elements. It is a crooked zigzag strategy Muller symbolically hints at once she refers to how Trudi's braid is the one thing that saves her from the gazing mountains in her village. In another context, Leo speaks of Katy Sentry's braid which helps her to sleep in the barrack, even when cut because of lice, she keeps stretching her hand as to clutch it to sleep. This is the emergency language taught in the camp which Muller herself is employing all the time with the different elements of her artistic world. Once used to it, Leo will feel estranged at home where everything has a stable meaning and value. The same dialectical language will leave its stamp in his last dream in which he exchanges position in time with his brother; in the sense that he becomes as young as his brother, while the latter is as old as Leo. This dialectical reversal of positions in time is intended to grant Leo the imaginary world of children with his shoes that don't reach the ground, but it, and at the same time, makes the responsibility of material salvation his brother's, who is depicted fetching a piece of gypsum ceiling to his shoulder.

This contradiction stressed in Bea's body and peculiar status throws its shadow back on the Eve stage to see in a sort of one of Leo's flashback memories how together with his mother as Eve they suffered from a lust for food. Speaking of their vacation in the country, Leo says "on that day we could eat whatever we wanted and as much as we wanted" (55). In finding 10 rubles in the market, he kept buying food and eating till his stomach couldn't stand this load and finally, he vomited all he had eaten, and for the second time, he realized that hunger in the camp was best for him, maybe a punishment too for gluttony. Consequently, he states that Fenya who is responsible for distributing bread in tiny ratios that are not enough to sustain their bodies knows what is best for him (67). Therefore,

Leo is heading towards a realization that the camp with its deadly hunger is what suits an avid like himself. Emptiness inside is necessary to extend a space not only for inner silent speech but more important to endow him with a space of inner freedom. Moreover, as Dr. Chitra says, it is this traumatic hunger which has led Leo to knock the doors of imagination, to learn to eat smoke or smell just to survive death, in a sense, it is his path to imaginative redemption (711).

The extension of an inner free room, the result of long fasting, leads the reader's mind to the third modified image of Eve in Mary accompanied by Leo the son dressed in the third image of the animus; the word or the eloquent speaker. Spiritual Mary is embodied in Paul Gast's wife whose husband is tormenting to death by eating her allotted amount of bread and soup, but just like Zakaria who is visiting Mary carrying food, Heidrun Gast confides Leo and other campmates and tells them of a mysterious man, a German prisoner of the war, always passing and throwing her a small potato. The last potato thrown to Heidrun was a small one, and the man didn't show up as usual in the sense that she didn't see him from the hole up in the garage. Late in the evening, she bit off the thread and found that the potato had been sliced in the middle and a piece of cloth was put in between in which certain incomprehensible words were written and signed ERMAN. The rest of the message was eaten by the starch of the potato. Later in the yard, she found a fire in which she threw the cloth, toasted the two halves, and ate them. She ended her story by saying that she probably ate part of the message and since then the potato man didn't show up and she was sure that he didn't die "I realized that I ate a message, she told us, and that was sixty - one day ago. I know he didn't go home and I'm sure he didn't die; he was still healthy. He just vanished from the face of the earth, she said, like the potato in my mouth. I miss him" (110).

This scene is one of both real and linguistic materiality used to feed a sort of false spirituality characteristic of a defaced Mary in the form of Heidrun. From the very beginning of Heidrun's story, Muller has been intent on relating the whole thing to Christmas. Leo starts his story of the Gaston couple by expressing his amazement and surprise to discover that the Christmas wire tree he made last year has been kept by Paul Gast the lawyer in his suitcase and now he surprises them that he can afford to decorate it with pieces of bread they know that he has stolen from his wife. Then, Muller takes another step towards hinting at the idea of defaced spiritual humanity in describing Heidrun's face "She already had the dead monkey face, the slit mouth running from one ear to the other, and the white hair in the hollows of her cheeks" (109). So the religious and archetypal idea of a spiritual Mary transferring her sacredness to Christ, God's word, as one whole spiritual family tree is falsified in Heidrun with her pseudo-spiritual aura imposed by hunger created by the fascist regime dragging Heidrun to Coffin-like garage under the ground where the earthly world above the ground turns into pseudo heaven raining not only food but also the incomprehensible message which the false Mary has nothing to do but swallow it as a grace. In a subtle gesture, Muller relates the Minkowski's wire with its sixteen frames mentioned in the previous chapter to the story taking place, as she mentioned, sixty-one days ago; the reversed number of waves is the span of her story under the ground. This false imposed hollow hunger seen as spirituality is sure to have its offspring in the parallel animus belonging to the same stage. Surprisingly and after advising Heidrun to drink her soup, Leo

starts having it all for himself, thus playing the merciless husband. Consequently, Muller entitles the chapter: "Once my hunger angel was a lawyer". Muller's exploration of the subject hasn't stopped at this stage. She takes a further step and throws a similar pseudo-spirituality in concluding the story in an abstract causal principle that relates all characters in a false Christian word confined in silent materiality summarized in one sentence "they couldn't help it" because this is "the way of the world". In an endless abstract chain of cause and effect, Leo, assumingly an eloquent lawyer, defends not only himself, but all those who have contributed to Heidrun's death "The naked truth is that Paul Gast the lawyer stole his wife's soup out of her bowl until she could no longer get out of bed and died because she couldn't help it, just like he stole her soup because his hunger couldn't help it...just like the winter couldn't help being icy cold and the coat couldn't help being so warm...That was the way the world: because each person couldn't help it, no one could"(115). The whole world is some interrelated frames uniting people in terms of a pseudo predestined divine chain of cause and effect and grace is something to be mysteriously donated like potatoes and not labouriously obtained. This trend of thinking has been previously implied by Muller in the first chapter in the picture of the saint carrying the sheep indicating that grace is guaranteed from the beginning for the sinner. Heidrun Gaston is a symbol of false imposed spirituality confined in a garage under the ground, imagining those above to be in heaven and giving birth to a dead word entwining a barren logic of truth.

The manipulated image of Mary and Christ is always seen in all the scenes gathering Leo and his mother, the crescent Moon Madonna, especially the one in which Muller directs the attention to a topsy-turvy world of pretended spirituality entitled "Sky below earth above". In this chapter, Muller introduces the reader to the assumed spiritual world of Leo and his mother where Mother Eve is playing Sophia and teaching her son the extracted wisdom of contemplation: everything is made of earth and heaven and that the sky is so vast because there is a coat for every human and the earth is so big. After all, the world's toes are far away, so far that you feel hollow (98). Muller is careful to disclose the falsity of the pretended spirituality first with the inverted placement of heaven and earth, second by giving the gesture that the mother has pulled the collar of her jacket till it is the collar's lips, not the mother's that contemplatively utter the one lesson of life. The collar is just another image of the sinful sheep indicating shameful silence. Third, the description of the landscape doesn't set heaven below unless Muller is referring to both Uncle Herman and aunt Luia; the two wooden benches the mother is sitting on and the position of Leo who is lying at his mother's feet on the ground. Such positioning makes of the wooden benches heaven for the mother but not for Leo. Consequently, the spiritual heaven spoken of is a natural one gaining this assumed sacredness because man personifies it. This result is stressed once Leo insists on his materialistic thinking and poses the question "Are Uncle Herman and Aunt Luia a couple. If wood gets married, then yes" (98).

The previous scene has paved the way for the fourth stage of Sophia on the anima's level and meaning on the animus' one. The motto or the wisdom of the stage is that to evade being caught, you have to be a watchdog and never leave a trace behind and again the silence is the hero of the stage, but how?! Muller, at Trudi Belikan's tongue, states that the Russian language has got cold (45), one of the enigmatic sentences the reader comes across, though none of the attendants expresses his bewilderment at it, as if they all know what it

means. The diagnosis is of course related to the cold Russian environment, but more significant is the state of the sick with cold: he can't breathe easily and his voice is hoarse as if imprisoned in. The first female character to complain of snow and to accuse it of betrayal is Trudi Pelikan; the Romanian woman belonging to Leo's village. On the cattle cart to Russia, Leo describes her as a lady smelling of peach even after spending three or four hours in the cart. She is wearing a coat with brown fur at the sleeves and sometimes she crosses her hands, so the two sleeves meet and she looks like a dog. She recounts how she kept hiding in a hole in the neighbour's garden and her mother brings her food daily. Once the snow falls, her mother stopped coming because the snow kept the footsteps and "that it immediately sided with the Russians. The snow betrayed me, said Trudi Pelikan, that's why I'm here." (6). The cold-hearted Russians are just like their characteristic snowy environment. They never forget that the Romanians are partly responsible for the destruction they are living in, this is the main reason for their deportation. Consequently, it is logical as well as a wise strategy to erase this painful memory, but the fact is that painful memories are hard to find their way to oblivion as the song women sing in the train

The daphne's blooming in the wood
 The ditches still have snow
 The letter that you sent to me
 Has filled my heart with woe (6).

Therefore, the silent strategy the anima and the animus will count on is to disappear from the Russian world with its catching guides of deportation and memory; words that keep Leo and his mates as targets (117). This disappearance strategy depends upon complete submission of the body or the material part to this senseless Russian environment while feeling in the case of Pelican, mind in Kati Sentry's and the artistic imaginative world of collage poetry or of cut and paste in the case of Leo are the means towards which their breath is heading for life to counterbalance the dead Russian steppes.

In psychology and old alchemy, the squaring of the circle is indicating that the individuation process is getting to its end, here the anima and animus are in their final destination to assumed wisdom and meaning. Trudi Pelican starts working in the camp by dragging a large trapezoidal wooden box filled with lime on wheels. The geometric shape shows imbalance implying that the practiced wisdom is just like spirituality in the preceding phase has something faulty. The flies attacked the pupil of her eyes and mouth, she stumbled and the wagon rolled over her toes. Later on, and because of bacteria and microbes, they had to be cut. Consequently, in dancing in the barrack hall, she danced on her heels, stating that they can no longer walk. All they can do is to dance because dancing is done to previously harmonized sounds played by the dead land of the Russians. Leo says "the music makes death alive, he locks arms with you and sways to the rhythm" (71). So, it seems that Trudi has learned how to submit her body to the music of the deadening music of cold Russia and what is more is that her toes which may leave traces are cut, while her heels leave only holes in the ground, holes that accompany the holes she tells Leo about during the dance in a secret silent world of pain. She discloses to him how the dead bodies in the camp are shovelled over with snow till they froze, then the gravediggers chop them into pieces, so they don't have to dig whole graves, only holes. So how is she supposed to escape presence in this ugly world? The answer is provided once Leo gets a fever and she tells him

to start closing his eyes as she does and register presence in a world of dreams. She dreams of an American handsome and rich man to love her and get her out of the camp. It seems that she keeps swinging between the two worlds of painful reality and rose dreams as a survival mechanism that leaves no traces against her. By the end of the novel, she appears once more when Leo is on his way to see the church with its saint image. She is walking with the help of a cane and tries to avoid speaking to him by leaning down and pretending to fix the lace of her shoes, thus escaping presence into silent absence. She has paid the material labour of the body in return for the freedom of feeling and imagination and her swinging breath, the dominant image of the whole novel keeps fluttering between the two worlds, exactly like Leo's. Immediately before encountering Trudi, Muller presents Leo seeing a fat boy feeding the pigeons dahlias in the street. He wonders how after discovering that what they eat isn't bread, they come back and eat. This is the case of both Trudi and Leo whose feelings and imagination have discovered how painful the camp experience is, the traces on their body is a testimony, nonetheless, they need to keep the memory because their other world of imagination is feeding now not on the physical labour but on the memory of it. But the fact remains that both the fat boy and Trudi have diverted Leo's attention from going to the church and instead Leo, the meaningful animus, drowned with rain is driven to a shop to buy a lined notebook to write down the camp experience. There a cat comes from under the curtain

came up to me and nuzzled my pants as if it knew me . . . I picked it up, it weighed practically nothing. This isn't a cat at all, I told myself, it is just grey – stripped boredom that's grown fur, the patience of fear on a narrow street. . . its nose was leathery and rounded like a heel. . . The cat jumped to the ground. The cat jumped without making a sound and landed like a scrap of cloth. The cat was empty on the inside (142).

Muller throws words like heel, empty, boredom, the patience of fear to create a direct connection between Trudi and the cat and to draw the attention that once the material labour at the camp which Trudi used to feed her imaginative world on stops, Trudi, like the cat, is empty inside and the same applies to Leo. Emptiness causes boredom and suffocation. Consequently, he resorts to the material orthographic recording of the experience as a substitute for labour to feed the imagination. So his breath keeps swinging between the two worlds providing him with life. This swinging is what constitutes Muller's own poetological concept of the invented experience that works without the restraints of logic or linearity (Kiss 86). After writing the first chapter, and in an identification moment of false wisdom, Leo reminds himself that "I really ought to grow a trapezoidal beard so no one in town will know who I am (143). Distortion of personality is becoming a habit for Leo to erase any trace, so none can identify him.

Earlier than Trudi, Leo has extracted the equation which he sets as fundamental as the silence that one shovel load equals one -gram bread. His heart shovel becomes his master and deep inside he divides labour between the lungs so that one breathes the cold painful Russian air in and the other entombs it in external silence that could only be heard either in personified nature or in cut and displaced memory. In a passage in which he is trying to explain how he has turned out to be indifferent, and in case there is some painful feeling is attacking, homesickness, for example, he resorts to collage memory

I'm always telling myself I don't have many feelings...When I do allow myself a feeling, I take the part that hurts and bandages it up with a story that doesn't cry, that doesn't dwell on homesickness. For example, one about chestnuts and how they smell "and he adds "Then my mind would no longer be home to people, only objects. Then I could simply shove them back and forth across the place where it hurts, [then].... they are finite (93).

This insane reciprocating strategy is first a mental silent one, but second and more important is that it empties things of their vitality and vigour till they dry and die the more he shovels "as we shove our feet when we dance the Paloma". Death and emptiness lie on both sides the object of memory and the remembering one, but the ruins on both sides witness a birth of a new insane world in which all objects enjoy illogical ciphered relations to frustrate any tracing mentality.

This last statement creates of Kati Sentry, the mentally retard female the perfect external embodiment of the strategy adopted by the wise anima and the meaningful animus. She is a mentally retard, but Muller has managed to make her an example of successful accommodation to the camp. As Leo testifies, Tur Prekulitsch fails to drill her to his orders. She keeps moving from one barrack to the other, sleeping when and where she wants. Unlike the rest, she doesn't have to beg for food because she could eat everything, even the excrement of dogs. Loved by everyone and cared for by them all, she is quite at ease as a pet at home. Meeting her while eating black ants, he asks her about what she is doing and she answers that she is making gloves. In a sense, she eats the painful material humiliating conditions and uses them to make something that helps her to elude any tracing attempt: gloves. Her questions and answers may seem unrelated or irrelevant, but considering the escape strategy aforementioned, they are deeply significant. For example, she asks when the war will end and Leo answers that it has already ended two years ago, but the fact is that what they are living and experiencing doesn't lead to this. Consequently, Leo comments "She didn't have to invent illusions because her mind wasn't in the camp, to begin with. The way she behaved didn't conform to the camp regulations, but it did fit the circumstances. There was something elemental about her that we envied" (48). When the accordion player Konrad Fonn tries to deceive her by exchanging a piece of wood for her bread, they don't allow him because she is living and there is a limit to what they could do to the living. In a moment Muller describes as a bright one, Kati identifies Leo as Latzi; the name of her brother. When Leo objects that his name is Leo, she responds that this is his name at home, but here in the camp, he is Latzi. Surprisingly and absurdly, Leo accepts the identification seeing in it a bright moment of connecting different waves of different entities all living on each other's blood that animates their inner silent worlds "Such a bright moment, I thought, there's even a louse-a Laus- inside the name, since Latzi comes from Ladislaus" (121).

So far, we have been following Leo's process of individuation in its two first diachronic stages of the self and the anima and the animus, tracing the distortion left by the communist and fascist regime on his face, and behind him, the collective face of humanity that might be subject to similar circumstances, in the following part, the paper traces the two other stages which, out of their horizontal line of association, it is more suitable to label the synchronic phases of the shadow and the wise old man.

In *Man and His Symbol*, Von Franze sets the basic characteristics of the shadow. The shadow is a sort of criticism of the ego springing from the unconscious. Usually, it

appears in a personified form in man's dreams either in a figure of the same sex or of the opposite, but when it takes the form of the opposite sex, it is less annoying. It represents certain attributes of the ego that need to be assimilated, usually rejected ones, that's why they are projected on other characters. It shows face in gossip when we hate in the other what is actually non identified attributes of our own. It is also subject to collective infection, sources outside the individual self. When faced with the shadow, the result is embarrassing silence, then a painful process of self- education "a work we might say, that is the psychological equivalent to the labour of Hercules. This unfortunate hero's first task, you'll remember, was to clean up in one day the Augean Stables, in which hundreds of cattle had dropped their dung for many decades" (168). This last note dresses the man confronting his shadow in Christ, who in Christianity is believed to take the burden of humanity as a whole upon his shoulders. This is psychologically justifiable since as Franz has just explained, the shadow is subjected to collective influences.

Searching for Leo's shadow among the debris of humanity presented in *Atemschaukel*, the reader is presented with three passageways to this hidden part even to Leo himself and again they are all wrapped in silence: dreams, reveries, and memories. These three worlds constitute parallel transparent worlds in which Leo's shadow is revealed, but they are not articulated until they are traced in their ever-widening circles in Leo's Minkwiski's world. That way and only that way they acquire timbre and aroma. Through these worlds, Leo is operating a triadic analysis of himself before, during, and after the camp experience. Six dreams are presented to the reader throughout the novel, in which Leo's shadow is sometimes identified with objects, figures of the opposite sex, and collective factors. The first of these dreams is the one that visits him in his train journey to Russia and in which he declares himself dead in an empty grave in which a flower grows in a suitcase and on which he should write, following the orders of his mum "RUHT". Here the mother stands for the strict part of Leo's character who sees the deportation as a punishment for his sinful sexual acts and which comes in the dream to announce its verdict that the sinful social body should be deprived of a social environment. Muller subtly hints at the idea in awaking Leo from the dream to the voice of a man wearing a coat with a flying bird on each silver button, an albatross, and a cross turning into an anchor when he leaned closer. The scene recalls Coleridge's "The Rime of The Ancient Mariner":

Ah! Well - a day! What evil
Looks
Had I from old and young,
Instead of the cross, the Albatross
About my neck.

The lines show that what seems from Leo's strict point of view as a mercy in the form of punishment purifying him will turn out to be a curse. Leo will never be spiritually saved for if he is being punished for his sexual transgression by being banished from his homeland, and despite the inhuman conditions he lives in, he will return to his sinful actions once he is outside the camp. The idea is intensified in his memories when waking up in the camp to find some mice in his pillow. He is very happy and proud as a father for the mice has chosen his pillow to live in, but then memory works backward and he remembers the

kitty he finds in their washing room and how he presses with fingers on her belly, things take a different turn. She scratches him, so he keeps pressing until she dies. After his return and in the shop where he is buying a notebook, he meets another cat, a very feeble and hollow one, he pushes its head away. In the camp, strictness, and let's remember that he declares that he loves strict people when referring to his admiration of Bea, is turned into fear and horror and shame forcing him to accept and to accommodate himself with nasty things, to be sympathetic to the mice as a symbol of fear, thus the camp experience is a worldly anchor and not a genuinely spiritual one.

This identified strictness foreshadows another defect that both Leo's character and the collective identity of his people share: the absence of physical and intellectual integrity. They are living in circles of hunger, physical and intellectual as if the Albatross has caused them a bottomless ebb, a vicious circle as Muller says about language and words. This idea is reflected in Leo's second dream where his shadow finds its identification in the white pig carrying him in the sky and the hunger angel showing his land in a scene of ownerless sheep and ownerless suitcase. The pig stands for lack of feeling characteristic of Leo, something he confesses. Lack of feeling is a result of social isolation Muller hints at concerning her home town where silence looms over everything, but in the camp it is forced upon the deportees, transforming them into pigs and sheep feeding upon every nasty object and fed upon by lice and bedbugs, incapable of right thinking and considering every abstract order that lifts their animal hunger into the higher world of abstract language a kind angel that relieves them by donating them a buff of human life. In the dream, the helpless Leo riding his shadowy numb feeling and hungry materiality; "the pig" over a parallel world of inanimate objects "suitcases" and animals, "sheep" and asking his hunger angel what he should do. The angel advises him to ride back, but he says if he does, he'll die, the latter promises him an easy death. He fulfils his promise. In the third dream, again his shadow finds identification in the pig and the angel, but now the downward parallel scene disappears, and he asks who switches his country. The angel answers that it is America.

America is the symbol of consuming material and pseudo-spiritual civilization that will receive the fallen land of dictatorship and fascism. When asking about the people, the angel keeps silent. Here, Muller is anticipating the result of the strict dictator systems to be followed, if released, into purely material barren civilization, the same way the deportees, once given money, spend it all on food and clothes. Painful strict and inhuman experiences have built material buildings in Russia, but have failed to teach the deportees one spiritual lesson. In *Marxism and Form*, Jameson says that historical periods facing terror, just like a dictatorship we have in *Atemshaukel*, are usually followed by periods of sensuous gratification whose basic passageway is the eye (316).

The dream is repeated thrice and Leo is given no answer to where his people have gone. Albert Gion sends Leo to Zither Lommer to interpret the dream. He shakes thirteen white beans and turns them out and begin to investigate them. Lommer speaks of a carriage in which there is a baby. So, Leo hasn't received an answer to his question, but Lommer, following the cut and paste strategy of Leo, has set a baby in the empty space of people. Here Muller is leading the reader towards discovering a new shadowy aspect of Leo's unconscious: gullibility and skepticism. The insatiable material and intellectual hunger make Leo and his likes victims to Zither Lommer who reads their destiny out of dried beans,

out of traces, the same way Tur and the Russian officers tried to read the reasons behind Leo's secret possession of two bottles of cabbage soup in his suitcase. The sarcastic thing is that Leo himself doesn't know why he has done so. The irony of the situation is that the fascist system is investigating the hidden unconscious of people, and all they can discover is an image of themselves and their strategies confined in the deep recess of the victim's unconscious and his attempt to comply with the oppressor just to gain life: a witness that he is the product of their own hands. In describing how hunger identified in cabbage soup has resulted in hollow men, Leo says "Cabbage soup was our main food, but it mainly took the meat from our bones and sanity from our minds" (75).

These ratty identities with their dowdy minds and selves will receive their shadowy identification in his next dream in Aunt Fini. In order to understand the significance of the dream, we have to relate it back to the beginning of the chapter where Leo is assigned the task of cleaning a basin coated with the pitch in the middle of a blazing sun, an image recalling Franz's of a man encountering his shadow and indulging in heroic labour of cleaning the dung of other animals. He describes the black dust coming out in terms of black organza" The air shimmered like an organza cape made of glass dust" (79). As Trudi Pelikan explained, he had daylight poisoning, slept for three days, during which he dreamt of being at home with Aunt Fini in a white organza dress, holding a curling iron she uses with her own hair. Then she combed his hair with her finger after using her spit to slick down his cowlick. In the preceding chapter, he claimed that his hair had just "been clipped on account of lice" (78). The hunger imposed upon their identities, had, like lice, not only eating their lives, but more important transformed them into porous identities like organza. In the dream, Aunt Fini accompanied Leo to the outside to get daisies for the breakfast table, but there she was attacked with locust and Leo struggled under her dress to throw it away "They are cold and heavy like wet screws. They pinch, I feel afraid . . . under the organza dress was the first time I ever had to shovel in desperation" (80).

Previously Leo has stated that one shovel equals one bread gram as one of the fundamental principles like silence in the camp. The statement is of fruitful shovelling which depends on loading and unloading, exchanging movement between the opposite worlds of fullness and emptiness, of presence and absence, of day and night, of man and woman, but now he shovels between similar porous identities. this is why it is a desperate shovelling, a barren exchange. The image of the locust has biblical connotations in the Egyptian plague divinely sent as a punishment for the dictator pharaoh assuming rivalry with God. Religious faith is based upon a similar exchanging process between the divine and the human domains, a shovelling between different spheres, but the dictator policy whether it be pharaonic, fascist, communist, etc, is between similar porous, lacking and hungry domains, no wonder that Leo is homosexual for the superstructure "the dress" is only an image of the base "working in the basin". The dream itself has sexual connotations exactly like Leo's different jobs with different guys under the ground in cellars and factory boilers.

Throughout the final part of the novel, and after his return, he indulges in reveries in which he imagines himself encountering campmates, but the one thing dominant in those imaginary meetings is that he is all the time pretending indifference and behind it is his deep desire not to be identified. The reader is once more reminded that he has originally left with

the same hidden drive, so the mind is involuntarily led to a comparison between the two states which work like punctuation marks setting the beginning and the end of his individuation process. Before the camp experience, Leo's anticipated rejection of recognition springs from the shameful sexual deviation, the world of Alder Park where he identifies all his mates as animals written in capital letters HARE, CAT, GULL as if identified by bodies, an inferior status to humanity to be sure. After the camp, resistance to identification which he practices even in reveries doesn't emerge from hidden shame, but rather from a violent rejection of life itself, because he is already dead. In speaking of his dead grandfather, he says "He died of kidney failure the summer after my third peace, but unlike me, he stayed with the dead" (137). This justifies his nervousness and unease whenever his grandmother or his little brother Robert asks him "Are you back?" "Are you leaving?". Each time they ask, a violent desire to squeeze the child's neck comes to the fore, but what prevents him is the disabler.

With the disabler, the reader is introduced to the last identification of Leo's shadow which appears in his final dream. In this dream, he sits with his grandmother on a velvet couch, and in a chair beside them sits his brother. Strange as it is, Leo is as young as his brother, while Robert is as old as Leo. Robert stands on the chair and stretches his hands to get part of the ceiling stucco, only to set it around Leo's and the grandmother's shoulders like a white shawl. Leo puts it off, but grandmother puts it back. The mother asks them to smile so the father can have a photo for them before she dies. Leo's eyes are attentive to how short his legs are. they don't reach the floor. The resemblance between the dream and the first image seen in the church at the very beginning of the novel is obvious, except for one thing: Leo dressed in the saint is having the stucco instead of the sheep around his neck, but for what? And more why is he presented as too young while his brother in his shape is as old as Leo should be? This is the working of the last shadowy identification of Leo: the violent and destructive disabler. The camp experience hasn't only killed his feeling and distracted his mind, but it has turned him into a Medusa of a certain type. His eye is always in the habit of displacing things out of their environment, the same thing his little brother does, that's why he comments that the disabler is working at home while he is out. So, in a way, he is killing them, then using the remains as a coffin, a shawl signalling, not redemption, but degradation to a lower level of existence; the ceiling stucco replacing the sheep. His Medusa eye has split his identity in two, the same way he split the steppe dog's head and listening to his dying breath "hase"- "vey", same way Tur Preklutsch, the capo was found killed after release and the news reached Leo in a letter, the same way he imagines his father doing to hares in shooting them as he shoots their photograph. Recalling Leo's false wise animus: this is the hard truth of life; none can't help it. This is a journey of death between the two split halves of one identity, merely two exists, and in between is *Atemschaukel*; a swinging breath of hunger. This is Muller's vision of life under the dictator regime; Cassandra's fateful prediction.

There remains the fourth and the last phase of the journey, the wise old man whose wisdom should grant this dead breath a sort of shadowy life in memory; a miracle of resurrected Lazarus; an image of the dead enjoying a secret silent life. It is a silent ancestral soul passing from the grandmother's mouth "I know you will come back" to the handkerchief the Russian villager gives Leo, to the milk he drinks under fever" And every

day I hope its effect will protect me for a full month. I don't dare say it but I say it nevertheless: I hope the fresh milk is the unknown sister of my white handkerchief and the flowing version of my grandmother's wish. I know you'll come back" (91).

The idea of the wise old man is delivered both on the thematic and the technical levels by Muller and presented naturally to Leo in the regressive conditions of the camp. The forced labour camp that pays nothing to the deportees, where nothingness here should be interpreted on economic and existential levels, has forced them to follow the primitive strategy of bartering or exchange system. They exchange work for food, cool for salt, but more important is that they exchange meanings and with the lives of different sorts. Human beings are driven to abandon life, just for the inanimate things to absorb it and to constitute a coded hidden world of meaning, a well of wisdom that runs deep from the totalitarian system. This is why everyday objects takes on extreme significance: crusts of bread, lumps of coal, shovels, as Pervez says, life revolves around them (1). With the help of dialectic materialism, Muller has managed to braid the loss of meaning and the broken human relations with their counterpart material world pregnant with hidden wisdom. The idea is enigmatically and in a surrealist manner set before the reader in braids of Katy Sentry to which she clutches to support her and deliver her an easy sleep and the similar braid of Trudi Leo describes and comments ambivalently upon that it was what protected Trudi from the invading look of mountains. In another context, Leo refers to another secret life that moves secretly from cloth to cloth, secret veins nurturing a latent life with meaning. These same veins are seen clearly in his grandmother's hands, those transparent running cells of blood carrying the breath of life: "I know you will be back". Just like these words which have managed to cross the boundaries of time and despair, dialectics which stitch one partition of life to another, a technique Muller proves to be an expert in, one negative photo to its positive counterpart, succeeds to unveil the deep penetrating wisdom.

Muller's unfolding of the individuation journey of Leo and behind him the collective one of the Romanians has succeeded in using the aesthetic frame of the novel, in which she uses allegory and collage techniques to encode the psychological, physical, moral and political conditions of any totalitarian rule, thus she has managed to offer not only a substitute for the absence of any official ownership critics like Eron Kiss have complained of, but also a literary testimony of ethic mediation of this period of the Romanian history(79). Indeed, as Kiss testifies, Muller has phenomenalized the historical experience in collective and individual forms to counteract the fading or repetitive construction of the experience (82).

Atemschaudel, with all the emotional pain experienced in reading its subtly interwoven images, reminding us of Leo's mother with its weaving balls, and its intellectual agony involved in disentangling the latent silent intellectual cognition, has marvellously snatched, in a heroic Prometheus-like manner, from communism something that is our own, something completely human, individual but collective. In her speech to the Nobel prize, she says "Literature speaks with everyone individually- it is a personal property that stays inside our heads. And nothing speaks to us as forcibly as a book which expects nothing in return, other than we think and feel. considers" (Brandit and Glajar,1).

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WHAT CAN'T BE SAID CAN BE WRITTEN: THE REPRESENTATION OF SILENCE IN HERTA MÜLLER'S VISUAL TEXTS

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Abstract. *What is going on? How can silence be said, and be a source of meaning? Silence is defined as a complete absence of sound, an absence of information, or even a temporal limitation of speech. Silence is not a failure of language to communicate. When people get short of words, feelings, safe space, or even want to flee from punishment, they choose to keep silent. Yet, silence could be a smart tactic to cross borders, to personify agony, and to engage others' imagination. Silence can open up new contexts and reveal hidden feelings in an unprecedented manner. The oeuvre of the Romanian writer Herta Müller exemplifies the absence of sound and even the absence of life itself. Müller manages to break through the formal constraints of language in a significant and artistic manner. She has a peculiar and creative way of describing her world. Her creativity is not limited to language as she always questions the power of language to express thoughts and feelings. Language could be a space where Müller can bend words, forms, colours, and shapes. In her collage poetry, Müller can defamiliarize language in an unconventional manner. She uses a unique art form, the art of cut-ups that makes the words and images speak for themselves. Faced with physical threat and psychological repression of the oppressive and dictatorial regime of Nicolae Ceausescu, Müller resorted to silence to say what can't be said. This paper aims at highlighting the art of collage as a tool used by Herta Müller to express silently incongruent images and texts to express fear and oppression. It will scrutinize the authenticity of the collage poetry of Herta Müller and how her rich and colourful images helped her to gain a foothold in the new setting. It also attempts to elucidate the difference between the silence of language and the silence of things.*

Keywords: collage poetry, silence, space, metaphoric language.

1. Introduction

The German Nobel Prize laureate Herta Müller, who was born in the Romanian Banat-Swabian village, transposes in her writings the horrors she has experienced in the ethnic German community and then under the communist rule of Nicolae Ceausescu (1965-1989). She lived for over thirty years in oppression and injuries. Müller didn't choose the themes of her writings; the themes of fear, oppression, and silence chose her. Müller resisted political repression, lack of freedom, the humiliation of the individual, and the totalitarian power through her images and a marked use of language. Müller's enforced silence, as well as the fragmented language and gaps of her collages, are meant to say what cannot be said. She said in her Nobel acceptance speech: "What can't be said can be written, because writing is a silent act, a labour from the head to the hand" (7). But how can we read and appreciate what is not said? How can we capture the effect of Müller's poetics if what is not

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said depends on Müller's mistrust of language, and shifts the responsibility of interpretation to the reader?

Significantly, Müller is exclusively known as a novelist since none of her poetry or collages has yet been translated into English. Yet, the art of collage is Müller's favoured genre and is central to her output. She tries to present her injuries and painful past through an interaction between the visual image and the verbal text. Fragmentation and gaps as presented in the collages reflect the fragmented life of Müller. Herta Müller is privileged in presenting the un-representable through the creation of a world of collages. Her life and her writings are a complicated collage, and she is a collage herself. Müller lived in Romania, and her output belongs to the Romanian literature but she never claimed to be Romanian. Although she was deported by authorities from communist Romania to West Germany in 1987, Müller was not considered a refugee or even a migrant writer. She was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature only because of writing about dictatorship rather than literature. Like a collage that reflects multiple interpretations, Müller's life goes in different directions, and probes into the meaning of the unspeakable. Being a collagist, Müller has found a way to express silently her discomfort, anger, and fear through a process of deconstruction and reconstruction. She first cuts images and words from different print sources with a merciless scissor to create messiness and alienation similar to her life. Then, she goes on a time-consuming process of electing and pasting unrelated words in different shapes, fonts, and colours to create a pleasant and colourful whole that cannot conceal its fragmented reality. Fragmentation as a form of destruction is present in both the process of cutting and pasting. Silence which is not a thing, but rather an absence of something, helps to bring forth more abstract meanings and expressions through codifying both the form and content of fragmentation. Müller is quite aware of the relationship between image and word that expresses the fragmentation of the psyche, and her tactics unfold a novel and an aesthetic approach.

Far from Müller's fragmented language and oppressed memories, she knows well how to handle her inherited fear and how to overcome her disintegrated self through moving into a silent medium of collage making. It's not a contradiction to say that Müller prefers to talk in silence. Silence is as necessary as speech. It hides the unspeakable terror, expresses anger, works as a relief and support, and is considered a tactic of survival. From childhood, Müller lived in silence, and practiced different types of silence. She says: "I have packed myself into silence so deeply and for so long that I can never unpack myself using words. When I speak, I only pack myself a little differently" (Hunger Angel 2). Philosophically, collage is associated with the concept of randomness, of traumatic experience that cannot be assimilated, and of things that cannot be told explicitly. Because words alone cannot express the haunting memories and feelings, Müller resorts to a coalition of pictorial and verbal collages as an art of resistance against dictatorships.

This analytical paper is driven by the following research questions: What is collage? What is silence? Can readers able to interpret Müller's collages as a visual art without being acquainted with her suffering? Can language affect people physically?

2. The Art of Collage

A collage is a visual or/and verbal representation of condensed and fragmented materials with different shapes, forms, and colours that serves different purposes. Collages help in presenting issues hard to be presented in a typical way. The art of collage involves both a creative process from the side of the collagist and an analytical process from the side of the reader. David Hockney differentiates between two kinds of collages; the manipulative collage and the honest collage:

Your eye takes in the whole [flat] surface instantly. The eye can't do that in collage, because the collage entails another time existing there. When people make deceitful collage...they try to make it look as if it's all the same time. Honest collage deliberately puts another time there, so that the eye will sense these two different times and therefore space. (163)

In her Nobel acceptance speech, Müller does not go so far away, she asserts: "In writing, it is not a matter of trusting, but rather of the honesty of the deceit" (8). Müller's practice of collage is closely intertwined with her idea that language can be understood in light of suffering and trauma. The art of collage is revolutionary; it enables the reader to see beyond words, to hear the unspeakable voices, and to uncover the hidden meaning. It depends on pre-existing material and works in transforming it into something new. Etymologically, the word collage is taken from the French "*coller*" which means to paste or to glue. The practice of collage was first initiated in the 1920s by the Cubists then challenged and developed by the Dadaists and Surrealists. The aesthetic aspect of collage or visual art lies in what is left unsaid. It is considered a manipulative art that demands the indirectness of both content and form. The atrocities of wars as well as the totalitarian and dictatorial regimes around the world have contributed largely to the development of the art of collage. Cutting and pasting words from different sources resemble a puzzle that needs rearranging its parts, and invites multiple readings to get all the possible meanings. Rosalind Krauss interprets collages as a metalanguage of the visual in the sense of a superimposition of grounds, each of which points to another and ultimately to an absent origin (37). This makes collage a kind of metaphor that has a visual play of signs that fits the twenty-first-century readers.

In 1987, Herta Müller has published her earliest volume of collage entitled *Der kalte Schmuck des Lebens* (The cold ornament of life). It includes funeral imagery where colours are muted to display her reality. In 1991, she wrote *Der Teufel sitzt im Spiegel*, (The devil is sitting in the mirror) that shows actual postcard-size collage. In the 2000s, Müller has published three German-language collage collections: *Der Wächter nimmt seinen Kamm* (The guard takes his comb) in 1993, *Im Haarknoten wohnt eine Dame* (A lady lives in a hair knot) in 2000, and *Die Blassen Herren mit den Mokkatassen* (The pale gentlemen with the mocha cups) in 2005. Müller has refined her art of collage where a cut-out image is creatively selected to meet a cut-out text. In 2005, Müller has published her first Romanian-language collage entitled "*Est sau nu este Ion*" (Is it or is not Ion).

Herta Müller is interested in language in a constructive, not a destructive way. For her, language can kill and heal at the same time. Thus, collage is simply the most succinct and appropriate art that enables Müller to make survival possible through silent resistance. She is resisting without appearing to do so simply because collaging allows camouflage. A

collagist resembles a gymnast who moves swiftly between words, colours, and images. Ultimately, Müller managed to make her readers hear voices and see images through penetrating deeply underneath the visual and verbal meanings. Lyn Marven considers Müller's collages an aesthetic of dissonance:

Müller's collages, simple as they are, share themes and structures with the prose texts, extending her representations of trauma into more literal forms. The collages develop the notion of fragmentation and foreground the kind of interaction between different levels of the work which derives from the dissolution of boundaries. Elements of the grotesque and the poetic devices in the texts mark a move away from the subjective effect of trauma to an external viewpoint and, as a result, the collages have taken on an aspect of playfulness. (Trauma, Fragmentation 410-411).

In general, the uniqueness of Müller's collages and her adoption of details as an art of resistance is a panorama that surpasses Dadaism and Surrealism. Müller's play with colours, fonts, and sizes is a currency of Dadaism, while fragmentation of bodily imagery was a tribute of Surrealism. Although Müller's collages are simple, and the text is easy to be accessed, her metaphoric language opens different interpretations. Müller's collages depend on the Cubist tactics of cutting and pasting, and their grid-like structure highlights the visual implications. The phonic aspect of words and the discrepancy of images of the collages justify Müller's interest in Surrealism. Müller's novel approach in highlighting the function of metaphoric language in her collages challenges scholars and critics alike. Her highly poetic language "defies linguistic and literary conventions" (Metaphoric Conceptualization 73). Throughout her collages, Müller surpasses her reader's expectation by liberating herself from conventional writing and focusing on the things that are left unsaid.

3. Tactics of Collages

A psychoanalyst once said, "no speech remains without an answer, even if it is met with silence, provided there is a listener" (Lacan 247). Müller's collages speak differently, and her silent and fragmented language challenges her readers to speculate what is left unsaid. Müller's collages have been developed since she wrote *Reisende auf einem Bein* (Travelling on One Leg) where the protagonist Irene produces collages to express her fragmented psyche after emigrating from Romania to West Germany. A glimpse of Müller's collage poems reveals a unique art form where words and images are torn out from their context and are freed to speak the truth, to denote multiple meanings, and to defy fear. Müller has stated more than once that she does not trust language albeit she writes through language. So, what can Müller do in such a dilemma? She can create a magical space where the oppressive regime and the secret police are not allowed to log on. Although this space is mute and void, it is a powerful way to unmute Müller's long-silenced voice and to speak the unspeakable. This makes the reader entirely responsible for the embedded meaning. Each collage depends on the reproduction of a pre-existed text, cut out from different sources with highly politicized connotations. These words are not new, but rather words charged with new and hidden meanings that help to promote new connections without speaking explicitly.

Like Irene, Muller is fascinated by visual collages as a way to rearrange her reality. She uses Surrealist and Dadaist techniques that highlight the irrationality and randomness of modern life because of the horrors of wars. At first glance, Muller's collages are distinguished by two main and interrelated elements; multiple details charged with different meanings and the aesthetic function of the text. Their visual quality and fragmented language pinpoint the silent sound, and what is left to the reader is to reassemble the fragmented pieces into a whole. So, the task of making sense of such a type of encoded collages lies mostly on the reader.



Herta Müller's first picture-based collages were initially approached as a game, and then she added texts with visual dimension. It comes as no surprise that the process of cutting and pasting these fragmented pieces releases a tremendous amount of energy and gives Müller a sense of pleasure. This pleasure comes from her ability to use the language of the oppressive regime as a way of resistance and survival. Surprisingly, Müller can speak in silence what cannot be expressed in speech. The dilemma is that; either to accept suffering or to resist without leaving a trace. According to Katrin Kohl, Müller relies on "the significance and power of language ... when language gives way to silence in response to a life-threatening situation" (28). Initially, Müller chose the career of writing as a way to overcome the many silences around her. Silence, then, has become the safe space through which she can speak the truth about her frustration and dissatisfaction with the social order. In her Nobel acceptance speech Müller says that she speaks voicelessly because she reacted to the fear of death with a thirst for life:

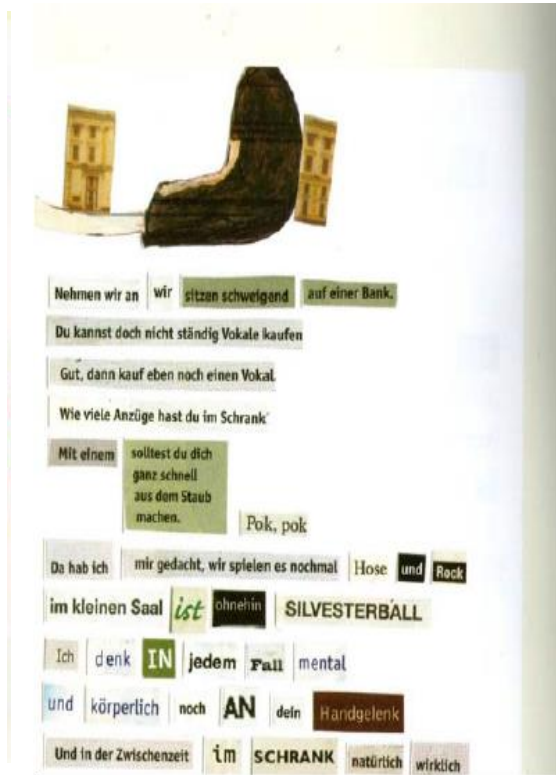
I talked a great deal during the dictatorship, mostly because I decided not to blow the trumpet. Usually, my talking led to excruciating consequences. But the writing began in silence, there on the stairs, where I had to come to terms with more than could be said. What was happening could no longer be expressed in speech (7).

Müller likewise conjures silence to comprehend the communicative potential of inanimate entities as Pavlo Shopin argues. Shopin maintains that Müller is quite aware of the difference between keeping silent and the absence of sound:

Müller humanizes the world when she ascribes to its inanimate entities the ability to keep silent. Silence can also metonymically stand for the mental states of those keeping silent or for their complex social actions; it serves as a central reference point for trauma, fear, guilt, suffering, writing, and collaboration. In Müller's works, metaphor and metonymy can interact and contribute to the understanding of silence. The author consistently highlights the figurative meaning of silence by estranging the trope linguistically and conceptually. Silence refers to the absence and failure of (but also implies the potential for) language and communication; and its use as a trope brings to the fore the search for meaning, expression, and social interaction (The Trope of Silence 241).

To help expose the many silences around her, Müller started early to listen to the sound of objects, animals, and plants within her environment. For example, when she was asked to collaborate with the secret police, she refused saying: "*I don't have the character for this*". This answer has made the officer so angry that he hurled a vase against the wall. Müller, who is endowed with a of multisensory talent, has listened to the sound of the inanimate vase: "As it shattered it made a grinding sound, as though the air had teeth" (Every Word Knows Something 2).

To belong to the ethnic minority in the Banat-Swabian village, to suffer from fragmentation, hybridization of your cultural identity, to be isolated and treated as a traitor to the communist order, have negatively affected Herta Müller and shaped her unique tactics of writing. Even after immigrating to West Germany, Müller is still haunted by the memories of persecution and oppression of totalitarian Romania. She first knew dictatorship in her small village, and in Germany, she lived in "*ein fremder Ort*" (a strange place). So, Müller persisted to reflect her own traumatic experiences in collages as a way to voice the numerous silenced victims. Themes about displacement, alienation, and fragmentation come first in Müller's collages. The collages are characterized by visual and verbal clues that signify what are left unsaid as in the following collages.



The following collage was published in 2005 in *“Die blassen Herren mit den Mokkatassen”* (The pale gentlemen with the mocha cups). In this collage, Müller develops the theme of alienation and brokenness in an unfamiliar way. The fragmented text and the symbolic image of the collage establish a strict separation from both the inside and the outside. On the level of the outside, there is a coloured fragmented image in the upper part of the collage, while the rest includes coloured poetic text with startling details. This simple image has two halves of a building, standing left and right, and in between an image of L-shape made of wood that could serve as a bench. The two halves of the building reflect fragmentation and splitting of the self into two elements (past and present/ old and new/ self and other). As for the text, the collage is condensed with visually separated words. The image here is allegorical for the reading of

the emblematic text. Like the image, the text is divided into two blocks separated by a square of a different colour with the following sentence: *“solltest du dich ganz schnell aus dem Staub machen”* (you should get out of the dust very quickly). Then, the reader hears two knocks on a closed-door *“Pok, pok”*. Knocking on a door has nothing to do with politeness, but rather related to the controlling regime that necessitates permission for everything. This phonic sound increases the tension and functions as an external interruption. The reader cannot identify the owner of these two knocks. On the level of the inside, to begin the collage with *“Nehmen wir an wir sitzen schweigend auf einer Bank”* (Let’s assume we’re sitting on a bench in silence) means that there are two persons; a speaker and a listener. Or, the speaker here speaks to his divided psyche where the self is seen as other. What is startling in this collage is the word *“schweigend”* (silence) which reflects the traumatic symptoms Müller has experienced. The silence here connotes Müller’s mistrust in the language being a tool of the oppressive and violent regime. The two persons in the collage are sitting next to each other without talking because they mistrust each other, or even fear the intruder who is knocking on the unseen door. The absence of sound is an effect of the absence of life. The result is that the outside of the collage leaves no traces that might endanger Müller, while the inside communicates frustration and fragmentation of the divided self.

The forced external separation between the two building blocks resembles the internal tension between the inner voice and the controlling external other. This inner voice stands for the silently resisting person, while the external one stands for the oppressive controlling regime. The argument between self and other goes in one direction; a speaking one and a listening other. The speaking voice says: *“Du kannst doch nicht ständig Vokale kaufen/Gut, dann kauf eben noch einen Vokal.”* (You cannot keep buying vowels all the time/Well, then go ahead buy another vowel). *“VOKAL”* (VOWEL), which is highlighted through capitalization, may stand for any significant object. However, after permitting to buy another vowel, a second decisive command comes: “you should get out very quickly from here”. So, destruction and damage (physical/ psychological or, internal/external) of the form have been reflected in the content and the characters of this collage.

Again, the theme of brokenness and estrangement from the surroundings is repeated in the following collage. Müller who was continually tampered by the interrogations of the Romanian secret police resembles the small man in this picture who does not know where to go. He is referred to as a human being *“MENSCH”*; just a human being who wants to escape his psychological and emotional damage. The way he looks downward while walking in small steps connotes frustration and loss. Walking alone aggravates the impossibility to communicate with others because of fear and mistrust. Psychologically speaking, *“MENSCH LILI”*, who stands for any oppressed individual, refuses to give up and to be crushed under the weight of the destructive force of oppression. His small steps will ensure his security and survival at the very end.

In the upper part of the collage, a house is broken into two halves and in between a stretched staircase that leads to nowhere. These stairs are like the accordion that plays in funerals that Müller has got enough of it: *“ich hab genug DAVON”*. The typography of the word *“DAVON”* with its eye-catching colour functions as decoding Müller’s depressing reality. Herta Müller has also an eye-catching for signs and details, and an ability to translate them into visual terms. Müller’s peculiar focus on details started early when she was herding cows in her small village. Her voice gives life to inanimate objects enabling them to speak or to keep silent. And to keep silent is to keep no human traces that might endanger you. Not only that, but the silence of language and silence of objects challenge the reader’s imagination to their figurative potentials.

This collage poem belongs to the collection *“Die blassen Herren mit den Mokkatassen”* (The pale gentlemen with the mocha cups). This collection does not include any prefatory note or commentary which asserts the reader’s entire responsibility to get the meaning from the collage alone. In the above two collages, the image and the text are connected to each other. They have the same symbolic meaning, same structure, and even tackling the same issues. Both the broken building (*staat/country*) and the broken house (*dorf/village*) in the two collages refer to the term *“Heimat”* (Home). The words are arranged in blocks without being connected to each other, and the two collages are teeming with words. This is because the space of freedom is measured by the number of words an individual is allowed to take. Also, these words with their incoherent semantics, pasted next to each other away from their original location, stand as if in a state of homelessness. So, Müller strives to turn humiliation into dignity by arranging ripped out words in an image shape. She says in her Nobel acceptance speech:

It seems to me that the objects don't know their material, the gestures don't know their feelings, and the words don't know the mouth that speaks them. But to be certain of our own existence, we need the objects, the gestures, and the words. After all, the more words we are allowed to take, the freer we become. If our mouth is banned, then we attempt to assert ourselves through gestures, even objects. They are more difficult to interpret and take time before they arouse suspicion. They can help us turn humiliation into a type of dignity that takes time to arouse suspicion (8).

Here, and in other collages, Müller gives the inanimate objects the ability to keep silent. The broken house and the staircase are personified to express suffering and damage caused by the controlling oppressive regime. Silence can be "a metonymic vehicle to refer to complex social actions" as argues Pavlo Shopin (The Trope of Silence 20). The destruction in this collage causes a tangible change; it forces "*MENSCH LILI*" to move away suffering from an acute solitude. Sometimes, destruction causes a seemingly more humiliation as in the case of Müller's mother. When she was left alone in the interrogation room, she started to clean the room with her handkerchief only to be distracted from feeling humiliated, and to create a space of dignity to herself. This same thing is found in the collages of Herta Müller where she manages to survive from her fragmented life by creating a unique fragmented structure. Müller repeatedly sketches her oppressive experiences to free herself from the unbearable solitude and the psychological pressure she has gone through. Freedom is achieved in the white space and gaps between words, in the separation between text and image, and above all in what are left unsaid.

Müller believes that "*Nicht Sprache ist Heimat, sondern das was gesprochen wird*" (Home is not language, but what is spoken). It seems that these two collages could be two stages of the same process. Initially, a person is sitting silently with his divided self and he concludes that he has to get out of this messiness very quickly. Yet, when taking such a decision, the silence of speech turned into a silence of action. "*MENSCH LILI*", with capital letters, pinpoints the figurative meaning of silence through his failure to communicate or to take an action. Unlike the first collage, this one is void of punctuation to indicate absence (silence) of mental clarity. Furthermore, the colourful words in these two collages are ripped out from their original context and pasted in a new one as if they are in exile. It seems that the separating border between text and image does not exist so that the reader can move freely between both.

Herta Müller's stimulus to be a writer is not to document the atrocities of the totalitarian regime, but rather to overcome the imposed silences around her. Even her mother has practiced silence after returning from the Soviet concentration camps. Müller's tactic is to express freely the truth and to keep silent at the same time. Because it is better to fight fire with fire, Müller decided to confront silence by writing, which is considered a mode of silence. So, Müller's silence works as a source domain and a target domain at the same time. In the following collage, Müller employs different tactics. The character in the next image is marked by acute fragmentation which echoes Müller's traumatic experience, and how she suffered from a minority of place within a minority of language. The focus on



detail, and the analytical sharpness of image and text, which are a trademark tactic of Müller, reveals several points. First, the uncovering of the fear and persecution under Ceausescu's political regime are major themes in Müller's oeuvre. When Müller discusses the atrocities of the communist regime in Romania she carefully maps everything; shrinking and stretching events, focusing on things that seem unimportant, and ignoring important things. Müller creates her own environment to suit her cultural identity. Second, recalling these details has a therapeutic function. Every small thing is a marker of something much larger in her life. It carries parts of memories that shaped her cultural identity. Take for example the handkerchief of her mother and how it is a symbol of dignity, the accordion of the Nazi Matz, and other small things that stand for fear and hope.

This collage begins with "Wenn drei straßen staibig auf dem rücken schlafen" (when three streets are sleeping on your back). The metaphorical meaning is unconventional in the sense that the inanimate street is given the attribute of a sleeping human being. The text makes clear that damage and danger can be caused by whatever reason. One of these reasons is not showing respect to the controlling regime. Respect here means to collabourate with the secret police, to be an informer on your friends, and to be prepared even to death. The man in this collage does not enjoy the essentials to feel at home. For him, stability, feeling safe, belonging, memory, and family are among the things that define "Heimat" homeland. For the controlling regime, this "blasse Herren" (pale master) should be expelled out because he lacks respect "Wer den Respekt verliert". The image in the upper left corner of the collage is a photograph of a man



dressed in a formal suit and a tie. The lower part of this photograph is two legs of a woman standing next to an open door made of hard steel.

The idea of wholeness is absent in this collage. So, this triple fragmented image is allegorical for Müller's traumatic fate. It can be interpreted as follows: the man in the upper corner is the state official who is about to expel the woman in the lower part out of her homeland. And the opened steel door stands for threats, interrogations, and even death for those who do not collaborate and show respect to the oppressive regime. The irony of this situation lies first in not feeling at home, so it does not matter to stay or to leave. In both cases, you are a foreigner. Second, the man who is supposed to protect you from any threats is the oppressive one. Fragmentation of the image is projected back in the text. Here, words with different shapes and pleasant

colours are celebrating and singing in a national ceremony where the "Orchester" is playing a joyful music "rätätä". Until now everything is good. But, unexpectedly a "Zündschnur" (bomb) will turn things upside down. So, this stylish man in a tie will turn things into abyss. You cannot take anything for granted, and trust was misused by the dictatorial regime.

The next collage depicts another aspect of Müller's traumatic experience in Romania. It belongs to the collection "Vater telefoniert mit den Fliegen" (father telephones the flies) published in 2012. It seems very simple and brief with a dominant black colour in both image and text. This deceptive collage begins with "Kurz notiert" (briefly quoted), with a speech about a man with a name "Herr Frodi" (Mr. Frodi) with enlarged "Herr" and a very small "Frodi", and a long silence (a void and mute space) at the opening and closure of the collage. Such a beginning seemingly indicates a sense of formality and respect. Yet, it reminds the reader with the official interrogations of innocent people where a list of accusations is waiting for them. Silence increases the sense of tension and uneasiness because one cannot expect what comes next. The text here is composed of a limited number of words where "Flüsterton" (whisper) and "Ort" (place) are written in black with a white background. In contrast, "meine" (my), "MEIN" (my), "heimgebrachtes" (brought home/earned), and "DER" (the) are written in white with a black background. The contrast between black and white helps in deciphering the feelings of contempt and mistrust found in this collage. Most noticeably, the background of the collage as well as the gaps and spaces

are white-coloured. Because black underlines death and oppression while white underlines life and resistance, Müller is metaphorically asserting the possibility of resistance and survival.

So, Mr. Frodi is criticizing his wife because her mouth turns to “*DER hässlichste*” the ugliest place in the world after counting the money he earned. Such behaviour is common among husbands and wives around the world. Yet, after decoding the deceptive language and the allegorical image of the collage, the meaning exceeds everyday quarrels. The controlling wife here stands for the oppressive communist regime that cannot be trusted or even confronted. The feeling of numbness between husband and wife is reflected in the image in the upper part of the collage. It consists of an intimidating smiling face of a female with a gloomy black background, a red hand, and a small table similar to those in the interrogation rooms. Herta Müller uses concrete objects to make silence more comprehensible. The red colour of the hand is not a cheerful colour though red is an indicator of love. The red hand suggests spiritual injury as a direct result of political repression. Also, the pale-yellow colour in the image reflects the dire conditions of everyday life under the controlling regime. It “speaks for the silence imposed on the population as a consequence of censorship” as Michel Mallet asserts (50). The coloration of the collages is metaphorically employed to explore further meanings and interpretations. Michel Mallet says:

The colours in found in Müller’s imagery appear, however, to be spiritually traumatized, a condition that reflects her own traumatic experience. As she points out herself in her essay “Der König,” her imagery is composed of “[. . .] Farben, die nicht mehr wanderten” (König 55), suggesting here that her colours are injured, faded winged creatures in Benjamin’s sense that reflect the desperate life conditions of her protagonists, who remain destitute of freedom and of hope under the constraints of regressive traditions and totalitarian dictatorship (40).

The idea of absence of freedom is not confined to the content of the collage with words that conceptualize repression and harassment. The form of the collage where blocked and incongruent words are listed beside each other inside a suffocating frame from which they are unable to free themselves is an added obstacle that triggers both physical and psychological confinement. The blocks of words lead to an interrupted reading—it interrupts the natural flow that we normally use to read a line. We are insecure about the rhyme because most words are not connected through the same fonts and sizes. Only a rereading brings us closer to the natural rhythm. Their disparate origins form a beautiful “whole” that does not conceal its fragmented sources (Moyrer 203).

In reading a collage, one is free to jump between words, to read vertically or horizontally, and to connect words with the image. The colours, fonts, and typology are whispering to the reader with different interpretations. The meaning of things is linked to their spatial environment, and part of their hidden meanings is granted by their location. Eye-catching words can be read in isolation from others and can be decoded differently. Words with visual typographical features stand as clues in each collage. Words as “*Bahndamm*” (Dam) in green colour “*BLINDE*” (blind) in black colour can be associated with the two components of the image to interpret the collage. The word in green unmuted colour in the middle of the collage connotes life, protection, and survival. While the word in

black muted colour at the end of the collage connotes death, and oppression. Unsurprisingly, the image at the bottom of the collage has two elements; a green bird to connote life and freedom, and a black shoe that connotes violence and cruelty. The bird and dam which are symbols of life are defeated by blindness and oppression.

The ability to communicate with others or even with your self is the first and foremost concern of Herta Müller to overcome physical and psychological censorship. This includes silence as a way of communication. Although the incongruent words in all collages are arranged in blocks to interrupt the reading and prevent communication, there exists another kind of internal communication. Müller personifies inanimate objects to make them able to speak and keep silent. This kind of inner communication is apparent in this collage where two travellers at the train station are communicating with each other. What is peculiar about this collage is the relatively small image at the bottom where a coloured bird is standing on the ground next to a black shoe in the foot of a man. One traveler is saying to the other: “*Richtung gibt’s in allen Fällen wo Sie wollen aber Rückkehr wäre eine so blaue Affäre*” (direction existed by all means to where you’d like to be but returns were such a blue affair like the blind shifts / of the winds). So, the inability to return to homeland once it has been left aggravates the sense of “Unheimischsein” (un-homeyness). Similar to the bird standing on the ground is very risky and dangerous because it is not supposed to be here.

According to Lyn Marven, fragmentation is one of the tactics Müller regularly

employs in her collages so as to describe her suffering and social subjugation metaphorically. Fragmentation, as a symptom of destruction and subsequently a symptom of trauma, has been described as the mark of Müller’s aesthetic style. Trauma is visible in the content and form of Müller’s collages in order to achieve the utmost effect. Marven says: “Trauma becomes visible in the texts’ content, and also in the aesthetic of fragmentation which structures their linguistic and narrative syntax” (397). Müller uses fragmented language for two reasons; first to portray her suffering, and second to beseech sympathy from her readers. Müller does not attempt to explain her suffering or her trauma because trauma is inexplicable. Instead, the reader can get from the individual words, from the gaps, and from the distinction between text and image the anticipated meaning. Trauma has become the framework of Müller’s collages.



The mapping of the following collage from the collection “*Im Haarknoten wohnt eine Dame*” (A lady lives in a hair knot) is a little bit different from collages of other collections. Image and text are given equal space, and black and white are the dominant colours here. As a matter of fact, to mute colours in this collage is to bestow them the ability to keep silent. The incongruous form of the image in this collage expresses both the physical threat and the psychological repression. The fragmented image here is reduced into two legs, one hand, and a toothbrush instead of a head. This fragmented body is lying asleep on something that resembles a tree. Müller’s choice of this image with the absence of the head and the sleeping and motionless fragmented body reveals multiple meanings. First, the toothbrush is one of the provocative words used in the collages of Herta Müller. Words as a suitcase, toothbrush, packing, a handkerchief, a staircase, and others are signs of always being prepared either to

be arrested or to escape from the secret police. This headless figure is no more a human being simply because he is deprived of freedom of speech. Second, to be hanged motionless on a tree without having a home to return is a metonymy of the inhospitable environment he is living in. She escaped from communism only to be faced with fascism.

One final example of speaking through silence is “*Gürtel und Hals*” (belt and neck) collage. It belongs to the collection “*Im Haarknoten wohnt eine Dame*” (A lady lives in a hair knot), published in 2000. Müller seeks to present to her readers the everyday life of an ordinary human being through extraordinary mode. The muted colours (black/grey) of this collage should be interpreted as a reminder of the long-endured oppression, and also of the dire conditions of everyday life in such a socialist regime. Müller combines the muted colours with the symbolic figure to indicate the oppressive mechanism of the Romanian dictatorship. The interplay between image and text is highly emblematic.

She engages the reader’s imagination to encourage different interpretations. “*Gürtel und Hals*” collage has a different design where image and text have given equal space. Unlike collages



Gürtel und Hals hat er benutzt
 seine Hände losgelassen
 locker wie ein Hampelmann
 dann heißt es Menschen
 die ans Grab kommen seien
 die Stühle des Toten
 solange ihre Schatten auf der Erde liegen
 muß er im Himmel nicht stehen
 schieb einen Riegel vor
 die leichten Zehen kann man sehen
 welkt mir mein Grasbüschel im Ohr
 und lebt mich alt und schläft mich neu
 mich f rißt mein Herz wie Esel heu

in other collections, this one is not teeming with words. Two elements characterize this collage: a picture drawn by pencil where a human being is bending downward until he touches the ground, and the text in black colour. Splitting or doubling of the self is seen in the shadow or the reflection of the figure.

Because Müller's experience cannot be expressed by words only, the image here is very appropriate to the text. The text is a reflection of the image in the same way the human being in the collage has been reflected in white and black colours. The contrast between black and white reflects the contrast between day and night, and between life and death. The attention of the reader is caught in certain words. First, the collage begins with "*Gürtel und Hals*" (belt and neck) which could be tools of torture or tools of committing suicide. Second, "Grab" (dig) and "*stühle*" (chairs) which are written in bold to connote death. The neck and head of the person are bent backward and downward which denotes uneasiness. This is what totalitarianism does to individuals. They are living under the threat of death, in desperate and gloomy conditions, and they are striving for freedom as appears in the white shadow of the figure.

In her Nobel acceptance speech, Müller speaks of how she looked after the cows, and the sound of words looked after her. She describes her feeling: "Every word in your face/ Knows something of the vicious circle/ But doesn't say it" (8). From this moment on, Müller learned how to listen to the whispering sound of objects, animals, and plants around her. And above all, she learned how to speak in instead of speaking out. For Herta Müller, writing is a mode of silence, and for her readers, reading is also a mode of silence. In writing, which is regarded as a defensive strategy, Müller is free to encode her traumatic experience and to express what she has experienced and perceived through the silence of language and silence of objects. And in reading, the reader is free to decode the metaphorical language that describes the **terrors of dictatorships**. This reciprocal relationship between the author and the reader resembles the process of encoding and decoding of information. Because of the inexpressibility of silence in the normal and direct way, it can be conveyed only through metaphoric language. So, Müller continues with two things in her collages: conceptualized metaphor and a fragmented muted language with a focus on detail. Metaphor is not mere ornamentation, but rather an indispensable aspect in understanding the collages:

Poetic metaphor, far from being ornamentation, deals with central and indispensable aspects of our conceptual systems. Through the masterful use of metaphorical processes on which our conceptual systems are based, poets address the most vital issues in our lives and help us illuminate those issues, through the extension, composition, and criticism of the basic metaphoric tools through which we comprehend much of reality. (Lakoff 215)

Thus, silence for Herta Müller has become the cause and effect; the source domain and the target domain. In other words, Müller has suffered from the imposed silence, and at the same time, she uses silence to avoid persecution, harsh punishment, and death. For this

reason, silence has become a multisensory aspect able to illuminate the harsh reality of Müller and other victims.

Herta Müller has experienced multiple dichotomies starting from being an ethnic minority in Romania, then suffering from the consequences of the Third Reich after the end of WWII, and finally from feeling different in the German society. The split of her life between Eastern Romania and West Germany, and of being an outsider and an insider at the same time, have resulted in what can be named as the disintegration of the self. The disruption and annoyance of this psychological state resulted in nuisances of the texts and images of her collages. Collaging has become a creative space; a white sheet through which Müller deals with her reality in a highly poetic way.

Collage is exquisitely a poetic and aesthetic art where Müller manages to alleviate the burden of oppression imposed upon her. While the gears of Ceaușescu's totalitarian machinery are fear, humiliation, fragmentation, interrogations, interceptions, and oppressions, the gears of Müller's collages are silence and metaphoric language. Her collages are characterized by startling typography where words with different fonts and sizes have different semantic connotations. Coloration has a decisive role where muted colours like black and grey connote the absence of life, while unmuted and pleasant colours help in relieving the weight of subjugation imposed upon the victims by this social order. Punctuation and rhyme are other aspects of Müller's literary style. Lack of punctuation in some collages reflects a lack of clarity and creates a distorted meaning especially in a text composed of words rather than comprehensive sentences. Regarding rhyme that appears in some collages about death, murder, and suicide, it represents the repeated fear and terror inside the interrogation rooms, and how it is projected back in the fragmented texts. The ambiguity of Müller's collages, the fragmented language, and the inexplicable images, are increasingly linked to the unassimilated trauma. What mostly marks Müller's aesthetic style is focusing on detail. Müller herself lives in detail; her fragmented life resembles the fragmented characters in her collages. She adopts detail as an art of resistance.

One more tactic of Müller's collages is the broken beginning and ending that increases ambiguity. Because words and images are ripped out from different sources, each element bears a separate meaning depending on its context. It remains that Müller managed to say in silence what she could not write explicitly.

4. Conclusion

Hera Müller has long endured persecution, interrogation, torture, and oppression until she resolved to resist and to speak the truth through a de-familiar language. Contrary to the principle of expressibility that whatever can be meant can be said, Müller believes that language is not the only means of expressibility. She has developed a sophisticated way of communication by whispering silently through gaps and fragmented spaces. Silence for Müller is not a failure of communication, but rather an alternative language. Silence serves as a way of survival through protesting the dictatorial power. In Müller's collages, the meaning of silence is not delineated but left to the reader's interpretation.

Because silence is anything but nothing, all the reader needs are to listen wisely to the whispering of words and to see the word as an image and the image as a word. Both the

content and the form of Müller's collages are focusing on the reader's ability to extract the figurative meaning of the salient and at the same time cautious language. Her critique of dictatorships and oppression through her employment of manipulative language and fragmented pieces leaves no traces so as not to endanger herself. Müller moves freely through gaps and blank spots where she can find trust and confidence. This is because her collages are like a baffling puzzle where deception and non-conformity are its outer appearance. Yet, penetrating deeply underneath words, images, colours, blank spots, and fragmented pieces one can find a complete whole.

Herta Müller's collages are conceptualizing metaphors about home, exile, immigration and above all her traumatic experiences. Through these metaphors, the reader is invited to decode the sonority of her magical collages hidden underneath signs of the visual and the aesthetic traits. Images in Müller's collages share one commonality albeit she gives her reader freedom of interpretation.

Müller's mapping of her collages depends on randomness rather than selection, typography, manipulation of language, coloration, and the figurative quality of what are left unsaid. On the level of the content, the text with variable fonts, sizes, and colours is seen as a body where the part is seen as a whole and the whole is seen as a part. Müller, like a gymnastic or even a dancer, is flexibly bending her words and is moving between past and present, between Romania and Germany, and between fear and hope. On the level of form, collages are strongly visual where separation and brokenness are the dominant features. The result is a true combination between content and form and between text and image where details are charged with different interpretations, and aesthetic functions.

So, after whispering to herself that she is a broken character, Herta Müller turned this brokenness into a silent language to restore her fragmented identity. Her collages have become a form of resistance and survival.

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OSCAR WILDE'S RESPONSE TO VICTORIAN RETICENCE – "THE PICTURE OF DORIAN GRAY"

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"There is only one thing in the world worse than being talked about, and that is not being talked about."

Abstract: Victorians have been commonly known as strict people with little room for norm deviation. The present paper aims at rendering the *fin de siècle* reactions against this reticence in the novel written by the controversial Oscar Wilde, "The Picture of Dorian Gray".

Keywords: reticence, sin, hedonism, Victorian.

Introductory Remarks

When one thinks of Victorianism, associations with such words as sobriety, respectability, national pride, values, morality immediately come to one's mind. The first developmental stage of the era was indeed marked by a strong appreciation of traditional Victorian values transposed into real-life behavioural practices. As the century progressed, however, there was a change of mentalities that encouraged intellectuals from various backgrounds to show their reticence towards the former Victorian values and ideals. In this latter part of the Victorian Era a writer was born that epitomised in the best way possible human reticence towards conventions and defiance of the rules as a means of promoting uniqueness. This was Oscar Wilde, an exceptional Irish writer, poet, playwright, essayist and novelist, who transferred his sense of rebellion into a huge work of prose fiction, "The Picture of Dorian Gray", a highly debated novel, even centuries after its publication. In its pages, the novelist had the courage to approach forbidden matters that were already happening within Victorian society, even though the latter denied their existence, as they were not in accordance with the strict morality of that time which was supposed to be perfect even if it was only a mask behind which true reality could be hidden. Therefore, the publication of the novel became the subject of a lot of controversy and received a huge amount of criticism, being disapproved by many important figures of the time.

Beyond Victorian reticence and reserve – O. Wilde

The novel was conceived at a time when there was "a somewhat more difficult and diverse tone than the high Victorian years of mid-century, although not necessarily because times were harder. The balance of domestic political and economic power was shifting, and new groups could make demands of their own. In addition, there seemed to be a cultural

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transition. The artists and writers who came to prominence in the fin de siècle (Thomas Hardy, Oscar Wilde, George Bernard Shaw, Joseph Conrad, Aubrey Beardsley) produced work of less comforting - more 'modern' - tone" (Mitchell, 2009:7).

As obvious from the quotation above, Sally Mitchell refers to a general transition from the status quo of the high Victorian period to a mood of discomfort, restlessness and anticipation characteristic of the 1890s. Society was changing rapidly and the writers at the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth century would be very responsive to these changes and start to create more challenging writings. Some of these writers criticise the dark aspects of Victorian society, including its strong promotion of inequality, intolerance towards the other and hypocrisy. To give just an example, Thomas Hardy strove to fictionalise women as strong female characters, Tess of d'Urbervilles being quite illustrative of that, and criticised Victorian society for failing to accommodate independent women and even punishing them for trying to take control over their own lives. G. B. Shaw's plays are famous for their social criticism and one of his earliest plays, *Mrs Warren's Profession*, speaks openly about the matter of prostitution, arguing that women do not resort to this profession because they are corrupt, but because they simply have no other means to support themselves. These uncomfortable writings were often controversial, which is also the case of Oscar Wilde. Wilde wrote openly about taboo topics and challenged the conventional morality of the Victorian society. He chose to adhere to social expectations neither in his writing nor in his private life, which made him a social outcast and eventually led to his imprisonment.

Although this progressive period was open to various technological innovations and scientific discoveries, Victorian society itself was still very conservative. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the importance of traditional values and morality was weakening, but conservative members of the society still held on to them. Therefore, when "The Picture of Dorian Gray" by Oscar Wilde was published in July 1890, the readers were shocked as it was a challenge for the mentality of the public which was not yet prepared to digest its content. It made waves and gave birth to many controversial opinions and lots of criticism. The book was criticised as immoral because its protagonist devotes his life to pleasure, enjoyment and beauty and eventually even becomes a murderer. Readers and critics of the novel thought that the story was inappropriate and that the book did not educate the reader the way books should.

It is, however, important to see Wilde's novel as "a highly serious meditation upon the moral role of the artist - an interior challenge, in fact, to the insouciance of the famous pronouncements that would assure us that there is no such thing as a moral or an immoral book" (Oates, 1980:420). Like Victorian society, Victorian literature was expected to be serious and serve not only as amusement but also as an education. Oscar Wilde, among other late Victorian writers such as Walter Pater, Dante Gabriel Rossetti or Algernon Charles Swinburne, however, challenged this idea.

Wilde's perception of human nature

"The Picture of Dorian Gray" was created with the purpose of opposing traditional Victorian restraint based on its overt reliance on and promotion of hedonistic ideology. According to Donald Dickson, "In the eyes of his contemporaries, Wilde's carefully

cultivated role as public sinner spoke louder than any protestations he made on behalf of his novel. Thus, despite his own best efforts in his defence, even a sympathetic critic like Walter Pater responded to topical interests rather than to the novel's serious concern" (Dickson, 1983). Walter Pater stated: "Clever always, this book, however, seems to set forth anything but a homely philosophy of life for the middle-class – a kind of dainty Epicurean theory father – yet fails, to some degree, in this; and one can see why. A true Epicureanism aims at a complete though harmonious development of man's entire organism. To lose the moral sense therefore, for instance, the sense of sin and righteousness, as Mr. Wilde's heroes are bent on doing so speedily, as completely as they can, is to lose, or lower, organization, to become less complex, to pass from a higher to a lower degree of development" (Pater, 1891: online).

Robert Boyle openly confessed to be against the critical opinion which claimed that the novel promoted immorality: "Those who rage and howl, like the critics of Wilde's novel, suffer from seeing their own savage faces reflected in the artist's creation. For the artist morality is of interest only as subject matter; ethics should not constrict his scope, nor does he concern himself with encouraging or discouraging moral behaviour. The work of art is totally useless; it finds its goal within itself, a beautiful creation reflecting all things human. It should be contemplated for itself, and aims at no other use. Thus the critics who condemn it as having evil effects should look inside themselves for the causes of those effects, not in the work".

In broad lines, "The Picture of Dorian Gray" presents the life story of a young man from the high class of London, who has been blessed with an exquisite beauty. Reading the book, we witness how in the pursuit of finding pleasure this innocent young person gives away to seduction and moral corruption in such a manner that in the end he is not able to sincerely repent for his sins, and on the way loses his soul entirely, and in the end his life too. The first chapters of the novel entitle us to think of Dorian as a kind of artistic perfection, which the famous painter Basil Hallward masterfully rendered on canvas. The turning point in Dorian's transformation is represented by his meeting Lord Henry Wotton, a married, very dandyish aesthete, who decides to take on the project of moulding Dorian's personality.

With only few sophisticated and twisted phrases Henry succeeds to completely alter Dorian's once-innocent viewpoint about the world. From now on he perceives life as a succession of pleasures, totally ignoring the notions of "good" and "evil" which he chooses to see as irrelevant questions. We witness the slowly step-by-step continuous moral degradation of our hero, who decodes Lord Henry's brilliant rhetoric literally, without being aware of the "subtle magic" (*TPoDG*, 19) that overwhelms his soul and mind and activates forbidden thoughts in the susceptible young man. When Henry states that the boy has "only a few years in which to live really, perfectly, and fully" (*TPoDG*, 21), Dorian Gray gets anxious of becoming "sallow, and hollow-cheeked, and dull-eyed" (*TPoDG*, 21). "How sad it is!" the youth despairs, looking at the finished portrait. 'I shall grow old... But this picture will remain always young'" (*TPoDG*, 24). The thought that the canvas will preserve its youth while his body will get old awaken in him brutal emotions: "It will mock me some day", he protests, 'mock me horribly!'" His thoughts, opinions, points of view, approaches and even some behaviours enter into the process of an inevitable alteration. Therewith,

Dorian makes a wish and implores that the picture could go to seed and adopt the offense of his immoralities and mischievousness in place of him and he would be young and gorgeous endlessly “If it were I who was to be always young, and the picture that was to grow old! For that- for that- I would give everything! Yes, there is nothing in the whole world I would not give! I would give my soul for that!” (TPoDG, 19)

Throughout the next eighteen years, Dorian always searches to attempt new pleasures and commits sins all the time; he goes after new experiences, perceptions and impressions without feeling concerned about any conformist restraint or even about the consequences of his attitudes and practices. No one has access to the portrait which documents the moral degradation and the corruption of the protagonist’s soul: the wonderful image had been affected and suffered all the consequences of Dorian’s behaviour, the man in the picture becoming hideous, grotesque. The more sins Dorian commits or the more corrupted he becomes, the more changes appear in the picture depending on the manner and sort of his actions. On Dorian’s thirty-eight anniversary Basil decides to settle in Paris and he comes over his old friend’s place to say good-bye and see him for the last time before his departure. He also wishes to know whether what people say about Dorian, is really happening in his life or not. After a heated discussion, eventually, Dorian indulges Basil to take a look at the picture that reflects every single detail of his subtle soul inside of him. When Basil’s glances meet the picture, he exclaims in horror, “*This is the face of a satyr [...] It has the eyes of a devil [...] It is*”, Dorian Gray corrects him, “*the face of my soul*” (TPoDG, 114). During a mental crisis, Dorian stabs Basil with a knife with which, at the end of the novel, wrecks the picture: “*He looked round, and saw the knife that had stabbed Basil Hayward. He had cleaned it many times, till there was no stain left upon it. It was bright and glistened. As it had killed the painter, so it would kill the painter’s work and all that that mean. It would kill the past, and when that was dead he would be free. He seized it, and stabbed the canvas with it, ripping the thing right up from top to bottom*” (TPoDG, 177). With this action the balance between life and art is restored, the painting shows again the image of Dorian in his early twenty, innocent and gorgeous, while the corps of Dorian reflects his decadence and degradation, his servants being able to recognize him by his rings: “*When they entered, they found hanging upon the wall a splendid portrait of their master as they had last seen him, in all the wonder of his exquisite youth and beauty. Lying on the floor was a dead man, in evening dress, with a knife in his heart. He was withered, wrinkled, and loathsome of visage. It was not till they had examined the rings that they recognized who it was*” (TPoDG, 177).

Victorian reticence vs. Wilde’s Hedonism

The main direction of this paper is to analyse Victorian reticence as a factor that launches the hedonism-infused double life of the male character from “The Picture of Dorian Gray”. The hero in question, Dorian Gray, is, on the one hand, a member of the aristocracy; on the other hand, his life behind closed doors is not the Victorian-puritan type and this is reflected in the changes the canvas of his portrait undergoes. The motive of the double life in the novel is closely connected with the period in which the novel was written: the conventions and expectations of the Victorian society prove to be the main reason why

the protagonist chooses to lead a double life. Besides the tension between individual desires and social demands – as illustrated in the examples of Basil and Henry, who seem to be infatuated with Dorian, but choose not to reveal their forbidden desires – there is the tension between spontaneously acting on one's primitive impulses and controlling one's behaviour based on reason, propriety and morality. This is the case of Dorian who starts to indulge in his primitive impulses and low drives when he realises that he can do so without consequences.

Dorian leads a double life in that he seeks pleasure and corruption, yet he offers a face which shows innocence and purity to the world. Dorian's first major act of cruelty is when he abandons his former love interest, the actress Sibyl Vane, who is devastated by Dorian's heartlessness. Wilde describes the scene by showing how "she crouched on the floor like a wounded thing, and Dorian Gray, with his beautiful eyes, looked down at her, and his chiselled lips curled in exquisite disdain". This is when Dorian first finds out that his portrait changes, although he himself remains unchanged: "In the dim arrested light that struggled through the cream-coloured silk blinds, the face appeared to him to be a little changed. The expression looked different. One would have said that there was a touch of cruelty in the mouth" (*TPDG*,). The portrait serves as a mirror of Dorian Gray's soul, a symbol of the double life that everybody is prohibited to catch a glimpse of. When Dorian realises that the only evidence of his increasingly immoral actions is his portrait, he hides the painting from sight and does not allow anyone to see it. In public, Dorian remains an extraordinarily beautiful young man with an honest face and his position in the respectable aristocratic society remains unchallenged. Behind closed doors, however, Dorian is becoming more and more attracted to the evil and addicted to selfish pleasures. The portrait enables Dorian to lead this double life because the tainted portrait is easy to hide, and Dorian's appearance remains untainted, so nobody suspects him. Dorian hides his real soul and real behaviour in the painting and presents himself to the public as a respectable gentleman who conforms to the rules of the society.

The novel is not pure fabrication, but also a reflection of the society of the time. Although the events of the novel are fictional, the pressure of the Victorian society on its members to conform to rigid social standards is not fiction, but an actual testimony to what it was like to live in the Victorian era. Wilde, as a highly nonconformist individual, knew this pressure to conformity very well, and his personal experience is to some extent reflected in the novel as well. In consequence, in the purpose of demonstrating the hedonism philosophy of the author,

Conclusion

In broad lines, the content of "The Picture of Dorian Gray" is illustrative of a growing need to escape socially-imposed boundaries and shape one's identity. a man who believes that happiness can be achieved by seeking to find pleasure and avoid pain, no matter the consequences upon him or the others. Hedonism is synonymous with pleasure, wealth, freedom, satisfaction and power.

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ASPECTS OF RELUCTANCE IN D.H. LAWRENCE'S "SONS AND LOVERS"

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Abstract: David Herbert Lawrence creates in his novels both characters and atmosphere that are not to be found elsewhere. The reluctance of his characters can be associated with that of the reluctance of the writer's own style.

Keywords: reluctance, characters, complex, fixation, contrast

The beginning of the 20th century marked the English literature with its richness in writing, new and old elements were intertwined in the works of famous poets and writers. Among these, David Herbert Lawrence is representative for his psychoanalytical type of novel and its controversial themes: "His writing is powered by tensions between the classes or the sexes or mind and body or, more apocalyptically, between natural life and a civilization of death." (Alexander, 2007: 339)

Sons and Lovers was considered Lawrence's first significant novel and his best work. It is an autobiographical novel which passed through four separate phases of composition before being published in 1913. The persons who influenced Lawrence during the revision of the novel were Jessie Chambers and Frieda von Richthofen Weekley. Both of them were to become characters in the novel first entitled *Paul Morel* and then *Sons and Lovers*.

Although the novel describes the drama that Gertrude Morel and her children have to pass through because of Walter Morel's bad habit of drinking, *Sons and Lovers* provides a memorable and absorbing portrait of the family life.

At the beginning, Gertrude Morel, a moral and religious woman and her husband Walter, a warm, sensuous and indulgent miner, have a happy marriage, but with Walter's change, Mrs. Morel will feel disgusted and disappointed with her husband and will transfer her love on the two boys, William and Paul, who will later be unable and reserved to give both passion and soul to women of their own age. After William's death, Paul will become the central character in the book and Mrs. Morel's reason for living.

By carefully analyzing the relationship between mother and son, the writer achieves what was to be called the Oedipus complex, Paul becoming a victim of the *mother fixation*. The complex presents the attraction that children, boys and girls, have for the parent of opposite sex, despising or even hating the other one. The feelings that the children have for the parent whom they are attracted to, will also make them reluctant towards their future partners.

The relationship that Lawrence describes in *Sons and Lovers* is based on the relationship that he had with his mother. Lawrence himself offered a thematic explanation of

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the summary of *Sons and Lovers* in a letter addressed to Edward Garnett in November 1912: "I tell you [*Sons and Lovers*] has got form- *form*: haven't I made it patiently, out of sweat as well as blood. It follows this idea: a woman of character and refinement goes into lower class, and has no satisfaction in her own life. She has had a passion for her husband, so the children are born of passion, and have heaps of vitality. But as her sons grow up she selects them as lovers- first the eldest, then the second. These sons are *urged* into life by their reciprocal love of their mother- urged on and on. But when they come to manhood, they can't love, because their mother is the strongest power in their lives, and holds them...As soon as the young men come into contact with women, there's a split. William gives his sex to a fribble, and his mother holds his soul. But the split kills him, because he doesn't know where he is. The next son gets a woman who fights for his soul- fights his mother. The son loves the mother – all the sons hate and are jealous of the father. The battle goes on between the mother and the girl, with the son as object. The mother gradually proves stronger, because of the tie of blood. The son decides to leave his soul in his mother's hands, and, like his elder brother, go for passion. He gets passion. Then the split begins to tell again. But, almost unconsciously, the mother realises what is the matter, and begins to die. The son casts off his mistress, attends to his mother dying. He is left in the end naked of everything, with the drift towards death."

But *Sons and Lovers* is a more open text than this letter suggests. The autobiographical elements abound in the novel. After his mother's death in 1910, D.H. Lawrence admitted that he hated his father: "«I was born hating my father», he told Mrs. Taylor, «as early as I can remember, I shivered with horror when he touched me... There has been a kind of bond between me and my mother. We have loved each other, almost with a husband and wife love, as well as filial and maternal...We have been like one, so sensitive to each other than we never needed words. It has been rather terrible, and has made me, in some respects, abnormal»"¹.

In the same manner, Paul really hates Walter Morel and this fact makes him reject his father and resists all his attempts to be tender with him. When Morel is in hospital because of an accident, Paul joyfully plays the role of the husband: "I'm the man in the house now". Besides the feelings he has for his father, Paul cannot love either of the women he pretends to be attracted to. He has unsuccessful romances with Miriam Leivers and Clara Dawes. Paul is reluctant to the idea of marriage, considering it to be a prison: "but to give myself to them in marriage, I couldn't." (Lawrence, 2006: 395). On the one hand he rejects Miriam because he is afraid of her love for him: "you love me so much, you want to put me in your pocket. I should die smothered." (Ibidem: 461). On the other hand he always returns to Miriam because his soul desires her patronizing and encouraging company. Still, he refuses to grow up as Miriam mentions: "I said you were fourteen – you are only four." (Ibidem: 340).

In this context, it is not only about the mother –fixation that Paul has for Gertrude, but also about the essence of an artist that hides in his soul and is attracted to Miriam. The love Mrs. Morel offers to her son is safe, secure, but static, while Miriam offers an inspiring love, representing also the opportunity to discuss about new things with younger people.

¹ *Letters*, vol. I: 190

From this point of view, Paul is reluctant even to his mother: “Why do you fly to her so often? I do like to talk to her...Not about the things we talk of. There’s that you are not interested in... You are old mother, and we are young.” (Ibidem: 251).

Besides Miriam and Gertrude, there is another woman in Paul’s life who offers him “the baptism in passion” (Spilka, 1955: 84). If Miriam stands for *spirituality*, Clara represents *sensuality*, but none of them can be the perfect wife, as the two women are limited in their response to Paul. Lawrence’s characters are created according to the relations that are established between them, relations of similarity or difference, of correspondence or distinction. The differences that are used in order to create the characters in the novel form narrative contrasts that make Paul be reluctant to what all his evolution really means.

In using plot, for instance, Lawrence is hardly breaking away from old conventions. Yet his plots are peculiarly his own because they are based on his profound and individual conception of human motivation. Characters are compelled by the force of life within themselves to form or to break relationships with individuals and with all mankind in order to reach the fulfillment of their own individual capabilities. Or they are compelled towards a fulfillment of dissolution by death-urge in themselves. (Miroiu, 1983: 160)

Paul’s repressed sexual behaviour towards Clara and Miriam is also due to the puritanical atmosphere in which he was brought up. The ideas that belong to Puritanism prevent Paul from feeling really free. Paul and the other children of the Morel family are governed by the ideas that everything has to be purified, but they also try to escape Puritanism in a sort of neo-pagan mysticism. In this respect, in *Chapter IV*, when Paul accidentally breaks his sister’s doll, he feels the need to make a sacrifice of the remains in the garden: She was horrified, yet rather fascinated. She wanted to see what the boy would do. He made an altar of bricks, pulled some of the shavings out of Arabella’s body, put the waxen fragments into the hollow face, poured on a little paraffin, and set the whole thing alight. He watched with wicked satisfaction the drops of wax melt off the broken forehead of Arabella, and drop like sweat into the flame.

So long as the stupid big doll burned he rejoiced in silence. At the end he poked among the embers with a stick, fished out the arms and legs, all blackened, and smashed them under stones.

“That’s the sacrifice of Missis Arabella”, he said. “An’ I’m glad there’s nothing left of her.”

Which disturbed Annie inwardly, although she could say nothing. He seemed to hate the doll so intensely, because he had broken it. (Lawrence, 2006: 62-63).

Gertrude is also one of the reluctant characters. She doesn’t want to save her marriage to Walter, but rather focuses on her sons. At the beginning she loved her husband and appreciated him for risking his life daily in the coal mine. But in time, they started quarreling bitterly over the money that Walter spent with no scruples on drinking, thus becoming a selfish, irresponsible alcoholic. Their relationship worsens when one day Walter comes home heavily drunk and locks his pregnant wife out in the moonlight. That is when Mrs. Morel stops loving her husband and starts focusing on her son, William, and the unborn child in her womb, Paul.

The moon was high and magnificent in the August night. Mrs. Morel, seared with passion, shivered to find herself out there in a great white light, that fell cold on her, and gave a shock to her inflamed soul (...). She became aware of something about her. With an effort she roused herself to see what it was that penetrated her consciousness. The tall white lilies were reeling in the moonlight, and the air was charged with their perfume, as with a presence. Mrs. Morel gasped slightly in fear. She touched the big, pallid flowers on their petals, then shivered...Except for a slight feeling of sickness, and her consciousness in the child, herself melted out like scent into the shiny, pale air. After a time the child, too, melted with her in the mixing-pot of moonlight, and she rested with the hills and lilies and houses, all swum together in a kind of swoon. (Ibidem: 27-28)

Mrs. Morel's reluctant character can be seen in the contrast that dominates her relationship with her husband. She is associated with light, while Mr. Morel is associated with darkness as he spends most of his time in the darkness of the pit. Gertrude is determined not to let her sons go down the pit because this might change them forever. This is also a reflection upon what industrialism has done to the society, bringing alienation and dehumanization into families.

Mrs. Morel's reluctance to stop loving her husband is also given by the fact that she belongs to another kind of characters, those inclined towards intellectual relationships, marked by strong emotions and passions. In one of his letters, Lawrence wrote: "I don't much care about what the woman feels- in the ordinary use of the word. That presumes an ego to feel with. I only care about what the woman is- what she IS- inhumanly, physiologically, materially- according to the use of the word...You mustn't look in my novel for the old stable ego of the character. There is another ego according to whose action the individual is unrecognizable."¹

It was suggested that Mrs. Morel dies for her son's convenience. The end of the novel offers Paul the chance to continue, *Sons and Lovers* giving the impression of an open end, presenting his situation as an on-going flux of life:

But no, he would not give in. Turning sharply, he walked towards the city's gold phosphorescence. His fists were shut, his mouth set fast. He would not take that direction, to the darkness, to follow her. He walked towards the faintly humming, glowing town, quickly. (Lawrence, 2006: 428)

Besides the reserved nature of his characters, D.H. Lawrence is reluctant in his narrative style, too: "They want me to have form: that means, they want me to have *their* pernicious ossiferous skin-and-grief form, and I won't."²

Although D.H. Lawrence is considered one of the modernist writers of the 20th century English literature, he was not concerned with the new narrative techniques as his contemporaries. He, as compared to Virginia Woolf, for example, still keeps the use of scenes and summary in his novels, especially in *Sons and Lovers* and *The Rainbow*, where the progress of events is emphasized by this pattern which increases the reader's awareness of an approaching climax.

¹ Letter to Edward Garnett, June 5, 1914

² *Letters*, vol. I, p.492

Lawrence uses modes of organization which were well-established in the English novel long before he was born, but they are constantly changed or expanded or enriched by the demands of each particular subject. Above all, Lawrence adds new kinds of organization to the old, thus building up a depth and complexity in his novels which is quite his own, rather than abandoning the old for the new and writing fiction whose organization is wholly original but perhaps somewhat limited. (Miroiu, 1983: 160).

David Herbert Lawrence presents in the novels his own interpretation of life, the important problems of human existence and the relationships that people have with the other human-beings and with society.

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CHRONIST OHNE BOTSCHAFT: CHRISTOPH HEINS ÄSTHETIK DES (VER)SCHWEIGENS IN „DER FREMDE FREUND / DRACHENBLUT“

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Abstract: Christoph Hein's novella "Der fremde Freund / Drachenblut" was published in 1982. It depicts the destiny and life of the East-Berliner doctor Claudia, whose monologue reveals concealed and internalized traumas. The last ones show significant signs of emotional and verbal reluctance, which go far beyond the private or intimate sphere. Thus, and based on the protagonist's laconism, the present article aims to surface the social stigma of a 'culture of silence' in the former GDR. It also endeavors to emphasize the aesthetic implications of the author's controversial status as 'chronicler without message'.

Keywords: silence, Dragon blood, Hein.

Einleitung

Die Ägyptologen und Kulturwissenschaftler Aleida und Jan Assmann situieren das Schweigen bzw. das Verschweigen in ihrer Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation „jenseits des Horizonts des Kommunizierbaren“ (Assmann, 2013: 9). Dieser Ansatz lässt sich beispielsweise durch Christoph Heins berühmte Novelle *Der fremde Freund / Drachenblut* (1982-1983)¹ auf Grund einer Ästhetik des Schweigens und des strategischen Verschweigens veranschaulichen. Dies impliziert nicht nur subversive und komplexe Mechanismen individueller und kollektiver Zurückhaltung, die die lakonische Diktion der Protagonistin Claudia innehat: es macht zudem den provokativen Autorstatus als ‚Chronist ohne Botschaft‘ (Hammer, 1992) heraus. Die in der Novelle dargestellten Formen verbal-kommunikativer Zögerung entlarven etablierte Kontrollmechanismen einer Kultur des Schweigens und der Staatszensur in der ehemaligen DDR, die heutzutage in einer globalisierten Welt kaum an Aktualität eingebüßt haben. Aus einem symbolischen und onomastischen Gesichtspunkt signalisiert bereits der Vorname der Protagonistin² die traumatisch verinnerlichten Zeichen einer intergenerationalen Tendenz zu verbaler und psychischer Verslossenheit. Daher lässt sich über die strukturell-diskursiven und intersubjektiven Zusammenhänge zwischen der lakonischen Haltung der Hauptfigur und der poetischen Strategie ihres Autors fragen. Weiterhin sollen hiermit ihre Leerstellen an den Tag gelegt werden.

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¹ Im Folgenden als ‚Drachenblut‘ angegeben.

² Der Name „Claudia“ stammt eigentlich aus dem Lateinischen „claudere“ und bedeutet „hinkend“ oder „verschlossen“. Vgl. <https://www.vorname.com/name/Claudia.html#:~:text=Der%20Name%20Claudia%20kommt%20aus,%E2%80%9C%20und%20%E2%80%9Cdie%20Verschlossene%E2%80%9C>. (Zugriff: 31.07.2020 12:33).

Schweigen, Gedächtnis und Entfremdung

„Ich lernte zu schweigen.“ (Drachenblut: 122)

Auch ‚Schweigen‘ lernt man, wie es das obige Eingeständnis der Ich- Protagonistin verbalisiert. Jene lapidare Feststellung verbirgt in sich eine kollektive Kultur des Schweigens, deren Tabus die ostdeutsche Republik lange geprägt hatten. Während ihrer Reise nach G., ihrer Heimatstadt, erinnert sich die Ostberliner Ärztin Claudia im neunten Kapitel an ihre Kindheitszeit, die von Kriegserlebnissen markiert wurde, und deren Erinnerungen für sie unwiderleglich geworden sind (vgl. Drachenblut: 117). Ihre Retrospektive, die durch den chiffrenartigen Buchstaben ‚G‘¹ gekennzeichnet ist, kann im Zeichen einer überindividuellen intergenerationellen Gedächtniskonstruktion gedeutet werden. In Anlehnung an Aleida Assmann haben jene Erinnerungen mit „Repräsentationen zu tun, die unter sozialen Rahmenbedingungen kulturell konstruiert werden.“ (Assmann, 2014: 156).

Die lange verdrängten Kriegstraumata Claudias kommen nach ihrem unklaren Traum im Prolog wieder an die Oberfläche und verraten somit ihre zögernde Verhaltensweise, die man dabei auf Grund einer verstörten Persönlichkeit feststellen kann: „Ich oder die Person, die vielleicht ich selbst bin, zögert.“ (Drachenblut: 7). Signifikant dafür ist das Traummoment, das nach der Lektüre des neunten Kapitels als Wahrheitsmoment entziffert werden kann. Laut Freud liegt Träumen eine Erinnerungsfähigkeit zugrunde (vgl. Freud, in Mitscherlich, Richards (ed.), 1982: 38), die in den Monologen der Hauptfigur zustande kommt. Die zögernde Haltung Claudias findet sogar Ausdruck in der ambivalenten Bezeichnung des Traums als „Traum, oder ein fernes Erinnern“ (Drachenblut: 8), oder im Sinne von Claire Gantet als „Helldunkel“ *eigener* Erkenntnis (vgl. Gantet, in Aurnhammer, Kühlmann (ed.), 2010: 267).

Aus jener Ambivalenz resultiert ein Entfremdungseffekt, der einen topologischen Charakter aufweist und eine Ästhetisierung von Naturlandschaften zur Schau stellt. Aus räumlicher Sicht wird jedoch die Opposition zwischen Natur und Kultur suspendiert; sowohl die Traumlandschaft als auch die Architektur des Wohnhauses Claudias sind Raum- bzw. Anzeichen für zunehmende Fremdheit und Entfremdung, deren Erstarrung mit der Hauptfigur anthropomorphisch zu korrespondieren scheint: „Die unbewegten Gesichter wurden abweisender. Eine schweigende Fahrt in die Tiefe.“ (Drachenblut: 11- 12). Folglich kann eine allegorische Analogie zwischen Claudias innerer Tiefe und der der beschriebenen Räume oder Topoi festgestellt werden. Ihr zögernder Blick in die (ihre) Tiefe erweist sich als Gefahr, „um nicht hinzufallen.“ (Drachenblut: 59). Im Traumtext heißt es: „Ich starre zum Waldstreifen hinüber, unverwandt, um nicht hinunterzublicken.“ (Ebd.: 7). Analog dazu setzt Manfred Pabst jene Raum-Subjekt-Konfiguration Lacan’scher Art in Verbindung mit der Kategorie des Unbewussten:

Lacan begreift das Unbewußte in seiner „radikalen Heteronomie“, einer „Andersheit“, welche die Vorstellung einer psychischen Innerlichkeit aushebelt. Das

¹ Der Buchstabe mag entweder „Gedächtnis“, „Genese“ oder auch „Genealogie“ evozieren.

Unbewusste ist *dis-cursus* (etymologisch) Durchlauf eines Wissens, das sich nicht weiß, da an einem „anderen Schauplatz“ situiert.“ (Pabst, 2004: 149).¹

Schließlich konstituieren diese Elemente eine Phänomenologie des bedingten Schweigens bzw. Verstummens, wobei das Letzte von Claudia im Prolog als unhörbares Selbstreden oder lautloses Schreien (vgl. *Drachenblut*: 8) gekennzeichnet wird. Seine Zeichen sind die einer unbewältigten Fremderfahrung (vgl. Waldenfels, 2016: 24-27), deren Projektionsort in ihrer selbst zu situieren ist.

Der Siegfried-Mythos zwischen Re- und Entmythisierung

Der Siegfried-Mythos (siehe dazu Oberste, 2008: 11), der dem Novellentitel durch das Drachenblutmotiv inhärent ist, gilt in der ganzen Novelle als das Lebensprinzip Claudias. Laut David W. Robinson ist der Leser mit *einer* Claudia der Tiefe und der Oberfläche ständig konfrontiert (Robinson, 1999: 90), was die Symbolik der Drachenhaut semantisch strukturiert²⁵. Ihre gesamte Existenz verbindet Claudia mit Verdrängungen, die im Lauf des Textes durch ein Wortschatzfeld der Haut-Symbolik paradigmatisch artikuliert werden. Claudia zögert somit, eigenen Gefühlen und Emotionen Gehör zu verschaffen. Sie gleichen:

[...] dunklen Kerker[n], unserer Seelen, in die wir einschließen, was die dünne Schale unseres Menschenseins bedroht. Ich verdränge täglich eine Flut von Ereignissen und Gefühlen, die mich demütigen und verletzen.“ (*Drachenblut*: 98).

Auf diese Weise lässt sich die distanzierende Haltung Claudias in den vorigen remythisierten Drachenblut-Mythos versetzen, sodass ihre zwiespältige Persönlichkeit wiederum auf eine doppelte Logik der Oberfläche und Tiefe angewiesen ist. Die folgende Passage vermag die vermeintliche Unverletzlichkeit ihrer Seele und Psyche metaphorisch auszudrücken, sodass Claudia als weibliches und psychisches Pendant zum männlichen germanischen Sigurd-Mythos fungiert:

Mir gefiel es, die andere Haut zu streicheln, ohne den Wunsch zu haben, in sie hineinzukriechen. Vielleicht war meine Zurückhaltung lediglich eine Alterserscheinung. (*Drachenblut*: 36)

Dennoch kennt dieser Mythos zugleich seine Entmythisierungsmomente, die mittels des von Claudia idealisierten, demselben Mythos inhärenten Unverletzlichkeitsprinzips erfolgen. Ihre Achillesferse besteht allerdings in der zerbrochenen Kindheitsfreundschaft mit ihrer Schulfreundin Katharina, so dass – ihrer Behauptung nach – sie kein Lindenblatt irgendwo schutzlos gelassen habe, aus deren Haut sie paradoxerweise nicht mehr herauskommen könne (vgl. ebd.: 173).

Die Paradoxie, die der Persönlichkeit Claudias innewohnt und ihre zögernde Haltung animiert, liegt vor allem in Wortspielen, die der Autor zwecks der Aufdeckung der

¹ Hervorhebungen im Original.

² Dies wird ebenso durch die vieldeutige Semiotik und Motivik des Mantels, den Claudia zur Beerdigung Henrys tragen möchte, hervorgerufen. Für sie sei er „ein Kompromiß“, der sowohl Trauer als auch Schutz bzw. Abwehr gegen die Außenwelt suggeriert: „Noch am Morgen der Beerdigung war ich **unschlüssig**, ob ich hingehen sollte.“ (*Drachenblut*: 11). Hervorhebung von mir.

jeweiligen Widersprüche hochstilisiert. Die folgende Textstelle, die das Wesen desselben Drachenblut-Mythos verbildlicht, enthält ein Oxymoron, das das rhetorisch-negative Raster des Ersteren herausmacht: „Ich bin nicht glücklich, aber ich bin auch nicht unglücklich. Ich bin zufrieden, und das ist viel.“ (Drachenblut: 165).

Die Novelle endet mit den fragwürdigen Eingeständnissen der Berliner Protagonistin, deren Rekurrenz eben das Gegenteil suggerieren mag. Die wiederaufgenommene Aussage „mir geht es gut“ (Ebd.: 175) löst beim Leser eher Skepsis als Glaubwürdigkeit aus. Den gesamten Text durchläuft eine Zwiespältigkeit, die dann aufzeigt, wie Claudia dabei zögert, eigene Schwächen und Verletzlichkeit anzuerkennen.

Negativ-Bilder, Abwehrreflex und Distanzmodus

Der Rekurs auf einen bildlichen Erzählstil im Text fungiert als Konfigurationsmodus jener Zögerungshaltung, deren Zeichen durch das Medium des Fotografierens aufgezeigt werden. Seine Negativ- Bilder entsprechen der visuell-optischen Perspektive Claudias, die sich in der Handlung als kalte und distanzierte Beobachterin erweist. Neva Šlibar und Rosanda Volk zufolge meidet sie das Fotografieren von Menschen und begrenzt sich lediglich auf tote Landschaften, die ihr Innern allegorisch enthüllen (vgl. Šlibar, Volk, in: Arnold (ed.), 1991: 62): „Ich fotografierte den zerfallenen, ziegellosen Dachstuhl, in dem eine kleine Birke wuchs mit hellen, fast farblosen Blättern.“ (Drachenblut: 57). Entscheidend ist das doppelte Moment des Fotografierens als Gestus, der sowohl die Distanz Claudias als auch die akribisch-pikturale Artikulierung ihrer kaum aussprechbaren Selbstdestruktivität und Emotionalität inszeniert. Gegen Ende der Erzählung wirkt das Fotografieren als zugrundegehendes Refugium gegen die unerträgliche Wirklichkeit umso unsicherer und bedrohender: „Neuerdings beginne ich, mich vor meinen Fotos zu fürchten. [...] Eine entseelte Natur, die ich erschuf und die mich nun zu überfluten droht.“ (Drachenblut: 174).

Claudias Distanz bringt vor allem der DDR-Titel der Novelle, nämlich „Der fremde Freund“¹, unmittelbar zum Ausdruck. Sie (d.h. Distanz) charakterisiert nicht nur ihren Umgang mit Verwandten oder Kollegen, sondern auch und gar ihr Verhältnis zu ihrem Liebhaber Henry, dem der Status des fremden Freundes zukommt. Diese kalte Beziehung betrachtet Claudia vermeintlich positiv und hält sie allerdings als Abwehr gegen mögliche affektiv- emotionale Enttäuschungen: „Zu Hause küßte er mich, und ich sagte, daß er mir sehr fremd sei. [...] Unsere Distanz gab unserem Verhältnis eine spröde und angenehme Vertraulichkeit.“ (Drachenblut: 35). Ihre Parallele zum „fotografischen“ Abstand vermag die Zweideutigkeit des Negativs zu symbolisieren, und zwar als Bestandteil des Fotoapparats, Charakteristik dessen Bilder sowie als Substantiv adjektivischer Prägung. Die Bilder-Welt der Protagonistin entpuppt sich demzufolge als eine auf sich selbst verschlossene Welt, die keinem verraten sein dürfte: „Obwohl ich nur von wenigen Negativen Vergrößerungen anfertige, [...] habe [ich] mit ihnen nichts vor. Ich will sie nicht ausstellen, und ich zeige sie auch keinem.“ (Drachenblut: 87).

¹ Neben der Tatsache, dass die Novelle Heins wegen des Urheberrechts in West- und Ostdeutschland einen unterschiedlichen Titel tragen musste, ermöglicht diese Doppelheit eine multiperspektivische, kontextbedingte Lektüre und Rezeption.

Der Negativität ihrer (psychischen) Bilder scheint Claudia nicht entkommen zu können. Sie lassen die Maske *ihrer* Hilflosigkeit fallen (vgl. Ebd.: 76), deren Fatalität nun unentrinnbar zu sein scheint: „Ich war überzeugt, daß ich niemals meine Distanz zu Menschen aufgeben durfte, um nicht hintergangen zu werden, um mich selbst nicht zu hintergehen.“ (*Ibidem*: 59). Uneingestanden ist in dieser Hinsicht ihre Furcht vor dem Fremdheitsverlust und vor jeglicher Nähe zu einem anderen Menschen (vgl. S. 63). Auch wenn sie Sehnsucht nach Liebe und menschlichem Kontakt hat und es im Endeffekt erkennt, empfindet sie immer mehr Schwierigkeit, Kontakt mit den Anderen zu knüpfen oder aufrechtzuerhalten – beispielsweise mit Anne, ihrer Kollegin (vgl. S. 16). Dies entspricht wiederum eine bildliche Transposition, die an ihren Fotos erkennbar ist: „Ich wollte fotografieren, aber es fiel mir zunehmend schwer, Objekte zu finden.“ (Drachenblut: 163).

Gleichgültigkeit, Ironie und Sarkasmus

Aus rhetorischer und diskursiver Sicht ist das Phänomen der verbalen Zögerung auf zwei Ebenen wahrnehmbar: auf der Mikroebene, die im Grunde die lakonische Diktion, die Gleichgültigkeit und den ironisch- sarkastischen Erzählton von Claudias Monologen umfasst. Auf der Makroebene operiert Hein mit Distanzierungseffekten und einer gewissen Ironie, die beim Leser den Effekt einer Appell-Funktion auslöst. Heikle Themen und kritische Urteile werden in der Novelle mittels einer Ästhetik der „Diskretion“ verschlüsselt, sodass der Leser im Sinne eines Barthes'schen Partizipationsprinzips den Status eines

„Mitautors“ erhält und am Text selber arbeiten soll (vgl. Barthes, 2002: 448).

Neben den vom Autor selbst kundgegebenen „Kosten der Zivilisation“ (Hein, in: Baier (ed.), 1990: 69) zielt sein Diskurs darauf ab, die Unzulänglichkeiten des ehemaligen totalitären SED-Staates an den Tag zu legen und sie fiktional zu problematisieren. Die von der DDR damals ausgeübte Kulturpolitik und Staatszensur werden beispielsweise durch die folgende ironische Aussage Henrys über die Art und Weise, wie alle Wohnungen eingerichtet werden konnten, thematisiert; der Gebrauch der indirekten Rede verstärkt des im Text dominierenden Distanzierungseffektes:

Dann redete er über das Zimmer, sagte, daß alle Leute in diesem Haus ihre Wohnung auf gleiche Art eingerichtet hätten [...] Wenn jemand Bücher besitze und dafür ein Regal benötige, so müsse dieses neben der Tür aufgestellt werden und das Bett folglich am Fenster. Und wenn er dann noch sehe, bemerkte er vergnügt, daß in den Regalen an dem notwendigerweise gleichen Platz auch noch die gleichen Bücher zu finden seien, so habe er Lust, sich eine Kugel in den Kopf zu schießen. (Drachenblut, 28).

Allerdings veranschaulicht Heins Novelle allgemeinere soziale Kontrollmechanismen, die durch Claudias Apathie, Verharmlosung und Gleichgültigkeit symptomatisch erkennbar werden. Den Tod und die Beerdigung ihres ‚fremden‘ Freundes Henry setzt sie mit der absurden „Zusammengehörigkeit mit einer Leiche“ (Ebd.: 17) gleich. Ihr sei dann besser, ein „Verhältnis zu den Möbeln“ ihrer Wohnung zu ziehen (vgl. S.25). Auch familiäre Beziehungen wirken ebenso gleichgültig und affektlos, so dass Claudia ihre eigene Mutter als fremde Person bezeichnet:

Die Frau, die neben mir auf dem Bett saß, tat mir leid, aber weiter konnte ich kein Gefühl für sie aufbringen. [...] Wir sahen uns selten, so selten, daß es ihr doch auch gleichgültig sein mußte. (Drachenblut: 37).

Weiterhin werden die Narrative der Indifferenz und der allgemeinen „Pathologisierung“ bzw. Verwahrlosung der Gesellschaft (siehe dazu Starke, in Schetsche, Schmidt (ed.), 2010: 67) durch ihren kalten „analytischen“ Wortschatz mit artikuliert: „Wozu Erklärungen, wozu das Vokabular der Psychiatrie bemühen. Ein Resultat des wissenschaftlichen Zeitalters: Leben als klinischer Befund [...]“ (Drachenblut: 46).

Die Präsenz einer Autorironie im vielschichtigen Erzählablauf weist selbstreflexive Momente, deren Textstellen die Haltung Heins gegenüber seinem eigenen Diskurs vermuten lassen. Einerseits drücken sie seine Verweigerung jeglicher Belehrung des Lesers aus. Andererseits rufen sie die Notwendigkeit einer Distanzierung zwecks kritischer Reflexion hervor. Beide Aspekte werden in folgenden Schlüsselstellen durch den polyphonen Charakter eines pronominalen Spiels sowie auf Grund einer paradigmatischen Ambiguität dargeboten. Diese reflektiert den Autorstatus durch das Prisma eines „Voyeurs“: Auf einer Party ist Claudia, zusammen mit Henry, einem „lustigen“ Künstler begegnet, der Folgendes äußert: „Wir sind nur noch Voyeure, sagte er, und nur wenn wir Voyeure sind, sind wir Künstler.“ (Ebd.: 73). Heins Stimme begleitet sozusagen die Claudias, wobei er den vermeintlich belanglosen Charakter mancher Erzählmomente – wie das Verfassen von Postkarten – subversiert: „Belanglose[n] Mitteilungen über auswechselbare Gefühle. Ein dummer Text, der mir selbst unangenehm war. Ich fühlte mich nicht fähig, wirklich etwas mitzuteilen.“ (Drachenblut: 66).

Schlussbetrachtungen

Christoph Heins Motto ‚Chronist ohne Botschaft‘ liegt die Logik eines intersubjektiven Stimmenspiel zugrunde. Das Wort ‚ohne‘ ist keinesfalls mit ‚nichts‘ gleichzusetzen, da das Erstere auf eine implizite Autor-Leser-Kommunikation abzielt und jenen verbal- erzählerischen „Abstinenzgestus“ sozusagen subversiv und elliptisch begründet. Der Autor appelliert an den Leser im Sinne einer Barthes’schen Partizipation am Text, um die encodierte und distanzierende Diktion seiner Protagonistin unter die Lupe zu nehmen. Ihr Lakonismus gehört zu den Narrativen einer Kultur des (Ver)Schweigens, die auf kulturelle und soziopolitische Verdrängungs- und Kontrollmechanismen beruht. Zensur und die vom Autor selbst verübte Selbstzensur sind deren (mögliche) Folgen, die im Novellentext Leerstellen aufweisen. Diese sollen dann vom Leser erkannt werden. Der provokative Gehalt jenes Mottos suggeriert eigene Introspektion und Retrospektion, die die Voraussetzungen individueller und kollektiver Zögerungs- und Zurückhaltungsformen zu entlarven vermögen. Claudias distanzierende Haltung (oder Zurückhaltung) ist der Ausdruck einer Selbst-Entfremdung, deren Verfremdungscharakter eine Ästhetik der Fremderfahrung impliziert. Ihr Medium ist eigentlich der Körper, der als Projektionsraum eines ent- und remythisierten Drachenblut- Mythos fungiert. Es stellt sich heraus, dass eine doppelte Logik der Oberfläche und Tiefe die ideelle und diskursive Struktur jener Zurückhaltung konstituiert. Schließlich kann ihre Selbstdestruktivität mit der folgenden

Aussage Walter Benjamins zusammengefasst werden: „Der destruktive Charakter verwischt sogar die Spuren der Zerstörung.“ (Benjamin, 1977: 290).

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POSSIBLE WORLDS, QUANTUM PHYSICS AND PLAY: NICK PAYNE'S "CONSTELLATIONS"

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Abstract: *This article discusses Nick Payne's play, Constellations, from the perspective of possible world theory and quantum physics. The play is analyzed from several angles: formal structure, plot, actualization of possible worlds in an attempt to sketch the characteristics of contemporary drama such as it is envisioned by Payne.*

Keywords: *possible worlds, quantum physics, drama, boundaries, blur.*

Nick Payne's *Constellations*, which premiered in 2012 at the Royal Court Theatre, is an outstanding take on the subjects of possible worlds and quantum physics which are played out, stylistically, in an extremely innovative way of expressing dramatic structure, temporality and space. This paper will discuss the implications of using possible world theory for playwriting.

The play is written in a non-linear, non-chronological fashion, managing, at the same time, to remain fully coherent and expressive. It is based on the possible world theory that everything we think, do, might enact or might become is kept intact in a multitude of possible worlds which, even though they might not be accessible to us in a direct, traditional fashion, exist nonetheless in the multiverse. This tenet is in correspondence with quantum physics idea that all quantum measurements in the "real" world are physically measurable in some other (possible) world. The genius of Nick Payne is that of short-circuiting the so-far neat boundaries among these worlds and making us witness their encounter. The effect on the actual writing of the play is rightly game-changing.

The plot revolves around a couple – Marianne and Roland – and their at times bumpy love story. She is a researcher in quantum mechanics and he is a beekeeper. After a first failed encounter, the two meet in different other contexts up till the moment they are finally together. From then on, we see their relationship evolve to intimacy and tenderness, through other separations, other lovers or stories, up till the climactic moment when Marianne learns she is fatally ill – brain cancer. The two will opt together – not without Roland's misgivings – for assisted suicide. However, this is not the last scene of the play. The play ends in one of the moments when they are brought back together. All these scenes are played out in a non-chronological manner.

One of the key-texts for understanding the play is when Marianne explains the main idea of quantum physics to Roland:

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Marianne: Now, potentially, one way of explaining this is to draw the conclusion that, at any given moment, several outcomes can co-exist simultaneously.

[...]

In the quantum multiverse, every choice, every decision you've ever and never made exists in an unimaginably vast ensemble of parallel universes.

She then goes on to state that it is not only everything we have ever done but everything we have never done (thoughts, feelings, aspirations, etc.) that becomes actualized in another possible world. From this perspective, the plot of the play can be interpreted in various ways: 1) an attempt to create a "real" story out of a failed encounter – what might have been; 2) an attempt to expand the limited time Roland and Marianne have together by telling their story in all its possible manifestations; 3) a contemporary time katharsis to the problem of death – if time is non-linear and everything we have ever or never done exists, then death really becomes irrelevant.

It is astonishing that about half of the text of the play is repeated several times with different outcomes without this becoming boring or repetitive even from the beginning of the play, which starts on the somewhat arbitrary and playful motif of the possibility of licking one's own elbows:

Marianne: Do you know why it's impossible to lick the tips of your elbows? They hold the secret to immortality, so if you could lick them, there's a chance you'd be able to live forever. But if everyone did it, everyone could actually lick the tips of their elbows, then there'd be chaos. Because you can't just go one living and living and living.

Payne brilliantly ties an arbitrary, trivial phenomenon to one of the most daunting philosophical matters: immortality, from the beginning of the play. He has his character, Marianne, who is a scientist, repeat this idea several times, thus giving credibility to both character and story while at the same time imploding the stability of the events. It's as if the characters were trapped in the same situation *ad infinitum* until the desired outcome is brought to fruition. This is done by juxtaposing several possible worlds, which, in the play, has the effect of creating an impression of infinity and imponderability.

From the perspective of possible world theory, the play revolves around the motif of "what might have been". Thus, the relationship between Marianne and Roland is constructed bit by bit, on the one hand, from failed encounters or miscommunications, to attraction and attachment. We can conjecture, from this point of view, that the whole story could be the *mise-en-scène* of what happens in one's mind after one such encounter between two people who are kindred spirits but fail to connect due to arbitrariness, bad timing, etc. The play has a lot to say about the inner workings of the brain starting from Marianne's musings on quantum theory and ending with the gradual decay of her brain capacities as revealed by her inability to use language. All this time, we are under the impression that some important truths are about to be revealed but they are lost because she cannot utter them anymore:

Marianne: People's lives were their own. Before it became skin

Skin, it became

Skin?

Roland: Skin?

Marianne: Mum wasn't scared of dying, she was scared of being kept alive. You know?

We can notice a great degree of poeticity in the language employed by Nick Payne and his wish seems that of defamiliarizing – breaking the stereotypes – around all the philosophical matters addressed in his play: death, time, love, linearity. We can see this resistance to clichés when Marianne retells Roland the kinds of things people say upon the death of loved ones:

Marianne: There's so much bullshit.

Roland: You mean on the –

Marianne: When someone dies.

Roland: Right.

Marianne: There's so much bullshit. 'When your time's up your time's up.'

Roland: Right.

Marianne: 'Time', I mean what on earth are they talking about?

Roland: Why don't we –

*Marianne: 'She was a real fighter.' Was she? Well, she obviously didn't do a good
***** job, did she? (55).*

Time is indeed crucial to the understanding of death for both characters. Time perceived in this non-linear, no beginning, no end, fashion relativizes death and transfigures the world into a playground of (scientific) miracles. This way of understanding reality gives one courage and agency. Thus, although Marianne appears at first a bit divorced from reality through her involvement with her research, she is granted agency and dignity in front of death: the choice to put an end to a degradation that risks to erase the very texture of reality. From this perspective, Payne does a wonderful job suggesting that language and our ways of expressing ourselves create certain realities or universes. When Marianne starts to lose her ability to speak, the scenes become shorter and fractured:

Marianne: It's not just the speaking.

Roland: Okay now I don't understand?

Marianne: Reading. I'm having trouble – Numbers, words, on the page. I don't know how to explain it. Typing. Typing, as well.

Roland: In what way?

Marianne: I know the word. I know the word I'm trying to type. But I don't know the letters.

None of the letters seem right. Rea

Rea

Rea

Roland: You don't need to finish.

Marianne: I want to. (20)

This fragmentation is in tune with the fragile texture of reality inherent in the display of several possible worlds next to one another. If the key to immortality is the fracturing of reality, do we really want to become immortal? Payne's answer seems to be 'no' since he grants his heroine the final agency, the right to choose over her own life.

The implications of using this type of structure for contemporary playwrighting are remarkable and the viewer is educated to following a plot that is no longer linear or logically connected but to witness episodes in various moments in time in a non-chronological way. This is achieved through stage set, music, change of lights and, not in the least, through actors' play which changes dramatically from one scene to the next. Thus, even if whole passages are repeated, the way they are acted out changes significantly every time.

This is in correspondence with Marianne's description of time as viewed by quantum physics:

Marianne: L-listen to me, please. The basic laws of physics – The b-b-basic laws of physics don't have a past and a present. Time is irrelevant at the level of a-toms and molecules. It's symmetrical.

We have all the time we've always had.

You'll still have all our time.

Once I

Once

Once

There's not going to be any more or less of it.

Once I'm gone. (68-69).

There is a sort of contemporary age hopefulness in Payne's play as well as a sense of a never-ending story, a newfound transcendence in this tragedy told with great subtlety and wisdom. Through the agency of possible world theory and quantum physics, the play becomes an embodiment of all possibilities contained in our language, our thoughts and our lives.

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A BRIEF STUDY OF RETICENCE IN ESP CLASSES

Mirela COSTELEANU *

Abstract: *As a complex phenomenon, reticence has been proved to exist in foreign language classroom, affecting the learning of the target language. Students' low proficiency, their fear of being corrected by their teachers or laughed at by their peers are two of the factors that lead to their unwillingness to take part in classroom activities, especially in speaking activities. The compulsory nature of the second language course may exacerbate the problem by negatively influencing students' motivation to participate in communication activities. Students rarely volunteer answers and even clear-cut answers may be followed by periods of silence. Given that language primarily exists to facilitate communication, interaction in English has an important role to play in developing learners' ability to use English effectively and correctly. Since interaction will not happen spontaneously, it is teachers' responsibility to find the right methods to encourage students to increase their involvement in classroom discussions.*

Keywords: *reticence, speaking, skills.*

As Dudley-Evans and St John point out, "in the earlier years of ESP development, spoken interactions received almost no attention" (2007:106). Students spent so much time learning about the language that they rarely had time to use it in a genuine way. The result was that most students gave up studying a foreign language once they realised they weren't going to achieve their main objective - that of being able to speak it fluently. Nowadays, speaking plays a vital role in language acquisition. Learning a second language is not only about knowing its grammatical rules. It is also about being able to communicate accurately outside the classroom. Learners improve their speaking skills by sharing ideas, discussing information, negotiating meaning and understanding what is spoken to them in different circumstances (Anton, 1999). Baker and Westrup (2003) state that a classroom is not only a place where students learn the rules of a language, but also a place where they can practise using the language in a supportive environment. Clarke (1996) shows that the learner's use and development of English is not restricted to the development of grammatical structures and vocabulary. It also includes the development of communicative aspects such as attracting and sustaining attention, managing interactions in groups and with different speakers as well as the development of positive attitudes towards themselves as learners.

1. Causes and effects of reticence in ESP classes

The success of foreign language learning is closely connected with the willingness to engage in foreign language communication. A large number of students are reluctant to express their ideas in front of their peers. Whereas the causes of their reticence remain

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unclear, the effect of their passivity in the long run is obvious - it turns out to be a barrier to language acquisition. Learners' involvement in classroom activities, on the other hand, shows that they are ready to "move from semantic processing prevalent in comprehension to the syntactic processing needed for production" (Swain and Lapkin, 1995:375).

There are various causes of students' reticence in ESP classes. Students are reluctant to actively participate in speaking activities if they are not interested in the topic chosen by the teacher or if they don't have enough knowledge about it. On the other hand, students may be interested in the topic and they may have solid knowledge about it, but they are unwilling to become active because they lack the vocabulary needed to speak about it freely.

ESP teachers need to choose topics very carefully. They need to make sure they select topics that have already been discussed by students with their subject specialist teachers. If they are familiar with the topic, they will not have difficulty talking about it.

Learners may feel intimidated if they are not given enough introduction to the topic before they are asked to speak. Teachers should familiarize students with the topic, give them time to mentally rehearse what they are going to say and do a vocabulary task to make sure they know the words they need in order to perform the task. Students' performance will be much better if they are given the chance to think about what they are going to say and how they are going to say it.

Since a group of students is generally heterogeneous in point of level of proficiency, their attitude to speaking differs from one learner to another. Low-proficiency learners are the least willing to communicate in the classroom. On the other hand, high-proficiency learners have generally a positive attitude towards speaking.

Students' willingness to participate in speech communication also depends on their aims. ESP learners study English for different reasons. The ability to communicate effectively with superiors, colleagues, business contacts etc is essential, no matter what industry they will work in. Those who are aware of the importance of being able to communicate effectively not only as students but also as employees will take advantage of any opportunity to improve their basic communication skills.

When it comes to speaking in class, each student has a unique personality. Some students are eager to contribute on any topic, whether they have enough knowledge about it or not. They are always relaxed and feel free to express their opinions in front of the class. They are not afraid of making mistakes and being corrected by their teacher. Their willingness to speak can be attributed to their high level of proficiency, their open personality as well as to their pleasant public speaking experiences.

Some students are more reserved and they can be coaxed into the conversation with some effort. Once they start talking, they gain confidence and communicate as clearly and effectively as the students in the first group. In other words, their communication issues have nothing to do with their English level, but rather with their cautious personality.

Some other students are very uncomfortable with the idea of speaking to a large group in English. They refuse to talk because they don't know how to or because they are afraid of making a fool of themselves in front of their peers.

Those students who do the talking will make a lot of progress whereas those who avoid speaking will stagnate. It is teachers' responsibility to find ways to encourage reluctant students to take part in classroom conversations.

2. Teachers' strategies to deal with students' reticence

There are several strategies teachers can resort to in order to encourage reluctant talkers to become active participants in classroom activities.

Teachers should tell students in advance that they will ask them to give an answer. Thus, students are aware of the fact that they are expected to contribute in class. ESP students should understand from the very beginning that they will be able to acquire language if they take advantage of any opportunity to use the language in interaction with other students. ESP students study English with a clear goal in mind. Whereas in ESL all four language skills - reading, listening, speaking and writing - are given equal importance, in ESP it is a needs analysis that shows which language skills are most needed by students, the syllabus being designed accordingly. Students may need to use the telephone with English-speaking business contacts or they may need to talk to customers into buying their products. Teachers can resort to different tools such as interviews and questionnaires, to find out as much as possible about students' exact communication needs.

Quiet students will feel at ease if they are involved in small group discussions. By dividing the class into smaller discussion groups, shy students will feel more encouraged to take the floor. The better teachers know their classes, the easier it will be for them to organise students into homogenous groups. Thus, the discussion won't be monopolised by the most extrovert students. On the other hand, it is the teacher's responsibility to make sure that each and every student feels comfortable in his/her group. Teachers should also ensure that all the students participate equally in the discussion.

Students are more eager to talk in a friendly, relaxed atmosphere. A positive classroom atmosphere helps students learn and develop. It increases student academic achievements, leading to increased self-esteem. Teachers can create a good atmosphere by being positive and having a constructive attitude. Learners will feel more productive in well-organised environments. If teachers are able to create a classroom environment where learners know they aren't expected to be perfect, even the shyest ones will start to participate more. If they are encouraged constantly and given positive feedback, the results will be soon visible.

Teachers themselves may be the main cause of students' reluctance to speak. Finding the silence in class awkward, some teachers tend to do all the talking. They seem to forget that their role is not restricted to talking just like students' role is not limited to listening. Most teachers at the beginning of their career have difficulty in finding the right techniques to help students speak in front of the whole class. There are several techniques teachers can use in order to increase student talking time. They should give students enough time to prepare their answers because not all of them are spontaneous. They should allow them to help one another. If a student cannot answer a question, another student should be asked to answer it. *Yes/No* questions should be avoided as much as possible. On the other hand, questions with *why, when, how often, where* etc. challenge them to speak longer.

Harmer (2013:142) makes a distinction between *accuracy* and *fluency*. Some classroom activities are designed to expect the students' complete accuracy whereas others are designed to improve language fluency. Communicative activities are meant to encourage students to use the language as fluently as possible. During these activities, it is generally thought that teachers should not interrupt students to correct their grammatical or lexical mistakes. They will associate speaking with a negative experience if they are interrupted by the teacher or, even worse, by their peers every time they make a mistake. As Harmer points out, the way teachers "respond to students when they speak in a fluency activity will have a significant bearing not only on how well they perform at the time but also on how they behave in fluency activities in the future" (op. cit. :145). What teachers should pay attention to is the content, not the language form. Yet, there are times when the teacher has to intervene. If the teachers' interventions are tactful, there is no reason for students to feel embarrassed and discouraged. There are various techniques that can be used by teachers in order to show incorrectness. No matter the method used, it has to be gentle and constructive. Overcorrection should be avoided because it may bring the speaking activity to a standstill.

Teachers can ask students to reflect on their learning processes. Thus, they can obtain insights into students' own thoughts about their learning, the difficulties they encounter, their learning plans for the future, their attitude to speaking as well as their reactions to classroom activities. This technique can be beneficial to both the teacher and the learner.

3. What can students do to develop their speaking skills and overcome the fear of speaking in class?

There are people who believe that speaking is something you are good at or not. In fact, speaking is something you can build up through practice. There are some techniques ESP students can use to improve their speaking skills.

a. Speech shadowing

This technique is mainly about imitation. They can listen to the way native speakers talk and then they can copy them. Students should also listen to their teachers as well as to their peers. By listening to better speakers, reluctant talkers have a good opportunity to develop their own speaking skills.

b. Recorded conversations

When listening to conversations they have had with their peers, students can evaluate their own performance, noticing which areas they need to improve.

c. Reading aloud

When there are no conversation partners available, students can practise speaking by reading aloud. Reading an accessible English book may slow down their reading speed, but it will surely develop their speaking skills.

d. Self-talk

There is no pressure for students when they talk to themselves. Since there is nobody around to hear their possible mistakes and laugh at them, they will have no difficulty speaking out their minds.

e. Participation in public speaking events

Some students think they do not have enough opportunities to practise their speaking skills because they do not live in an English-speaking country. They can register for various events organised by their universities and get a good opportunity to develop their speaking skills.

4. Conclusion

In conclusion, the skill of speaking in the target language may be said to be the most challenging for language learners due to its highly interactive nature. Reluctant speakers tend to avoid communication particularly in new situations which make them feel insecure and prone to make mistakes. Although teachers generally dislike dealing with shy or withdrawn students, it is their responsibility to find the right tools to make them understand that being a good communicator is far from being an inborn talent. It takes a lot of practice and hard work to become a good spontaneous speaker.

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TRANSLATOR'S RETICENCE IN AUDIOVISUAL TRANSLATION - GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS ON TRANSCREATION IN TV ADVERTISEMENTS

Bianca DABU *

Abstract: *The translator relies on professional standards of integrity and thoroughness, ensures maximum communication between source and target language and deals with appropriate relations of equivalence in translation. Thus, equivalence implies not only translation as a type of rewriting (Lefevere 1992: 9), but a transfer of cultural issues that the translator should skillfully render. How reticent or visible should a translator be within this process? The principle of reticence in communication can be applied in translation where the translator is a vehicle between the author and the audience. During the translation process the translator's inner voice becomes determinant, of vital responsibility. Venuti (1995:1) introduces the term invisibility "to describe the translator's situation and activity". Being a multi-faceted activity and a form of creative writing, the translators must listen to their ear. The process of transcreation, is not just an exact match of a word-for-word translations of the text in a different language, but a challenge to find the "cultural inscription of a term" rather than reconstructing its value.*

Keywords: *translator's inner voice, invisibility, ear, translated society, transcreation*

1. Translator's reticence: inner voice or invisibility?

The translator as a main conductor of the translation endeavour undertakes miscellaneous ways to achieve its goals confining to norms and regulations attached to the process itself that govern both the translator's decision-making procedures and the final translation product.

Toury states that there is no translation ever totally adequate or totally acceptable standardization and interference (1995:267-279). The accommodation to the norms of the target culture envisages the sociocultural factors of the different languages. Toury (1995:61) considers that norms perform a prescriptive function and "determine the (type and extent of) equivalence manifested in actual translations". The translator has to consider the right shifts – obligatory and non-obligatory – for the various stages of translation in the target language: if the target culture norms prevail, then the target text will be *acceptable* (id.:57).

As there may sometimes be a clash between the norm "authorities" and society in general, the professional norms that "regulate the translation process itself" (Chesterman¹,1997:66) include ethical, social and linguistic norms. The translator relies on

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¹ Cruz-Garcia (2018) quotes Chesterman with a view to the notion of translation: *Chesterman (2006:4) says, "[d]ifferent times and cultures may well conceptualize the notion of 'translation' in very different ways. To what extent might such conceptualizations overlap? Could there be a universal prototype notion of translation?"*

professional standards of integrity and thoroughness, ensures maximal communication between source and target language and deals with appropriate relations of equivalence in translation.

Bassnett and Lefevere (1990:11) go beyond language and focus on the interaction between translation and culture, on the way in which culture impacts and constrains translation and on “the larger issues of context, history and convention”. Thus, equivalence implies not only translation *as a type of rewriting* (Lefevere 1992: 9), but a transfer of cultural issues that the translator should skillfully render in order to be comprehensible although preserved within the boundaries of their culture of origin.

A translator’s creativity is an essential element in the translation process as it incorporates “the original’s mode of signification” (Benjamin, 1992:79). Aranda (2009:25) claims that,

A cursory glance at creative strategies might reveal only processes of incorporation or elimination, as if translation were a reformulation where the choices were either compromise or haphazard invention. However, the creativity of original thoughts and divergent thinking needed in translation takes on many forms and as a linguistic device negotiates form and content.

How reticent or visible should a translator be within this process?

Tim Beasley-Murray¹ (2013) referring to Bakhtin’s quietism in relation with the concept of dialog and silence defines reticence:

[...] the form of human silence that I focus on here, is that which precedes speech, rather than the silence that follows the end of speech². [...] Reticence, then, is a component of the threshold situation, where the subject hovers between being and nonbeing, and that hovering is analogous to what this symposium has referred to as “fuzziness.” Hovering on the threshold of speech, reticence is not empty; it contains something to be said but not yet said, and held back.

In the act of communication, “a word is a bridge thrown between me and another” (2013:438), thus a two-sided act of speech in which both participants rely on each other. Any disfunction in the uttering may disturb the understanding of the meaning. Beasley-Murray emphasises that “*Like us, our listeners are human beings, prone to error, prone to merely partial understanding, and above all mortal. An awareness of this risk might point away from the world on hand and the addressees on hand, and lead us toward reticence*” (2013:439).

The principle of reticence in communication can be applied in translation where the translator is a vehicle between the author and the audience. Thus, if the author “*can never turn over his whole self and his speech work to the complete and final will of addressees*

¹ Murray in his study, *RETICENCE AND THE FUZZINESS OF THRESHOLDS, A Bakhtinian Apology for Quietism*, opens a discussion concerning Bakhtin’s quietism, although, at first glance, this would seem peculiar as long as Bakhtin is the theorist of polyphony, heteroglossia, and dialogue.

² “Etymologically, reticence may be traced to the Latin *tacere*, to “keep silent” or “be quiet.” *Re-*functions here as an intensive prefix that carries with it connotations of restraint and reserve. *Tacere* is used only for the silence of human beings, the absence of speech; its counterpart is *silere*, which denotes the silence of nature”.

who are on hand” (Bakhtin quoted in Beasley-Murray, 2013:439), nor can the translator. Translator’s reticence in translation will envisage the role of a silent voice or “second voice” (Hermans, 1996:27) who deals with the (un)translatability of the author and his work¹. Herman points out that the **Translator’s Voice**, which may remain entirely hidden, unable to be detected, could also be in paratexts, like prefaces, footnotes, translator’s notes etc.

During the translation process the translator’s **inner voice** becomes determinant, of vital responsibility (Peden, 1987:9) “[...] *quidding all choices of cadence and tone and lexicon and syntax [...] phrasing and timing [...]*.” Peden points out that at the heart of translation resides an interactive process of careful reading, critical analysis, and skillful creative writing.

At the same time, researchers agree that the translator’s voice² is one element in a *multi-voicedness*. Alvstad et al. (2017:7) pursuing Bakhtin’s concept of polyphony (1981) makes a presentation of several other categories of voices involved in the process of translation:

Another influential voice is that of the translation’s copy editor, whose views on linguistic and stylistic issues in the target culture affect the transfer from the source text to the target text. Words, sentences, or passages may also be conditioned by voices from other directions, such as a previous translation into the same or another language (see Taivalkoski-Shilov 2015a), a review of the source text or a previous translation, or comments from the publisher or the author to the translator. Living source-text authors are interested parties regarding the words that the translator chooses, although their involvement in the translation process may differ greatly [...].

Venuti (1995:1) introduces the term **invisibility**” to describe the translator’s situation and activity”. Venuti sees this invisibility at two levels: at the level of translator’s work and the manner in which s/he creates an ‘illusion of transparency’ when producing an idiomatic and ‘readable’ target text that can be read fluently and at the level of the text itself that can be read in the target culture.

Venuti points out that a translated text,

[...] is judged acceptable when it reads fluently, when the absence of any linguistic or stylistic peculiarities makes it seemtransparent, giving the appearance that it reflects the foreign writer’s personality or intention or the essential meaning of the foreign text – the appearance, in other words, that the translation is not in fact a translation, but the ‘original’.

If Venuti considers translator’s invisibility the main quality of a successful translation product, Rabassa (1984) opposes the idea of translation as an act of invisibility. He has often said that the act of translation has similar characteristics to those of writing³. Being a multi-

¹ Derrida (1985) coins the phrase ‘*untranslatable translation*’ and affirms that ‘nothing is untranslatable; but in another sense everything is untranslatable’ (Derrida, 1985:57)

² Zhang Qun-xing in a well-documented article, *Translator’s Voice in Translated Texts*, aims to present an overview of the conceptual development of the translator’s voice in translation studies “*from different perspectives like narratology, stylistics, socio-narrative theory, speech-act theory etc.*” (2016:178)

³ Guzman (2008:214-5) analyses Rabassa’s approach to a translator’s work. “*He does not believe that the translation should be “a clone” of the original (2005, p. 234)—and acknowledges that the*

faceted activity and a form of creative writing, the translators must listen to their *ear*. The translator often considers that his/her work is intuitive and therefore, s/he must possess “*an all-hearing and receptive ear through which [s/]he has stored up a great treasure of expressions, words, and turns of phrase*” (1984:35). At the same time, in Rabassa’s estimation, the translator should switch alternatively from the level of a writer to that of a critic or reader having perspective on both the process of creative writing and its transfer into another language.

In similar vein, Munday (2008:150) tackles the concept of *creativity* defined by Loffredo and Perteghella¹ (2006) as a growing theme. Understanding creativity in translation hinges on acknowledging both the writer’s and the translator’s subjectivity. “*The crossover between translation and creative writing has begun to be explored, linking with the mechanics of reading, cognitive processing and the experimental reformulation of the source*” (Munday, *ibid.*). At the same time, a translator’s creativity can be considered a form of critical practice, a competence that involves “responsability”.

Due to the fact that translation retraces the creative impulse of the original (Aranda, 2009:24), both writer and translator are equally constrained by “*the handling and crafting of the raw material of language*” (Perteghella and Loffredo, 2007:10).

2. Transcreation in TV Advertisements

Translation is always a “challenging issue” (Babae, 2014:1) as there are several aspects to take into account. While some scholars think that translation should be a strict reflection of the style of the original text, others suggest that the text is untranslatable unless it is reproduced. The translation process means not only to analyse and evaluate the source message and to translate it into another language, but, more than that also, to preserve the same kind of linguistic structure. This is of great significance in short messages especially, as those in advertisements.

Advertisers want their texts to draw our attention. “*Marketing experts and advertising agencies are interested in the language of advertising to find the tricks how to make advertising more effective*” (Lapsanská, 2006:11). Copywriter’s purpose is to make us observe messages for reacting immediately or to conceive a favorable attitude toward product/advertising described service (Goddard, 2002:25). Affective involvement of the receiver of the message is determined by an aesthetic mechanism symbolically forged on the general sensitiveness. (Ruști: 2005:193).

The translation of advertisements is always conditioned by the target markets and the target audience. That is why, according to the motto: *Think global, act local*, global

translator’s experience is expressed in the text s/he produces, he does not grant translation the originality that would make it a text of the same order of the original or “the authorized copy””.

¹ “*From the hierarchy of original and copy ensues the vertical relationship of author and translator, demarcating the author’s literary creativity (as production, originality and innovation) from the submissiveness of the translator, whose task is to transmit and preserve form and meaning intact at the same time (translation as reproduction and derivation)*” Loffredo and Perteghella¹ (2006:3)

advertisements relocated should “*take into account the economic, cultural and social aspects of a local environment*” (Valdés Rodríguez, 2016:132).

A translation by all means is not just a technical task, as somehow it would simply look like. In order to preserve and unite the apparently opposing views, that of translation as a strict reflection of the style of the original text and of those who consider a reproduction, many scholars propose to add the ingredient called **creativity** into the equation resulting in transcreation. In such a case, the role of the translator emerges as a creative agent, whose voice is still heard, although reticent.

Cruz-Garcia (2018:66) provides other lexical equivalents for transcreation: “Among the synonyms of transcreation the authors mention the following: ‘cultural adaptation,’ ‘multilingual copywriting,’ ‘copy adaptation,’ ‘international copy,’ ‘adaptation of marketing materials,’ and ‘creative international marketing.’”¹

Ray & Kelly (2010), *Reaching New Markets through Transcreation: When Translation Just Isn’t Enough* were pioneers in shedding a light on whether ‘transcreation’ was just another word to refer to transferring and adapting content to target cultures². This is their current definition:

“The term “transcreation” is now more commonly applied to marketing and advertising content that must resonate in local markets in order to deliver the same impact as the original. The term may be applied when either a direct translation is adapted, or when content is completely rewritten in the local language to reflect the original message. Most often, transcreation includes a hybrid of new content, adapted content and imagery, and straightforward translation.” (Ray & Kelly, 2010:2)

The process of transcreation, is not just an exact match of a word-for-word translations of the text in a different language, but a challenge for the translator to be faced with.

It is actually a challenge to find the “cultural inscription of a term” rather than reconstructing its value. A translator, therefore, has to deal with a specific term by tracking down its location and adjusting the meaning to the local realities. A translator becomes a transcreator within the frame of the process, being both invisible and imaginative.

Transcreation provides the freedom to address the cultural gaps. It allows the intent of the message to be communicated so that it is positively received by the intended audience, without requiring the local version to remain fully faithful to the words or images used in the original version. (Ray and Kelly 2010: 3)

Living in a *translated society* (Aranda, 2009:26) creative translation is associated with marketing services focused on advertisements created to promote a product at an international level. Through creative translation the resulting products intended to different

¹ Ray & Kelly (2010:3) provide the following synonyms: “Other terms often used to convey the same concept include “marketization,” “cultural adaptation,” “multilingual copywriting,” “copy adaptation,” “marketing translation,” “international copy,” “adaptation of marketing materials,” “creative international marketing,” and “transliteration” (incorrectly applied)”.

² The authors enumerate a series of features concerning transcreation in order to make the proper distinction from translation, although they do not agree the idea that the writer handling the process is not a translator as well.

linguistic and cultural communities should be perceived as interpretations of the basic message. Thus, the translator has to use inner resources to find the best solution for the cultural equivalence. The translator should be well acquainted with the target language realities and cultural patterns appealing to the public¹.

Many of the activities performed by translators working in creative marketing are undertaken not by scholars but by practitioners in the field². That is a reason why the emerging companies in the field of transcreation describe the process in a different manner than the translators in the field of linguistics³.

Mathew Stibbe (<https://www.articulatemarketing.com/blog/translation-vs-transcreation>) offers an interesting opinion on creative translation. He thinks that,

“The goal of transcreation isn’t to say the same thing in another language. Indeed, it is often not possible to say exactly the same thing in another language. The aim of the game with transcreation is to get the same reaction in each language, something that translation in itself won’t be able to achieve.[...] **Transcreation is about taking a concept in one language and completely recreating it in another language** – it is normally applied to the marketing of an idea, product or service to international audiences. The language, therefore, must resonate with the intended audience”.

In the act of transcreation language plays an essential role not only for transferring a word-to-word message but for rendering an adapted message to a different culture. Nevertheless, sometimes bilingual societies have to deal with translation and adaptation of advertising messages within their own borders. Cruz-Garcia⁴ (2018:71) presents the case of adaptation of advertisements in Canada where

“At that time, most advertisements in this bilingual country, were produced in English by large English-speaking advertising agencies and were later adapted for French-

¹ One example would be the difficulty of transferring Peter Parker concept into other cultures. According to Asian Absolute (2020) “*Peter Parker is the mild-mannered alter ego of superhero Spider-Man. Unless you are in India, that is. Here, Peter Parker goes by the name Pavitr Prabhakar. He wears a transformed costume which includes dhoti (the standard lower-body garment for most men in India) and is often depicted fighting evil in places which will be clearly familiar to an Indian audience*”. <https://asianabsolute.co.uk/blog/2020/06/03/transcreation-vs-marketing-translation-which-is-best-for-your-marketing-content/>

² Many professional companies in the field of marketing translation include the idea of translation and creativity in their websites presentations (asianabsolute.co.uk-Translation and localisation services; brandedtranslation.com-Specialised language services for creative content/Marketing, advertising and literary translation; transperfect.com-Language services and technology solutions for global business; hogarthww.com-We are the World leaders in Creative Production, etc.)

³ *The moment you get into headlines, tag lines and buy lines, calls to action, you simply must understand the proposition, the market speak and the language nuance. Translators, do not get that and we see this time and time again.* <https://www.linkedin.com/grp/post/2982008-5911479621479575554?trk=groups-post-b-title> (consulted 30/9-2020)

⁴ The reference is to the Canadian journal *Meta Journal des Traducteurs – Translators’ Journal* released its No 1 Vol 17, March 1972, edited by André Clas.

speaking consumers.[...] The ‘translatability’ of some texts was questioned, as the concept of ‘translation’ was more intimately linked to that of a ‘faithful’ rendering of, or one that was very close to, the original text than a transfer of meaning or function advocated by the functionalist translation theories.”

As the scope of a good translation is to find equivalence between the source text and the target text, the translator’s role, however, is not a predictable or easy one. A translator is likely to use both inner voice and invisibility in order to transfer words and meanings recreating a world of significance within the target market advertising messages.

“When translating keywords literally you can get lucky, but you might also end up with the translation that attracts the least traffic (low search volume) or causes low click-through rates and high bounce rates. [...] When doing initial keyword translations, we give the translator the opportunity to come up with as many varieties of the word as possible” (Rijkenberg, 2014:46-7).

No matter how theorists and practitioners approach the principles of transcreation it is undeniable the fact that there is a tight connection with translation. Pedersen (2016:88) emphasizes that “*based on this observation, it could be said that rather than transcreation having no relation to translation (transcreation ≠ translation), transcreation is more than translation (transcreation >translation)*”. His extremely documented study emphasizes the added value of transcreation within marketing and advertising considering the paramount importance of cultural elements attached to the message itself.

Conclusion

The transcreation process and the idea of translation have something in common, as they both refer to conveying messages from one language to another. Nevertheless, transcreation seem to be more than translation when it applies to marketing translation where advertisements become brand voices targeting not only languages but also cultures. The translator’s role in transcreation relies on reticence as long as the final message intended to pursue the audience brings forth the products. Still, there is a translator’s visibility within the process, that is the translation work itself through intuition and creativity. The right choice for the words or cultural concepts for certain campaigns ensure the marketing activity a successful transfer of the products from source countries to other markets.

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PRODUCTIVE ACQUISITION OF COLLOCATIONS

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Abstract: *The issue of collocations has always been debatable among scholars due to their various classifications and dynamics in language. The difficulty in their analysis also lies in the fact they are not clearly separated by idioms, which makes their acquisition even more problematic. The present work aims to establish a few lines of approach related to their use in developing communication and in the translation process.*

Keywords: *collocation, semantic transparency, competence.*

Frequently defined as “a set of words that commonly occur together” (McCarthy O’Dell 2005) or multi-word lexical items with form-meaning pairings which are associated with specific situations or phenomena (Warren 2005), collocations have been part of the body of research due to their complexity and variety of interpretations among scholars.

The difficulty of analysis arises from establishing a clear boundary between collocations and idioms. As Parrot (2010) claims, a collocation describes two-word combinations when there is a limited number of words that may precede or follow another word: *high temperature, have an experience, heavy rain, fast car, straight hair* etc.

According to Jackson 2007: 106, collocations also have “mutual expectancy” which is their ability to predict the likelihood of the occurrence of another word. For example, *pay* occurs with more words (*cash, a fine, a bill, the price, a visit*) in comparison with *tea* which collocates with a limited number of words (*black, strong, weak*). On the other hand, idioms categorized as formulaic language are phrases that have a figurative or sometimes literal meaning: *off the top of your head, stab somebody in the back, face the music, ring a bell* etc.

The meaning of most idioms is pre-constructed and not semantically literal. Sometimes language learners find it difficult to grasp the general meaning even if such structures are analyzed as separate terms. An idiom such as *ring a bell* would be understood literally as “knocking at somebody’s door”, rather than “to sound familiar” as the dictionary entry shows. The following example bears relevance in this respect: *The lady’s name rang a bell but I couldn’t remember where I had heard it before. Break the ice in At the beginning of the meeting, I tried to break the ice*, is mostly used figuratively as “the initiation of an interaction by telling a joke or doing a warm-up activity”.

In other words, collocations are generally literal combinations of words whose constituent elements have a high degree of frequency, unlike idioms which are fixed structures, whose elements are interpreted together as a whole and have a more figurative meaning.

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Collocations in developing communication

In order to fulfil basic communicative skills, language learners need to process language fluently and using collocations is part and parcel of this endeavor. As regards the development of collocational competence, the first question that arises is *What criteria are taken into consideration when classifying collocations?*

Collocations are made up of lexical and grammatical units: *popular belief* (adjective + noun), *deeply concerned* (adverb + adjective), *strictly speaking* (adverb + verb), *good at* (adjective + preposition), *have a shower* (verb + noun) etc. As regards collocation classification, recent studies undertaken by Laufer and Waldman (2011) consider frequency and semantic transparency as two important criteria in identifying collocations.

The frequency-based approach highlights word co-occurrence in corpora which are good sources to provide direct information about language patterns employed by L2 users. The choice of a particular collocational structure should always comply with the dynamics of language production. Wray 2012 considers that while learning collocational patterns learners should also ground their understanding in cognitive factors such as proficiency, uniqueness, semantic meaning or personal relevance.

Semantic transparency, on the other hand, may be an indicator of the learners' familiarity with the meaning of the lexical items included in the collocations. For example, *make an attempt* is fully transparent because it can be understood by decoding the two lexical units in their literal sense. This is not the same with the non-transparent structure *green room* (a room in a theatre or studio in which performers can relax). There is little likelihood for the learner to decipher the meaning of this structure whose origin is often ascribed to those rooms painted in green as historical sources show. Therefore, a cultural background is required to make certain historical connections. Logically, this *green room* may refer to the green spaces, specially created to relax performers.

Transparency is more common in collocations in comparison with idioms which seem to be fully opaque. Bartsch 2004: 72-75 considered four possibilities of semantic transparency in collocations: 1. all constituent parts of the collocation contribute to its transparent meaning; 2. at least one of the constituents does not carry lexical meaning; 3. one constituent may lose its independent meaning, while the others retain their full lexical meaning; 4. the collocation carries an additional element which is not precisely expressed by any of its constituents.

For example, *mutual/common consent* (accepted by the people involved) differs from *the age of consent* (the age at which somebody is legally old enough to have a sexual relationship). Irrespective of their transparent or non-transparent nature, native and non-native speakers differ greatly both in terms of qualitative and quantitative use of collocations.

There is always a high tendency among L2 speakers to rely on translation equivalents in order to use collocations productively. The process of transferring collocation connotations from SL into TL is often complicated especially in the absence of academic expertise. Such strategies as: familiarity, context, exposure, comparison, repetition can be useful in producing and receiving collocations.

Let's consider the following collocations frequently used by the Romanian students: *break ground*, *catch a cold*, *come into view*, *do research*, *get dark*, *give an answer*, *give somebody a lift*, *have a break*, *have a fight*, *have a good time*, *keep a promise*, *make a fuss*, *pay interest*, *save money*, *take a seat*, *take place*, *tell a lie*, *tell the truth*, *cast a spell*, *lead the world*, *break a leg*, *come second* etc. Most of these collocations are generally easy to decode due to their frequency, repetition, familiarity or the mere meaning of their constituent elements.

However, a problem may arise with such partnerships as: *break ground* (digging, plowing or doing something innovative), *go smoothly* (in a steady way, without stopping), *make a fuss* (pay a lot of attention to somebody or something), *cast a spell* (attract somebody very strongly, use magic words to change somebody or something), *break a leg* (to wish someone luck before a performance), which seem to be more idiomatic in meaning and pose problems of translation in spite of their high frequency or usage in language.

Their more figurative meanings may be puzzling unless students are explained or given synonymous structures or other semantic cues to facilitate word retrieval. The context itself does not help learners to discover the connotation as it would be the case with *lead the world* or *give somebody a lift*, where parts of the structure can disambiguate the context. In order to develop collocational competence, scholars support the idea that learners should give up considering language as a linear process and adapt to the changes occurring in language. Granger 2009: 65 stated that we need to look at variables that influence the learner: degree of exposure, proficiency level, task type etc. L2 learners' identities goals or affective states will influence their language development as Larsen-Freeman 2006, argues.

Classroom evidence shows that repeated exposure and the ability to make associative links between the collocation constituents can help learners not only to recognize but also to use collocations as holistic structures. This triggers development of collocational competence.

In the absence of a constant exposure to the most common collocations, learners are not able to make cognitive links or acquire some knowledge, on the one hand due to their failure to understand the grammatical or lexical information about collocations and their inability to interpret collocations based on contrastive analysis, on the other hand.

In terms of frequency, there are debates on what it means to students. As Nation 2001:20 states "One person's technical vocabulary is another person's low frequency word." Individual words are more accessed than word partnerships, therefore, collocation acquisition is much more particular in nature and depends on specific language use situations that learners encounter. As carriers of precise semantic meanings, collocations have to be used appropriately in accordance with their type, frequency, transparency or learning context.

How are collocations processed?

Processing collocations analytically or holistically can be two productive ways for L2 learners. The analytical process comprises good knowledge of semantic, syntactic category, phonology, word meaning, whereas holistic interpretation refers to the recognition and memorization of word combinations. Studying English as a second language for

students in Psychology or Journalism may become problematic in the acquisition of specialized collocations.

Second-year students whose curriculum provides specialized terminology find it burdensome to develop language expertise through the use of collocations either because they lack prior knowledge in their native language, or they can't memorize low-frequency prefabricated patterns. For example, *forensic medicine/psychology/science* (related to scientific methods of solving crimes) can be difficult to understand holistically, unless students are previously exposed to the structure or explained that *forensic* pertains to the legal field and has a specific connotation. Furthermore, contextual examples should help learners to identify the right meaning. A *law-abiding citizen* cannot be easily decomposed by a student in Journalism, as long as the frequency of the verb *abide* (to tolerate or bear somebody) is very low. Instead, *obedient*, *conformable* are suitable synonyms for students to better grasp the right connotation.

On the other hand, a word like *fashion* collocates with various words: *follow fashion*, *fashion show/shoot/magazine/industry/trade/design/house/label/editor/maven*. Most of them comply with the context they belong to, except for *a fashion maven* (the one who decides what will be fashionable) which is not part of ordinary communication, due to the low frequency of the word *maven*. In such a case, *an expert* or *connoisseur* is a more suitable alternative for teachers and students alike.

In order to predict the right meanings of a collocation as a whole, students are encouraged to extend their English reading and use dictionaries on a large scale. Dictionaries are reliable sources of words as separate entities and word partnerships. Each word entry discloses not only a rich polysemy, but also various word combinations, phraseological units and plenty of contextual examples. The primary sense of the word may act as a clue to guess the meaning, whereas non-primary meanings may be an indicator that the structure belongs to the idiomatic field rather than make up a collocation.

Fine weather/heavy rain/strong wind do not need contextual illustration in comparison with *a wind of change* or *beat the wind* which are more metaphorical for the learner to form a mental image of what its meaning might stand for. Language knowledge and its appropriate use by learners are not only related to acquiring the rules of the language, but also to storing numerous preconstructed word partnerships. The single word is first memorized and then associated with many other words to create collocations. Depending on the word frequency, as a single entity or as a combination of more elements, learners can develop more complex communication mechanisms.

As far as language skills are concerned, the class dynamics revealed that collocations were better understood from the meaning of their parts, especially when exploring reading and listening, while in speaking and writing learning of collocations depended on the predictability of the co-occurrence of its members.

Collocations in the translation process

Translation of collocations has always been controversial among scholars mostly due to the potential linguistic or cultural differences between source language and target language. The suitable use of collocations brings about text cohesion, coherence and

accuracy. Therefore, the quality of the translation process is highly related to the appropriate applicability of collocational structures.

In order to overcome translation difficulties, the translator has different possibilities: to find an identical collocation in the target language, to use close collocations, to translate the correct meaning of the collocations etc. Confusable collocations are those whose meaning is slightly similar in both ST and TL. On the other hand, newly coined words may also stand for a real obstacle in translation. Such combinations of words as: *domino effect* (one event causes another similar event which in turn causes another event, *collinsdictionary.com*), *lateral thinking* (a method of solving problems by using your imagination, *collinsdictionary.com*), *broad money* (all the forms of money that cannot be turned into cash, *ldoceonline.com*) are non-literal and metaphorical in meaning and cannot be conveyed satisfactorily in the TL.

In terms of their classification, collocations can be strong, loose, fixed and fully-fixed. For example, *propaganda* does not collocate with too many words (*political/communist/effective propaganda*) which means it is a strong collocation. In comparison, *part* (*significant/large/main/vital/take/play part*) is a loose collocation due to its relatively large number of words it can make partnerships with. Fixed collocations have constituents that cannot be modified or replaced (*Dark Age, detached house, single parent* etc.) Fully-fixed structures become idiomatic as in *greenhouse effect*, whose meaning cannot be inferred from the meaning of its parts.

In terms of translation, strong or loose collocations are easily rendered into the TL, because they are comprehensible by their separate units, unlike fully-fixed constructions which require language expertise, frequent exposure to various specialized text and more refined mental processes.

Conclusions

Development of collocational competence is a long and complex process by which learners recognize, understand and develop collocation fluency. The productive usage of collocations requires familiarity, exposure, proficiency and openness to understanding them accurately. Exploration of various corpora may be a useful method to find out how collocations work in terms of semantics, grammar and partnerships with different morphological classes.

Native language learners will not encounter any difficulty in acquiring collocations, due to their ability to process language naturally, unlike non-native language users who need continuous training in order to produce and use collocations properly. Transfer of meaning through translation is much more strenuous for foreign language learners whose general tendency is to operate with words separately than in combinations.

Irrespective of the way in which collocations are acquired, they are part and parcel of any language and their dynamics is in accordance with all linguistic changes occurring in the language.

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BRANDING AND IDENTITY. THE LANGUAGE OF DECEIT

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Abstract: *In the current consumerist culture, where the environment is saturated with products adorned with images, narratives and slogans that attempt to lure us into purchasing them, consumers are constantly confronted with pressure to upgrade their personal goods. Brands draw on notions of place and culture when marketing global products in order to stand out from their rivals. The branding of a global product presents a certain image of its origins emphasizing whichever aspects or characteristics the company thinks will appeal to consumers, who may associate them with certain positive qualities or values. The messages used in the marketing campaigns are directed towards our sense of self, identity, place and culture. Analysing product narratives critically is important for helping us to see hidden messages, to develop critical thinking, to identify who controls certain messages, and to understand how marketing appeals to us as potential customers, consequently helping us to make informed decisions regarding purchases.*

Keywords: branding, advertising, identity, deceptive language.

The article is a brief overview of the ways in which linguistic aspects may be manipulated by brands in their marketing strategies and advertising campaigns so as to convey messages that appeal to our emotions through their association with positive qualities and values. The narratives on which their messages are based are prone to interpretation and the information they use can be twisted according to their needs. Most of these narratives are misleading¹ for their consumers, but extremely helpful to help them accomplish their only purpose: to sell the products.

Deceptive tactics in branding and marketing

Haynes (1999, p. 286) considers that in order to have a brand you need to have value added to a commodity. Accordingly, the equation of a brand is:

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¹ “Misleading advertising occurs when, in the promotion of a product or any business interest, a representation is made to the public that is false or materially misleading. If a representation could influence a consumer to buy the product or service advertised, it is material. To determine whether an advertisement is misleading, the courts consider the “general impression” it conveys, as well as its literal meaning.”

<https://www.bbb.org/mbc/get-consumer-help/tips-directory/misleading-advertising-deceptive-marketing-practices/>

“[...] advertising is seen as misleading if it involves false, misleading or deceptive information that is likely to cause the average consumer to act in a way they might otherwise not. Advertising may also be considered misleading if important information that the average consumer needs to make an informed decision is left out. Misleading advertising covers claims made directly to consumers by manufacturers, distributors and retailers, as well as in advertisements, catalogues, websites etc.”

<https://www.ccpc.ie/consumers/shopping/misleading-advertising/>

Commodity + Added Value = Brand

Perceived value can be added to any commodity at several stages, including: processing, packaging, or marketing. At the marketing stage, the company may choose to emphasise the product's geographical or cultural origins. Marketers rely on the impact of favourable associations and believe that making use of these associations is an important part of the success of a product.

However, deceptive tactics are common in the marketing area, as in any form of communication (Johnson et al., 2001 apud Javed et al., 2014, p. 521)¹, and even when marketers do not intentionally attempt to deceive consumers, their strategies and messages seem to be misleading or doubtful in some way (Burke et al., 1988 apud Riquelme and Román, 2014, p. 405).

Deception comes in a wide array of forms other than the outright lie, and among the features that differentiate them are amount and sufficiency of information, degree of truthfulness, clarity, relevance, and intent (Román 2010). In the marketing field, deception has received special attention in the areas of advertising and personal selling/ traditional retailing.

One of the motives for using deceptive tactics in marketing and advertising consists in the reality that many products (e.g. brands of cigarettes, beer, cleansers and soaps, rice, over-the-counter health products) are “parity products”, products that are nearly identical, with no actual substantive difference between them. For these products advertisements help create an illusion of superiority. (cf. Danciu, 2014, p. 19; Taflinger, 1996)

For these products, the only way to differentiate one from another is to induce that difference, to persuade people that there actually is some difference, and that difference is important to them. These differences are created through advertising, not through any inherent difference in the products [...]. They must rely on creating a trivial or even nonexistent difference in the bundle of values their target audience might find important to their purchase decision. However, if and once that difference is firmly established in the target audience's perception, a company can often rely on habit, brand loyalty and/or cognitive dissonance to get repeat business. (Taflinger, *ibid.*)

However, sometimes there is only a fine line that separates good advertisements, which tend to be persuasive by resorting to the emotions of the viewer or appeal to some other sensory experience, such as hunger and misleading or even false advertisements. These types of advertising may also make use of emotions “but they falsely promise or imply that the product being advertised can do more what it can actually accomplish. When an advertiser promises more than he can deliver, he is engaging in misleading advertising.” (Lewis, 2020)²

¹ The Impact of Consumer's Perceived Deception on Brand Trust, Brand Affect, and Brand Loyalty
Loyalty: Deceptive Tactics as an Impediment to Consumer Trust
<https://www.ajouronline.com/index.php/AJBM/article/view/1998>

² <https://smallbusiness.chron.com/differences-between-persuasive-misleading-advertisements-17727.html>

The same is true for nations in a globalized world, where there are growing concerns about homogenisation. The term “nation brands” was coined by Simon Anholt in 1998. He observed that “most successful brands came from countries that were successful brands in their own right, and substantial transfer of imagery and brand equity can often be seen to occur between the two”. The branding of a nation is closely linked to marketing and commodification, as there is no reason why nations, like companies, could not modify the way they were seen (cf. Anholt, 1998).

[...] the frenzy for place-branding betrays deeper perplexities. Every country, region and city now finds that it has to be a competitor in the vast, loud souk that is the world’s economy. Some places have never properly played this role before; others have played it so long that they’re unused to being challenged. To be noticed, a place must be distinctive, must appear unique. But this is tricky to achieve when a single, anodyne culture – the culture of the same global market – is flooding the ground everywhere. The global economy has proven that it can be profoundly nasty, and the migration of labour, both departures and arrivals, can alter the texture of a place, unspinning presumptions about its collective identity. (Subramanian, 2017)

Furthermore, nation branding, as it is reflected in marketing and advertising, is described by Kaneva and Popescu (2011) as “national identity lite”, reducing the country’s national identity to a number of appealing images and symbols, presented in isolation from their historical and cultural contexts, but appropriated for global consumption.¹ It is national identity which is intended to be sold as a commodity and thus constrained “within an ahistorical, decontextualized, and depoliticized frame.” These symbols and images are a “reproduction of non-threatening, folkloric myths and motifs, which provide a sense of internal identification.” Kaneva and Popescu (*ibid.*) conclude that nation branding commodifies national identity for commercial purposes. However, this type of branding also shapes its citizens’ identity, and the way they perceive their nation.

Essentialism and stereotypes

Essentialism is based upon the idea that everything has a set of attributes essential to its identity and function (e.g. the idea that gender, race and other group characteristics are fixed and that all individuals within that group will behave the same way). Often the image of a culture or a place is often oversimplified into an essentialist representation so as to be easier for potential buyers to comprehend it and subsequently reducing the culture down into something less than it actually is, for the purposes of a successful sale (e.g. reducing Brazil to just a country with carnivals). When discussing the issue of nation branding in relation to essentialist and stereotypical interpretations, Subramanian (*op. cit.*) notes that

In the 21st century, nation branding has grown to be busy business, and its practitioners take great pains to emphasise that what they do is different from the more straightforward marketing and advertising work that came before them. A particularly skilled copywriter sold Moses on Israel by calling it “The Promised Land”; Erik the Red named a large block of ice “Greenland” in the

¹ See <https://www.wall-street.ro/articol/Turism/239494/video-ministerul-turismului-a-lansat-un-nou-clip-de-promovare-a-romaniei.html#gref>

hope of tempting more settlers there; Milton Glaser slapped “I ♥ NY” upon a trillion T-shirts; a Las Vegas ad agency cooked up “What happens here, stays here”, the allure of sin encapsulated. Nation branding creates messages about a place that need to be simple and catchy. This can reduce a country into an easily recognisable but commodified form. Nation brands are often exclusive rather than inclusive. They reinforce essentialist and stereotypical interpretations of the nation, national culture, and its people. This can present a narrow interpretation of the life of a country’s inhabitants, and create unrealistic expectations about the country and its people. Nation branding also projects an expectation of behaviour onto populations. It can suggest ways in which the population ‘should’ behave.

Portraying a culture in essentialist ways can also encourage stereotyping. Thus, it reinforces pre-existing positive associations with the country. In the *Journal of Brand Management*, Anholt (1998) presented the case of the British electronics retailer Dixons, which “launched its own consumer electronics brand in 1982 under the mock-Japanese name Saisho, because it rightly believed that a British electronics brand would carry little credibility”.

This is also true about languages, as Ingrid Piller (2011) points out. Different languages are perceived to convey specific attributes, such as: high elegance and refined taste (e.g. French) or precision and superior technology (e.g. German).

For example, *Fahrvergnügen* was an advertising slogan used by the German automobile manufacturer Volkswagen in a 1990 U.S. advertising campaign. The term “Fahrvergnügen”, which means “driving enjoyment” (from *fahren*, “to drive,” and *Vergnügen*, “enjoyment”) is not even standard German but a neologism (compound noun) created especially for this advertising campaign. One of the tag lines incorporating the word was: “Fahrvergnügen: It’s what makes a car a Volkswagen”.¹

Sometimes local dialects can be used to promote a product more successfully, but creating brands which emphasise the supposed geographical or cultural origins of their products can also have very negative effects. Piller further argues that deliberately using a specific language to ‘sell’ something “maintain[s] national and racial boundaries and can sometimes constitute a smokescreen for covert racism” (*ibid.*, p. 108).

Product narratives

In the current consumerist culture, where the environment is saturated with products adorned with images, narratives and slogans that attempt to lure us into purchasing them, consumers are constantly confronted with pressure to upgrade their personal goods: companies producing mobile phones claim that we need the latest model, fashion retailers encourage consumers to buy new clothes for new seasons and car companies attempt to persuade car owners to buy new cars as often as possible.

Analysing product narratives critically is important for helping us to see hidden messages, to develop critical thinking, to identify who controls certain messages, and to understand how marketing appeals to us as potential customers, consequently helping us to make informed decisions regarding purchases. The choice the producing companies make

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volkswagen_advertising

reveals which attributes are seen as having greater capital than others (e.g. a place of origin, language, or ideas of authenticity).

“Puffiness” is the term used to designate a type of representation and manipulation of advertising statistics. In connection to it, Benjamin Disraeli’s remark, that “There are three kinds of lies: lies, damn lies, and statistics”, is more accurate than ever. Statistics can be manipulated for different purposes in a variety of ways. Thomas Edman (2001) notes that

If Disraeli was around to observe American society in the second half of the twentieth century, he might have included another category in his list of lies: advertising. Advertising, like statistics, is recognized commonly as a medium where facts can be interpreted, twisted, and emphasized according to the advertiser’s needs.

It refers to the situation in which the consumer can typically recognize when advertisers make thinly veiled attempts to create an artificial advantage, in other words, exaggerated advertising or boasting upon which no reasonable consumer would rely and which is not grounds for legal action. When given a set of data, the advertisers choose those that are advantageous to the product. If there is no good choice, they know that they have to change the criteria to make the data support their product. (cf. Edman, *ibid.*)

The effectiveness of an advertisement claiming that a given product is better than its competitors increases when the ad cites a scientific study or test to “establish” the claim.” The modern consumer often grants a position of “mystic infallibility” to information labeled as “scientifically proven.” Given the effectiveness of claims with scientific support, advertisers will, perhaps understandably, tout the smallest nuances of established superiority to gain a perceived competitive advantage. When advertisers’ claims cross the line from puffing to actual falsity, enforcement of the laws of unfair competition is available to injured parties.

Specific types of claims lead consumers to make erroneous judgments and have a strong impact on consumers’ beliefs, affect and behavioural intentions (cf. Burke et al. 1988; Darke and Ritchie 2007; Darke et al. 2010 apud Riquelme and Román, 2014, p. 406). Among the most common examples of deceptive or manipulative tactics mention should be made of the exaggeration of the features and benefits of a product and the use of high-pressure selling techniques (cf. Ingram et al. 2005; Román and Ruiz 2005; Ramsey et al. 2007 apud Riquelme and Román, *ibid.*).

As regards the linguistic aspects employed to deceive the customer, Danciu notices a few techniques intended to create and render the idea of the superiority of a product. One of them is the use of the comparatives “better” and “best” (cf. Danciu, 2014, p. 25).

The word better is legally interpreted to be a comparative and therefore becomes a clear claim of superiority. In certain countries, the word best can be used to describe the parity products because if all products are equally good, they can all be considered the best. But, in order to not manipulate the customer, the only time when better can be used is when a product does indeed have superiority over other products in its category or when the better is used to compare the product with something other than competitor brands.

This technique is closely related to what he calls “the unfinished claim”, which consists in suggesting that a certain product has more or is better than something, without mentioning what that “something” is.

A clear example is the expression “20% more cleaning power” which could be interpreted as either “20% more cleaning power than competing brands” or 20% more cleaning power than earlier version of some product”. The fact that it does not specify what product has 20% more cleaning power renders the claim meaningless. (*ibid.*, pp. 25-27)

According to Danciu (*ibid.*, p. 26), another technique with great potential of manipulation in advertising, in the effort to make the consumers believe something about the product that is not true, is “the weasel claim”. It involves the use of particular words and phrases that include a subtle modifier, called the weasel word, which negates the claim and performs different functions.

For example, the verbs *to help* and *to act* suggest a sense of action or of doing something important to consumer “because the words sound as if the product is being proactive toward the desired result. In the expression “helps control dandruff” for shampoos, the word *helps* acts as the claim no longer control dandruff but it helps control the dandruff like a good friend might.” Then, there is the use of the prepositional phrase *up to*, which gives the impression of an upward trend. The phrase *up to* in the claim “save up to 30%”, is often interpreted by consumers as a 30% reduction in price, which adds to the overall good feeling produced by the sense of rising motion that it conveys. Other prepositional phrases, such as *the feel of* and *the look of* convey the idea of similarity between products and “make the consumers think that the product is of high quality or is similar to another product because they imply a comparison between two things.” (Danciu, *ibid.*) *Can be* and *virtually* denote possibility. Thus, if an advertisement for a brand of dish soap claims that it *leaves dishes virtually spotless*, this may cause consumers to be misled into thinking that it *leaves dishes spotless*. Past participle forms, such as *fortified*, *enriched* or *strengthened* create an illusion of power and strength.

Food has strong associations with nationality, culture and identity. Consequently, narratives of place and stereotypical notions of culture are frequently used to market food. Due to the marketers’ desire for success and recognition, their choices are not always accurate. This may extend not only to narratives but also to their choice of names, which are misleading. Sometimes, the company may conceal the truth under false claims regarding the origin of a product or the way in which it was made.

The data offered by a panel of advisers representing public health experts, academia and the food marketing industry to the US-based EnviroMedia’s Leanwashing Index revealed that popular food claims such as *natural*, *made with*, and *whole grains* are the most common in the list of food marketing words that mislead consumers.¹

The word *natural* has no nutritional or legal definition. Sandin (2017) argues that *natural* is prevalent in academic discourse and in public and political discussions concerning for instance medicine, reproductive technology and other topics related to

¹ Cf. *Top five most misleading words in US food advertising revealed*, 2013, <https://www.ausfoodnews.com.au/2013/01/29/top-five-most-misleading-words-in-us-food-advertising-revealed.html>

biomedical ethics, as well as in marketing of commercial products, among them cosmetics, food and drinks (Nuffield Council on Bioethics, [2015](#)). Nevertheless, *natural* and *naturalness* are difficult to define, for the following reasons: (1) naturalness is not one single concept, but several ones (polysemy), and (2) those concepts typically allow degrees, so that things can be more or less natural, thus, (3) this complexity should be reflected in labelling of foods.

This appears particularly relevant in discussions about food, not least genetically modified food (Chapman 2005; Mielby et al. 2013; Siipi 2015; Tenbült et al. 2005; van Haperen et al. 2012). Enter any supermarket, and you are likely to stumble upon breakfast cereals, pasta sauces, and a whole range of food products that boast ‘natural ingredients’, ‘100% natural’, and so on. It seems that food producers are not unwise to use such marketing measures – studies indicate that people do have a preference for ‘natural’ food (Rozin et al. 2004; Ronteltap et al. 2016), and similar considerations are relevant also for, e.g., textiles (Overvliet et al. 2016). (Sandin, *ibid.*)

Made with frequently occurs in marketing and advertising slogans, sometimes in connection with ingredients that make up less than 1 percent of the final product, which may distract our attention from a high content of sugar and chemicals. *Whole grains* should be preceded by “100 percent”, or, at least, the real percentage should be added to finish the claim; otherwise, it may contain only tiny traces of grains, not enough to be entitled to make the claim. As regards the adjective *light/ lite*,

To say that a food is “light” or “lite”, it must be at least 30% lower in at least one typical value, such as calories or fat, than standard products. The label must explain exactly what’s been reduced and by how much – for example, “light: 30% less fat”. To get the whole picture about a product and compare it properly with similar foods, you’ll need to take a close look at the nutrition label. The easiest way to compare products is to look at the information per 100g. You may be surprised at how little difference there is between foods that carry claims and those that don’t. A “light” or “lite” version of one brand of crisps may contain the same amount of fat or calories as the standard version of another brand. Those tempting biscuits that claim to be light on fat can have more calories than you think, so always check the label.¹

One of the motives for using deceptive tactics in marketing and advertising consists in the reality that many products are nearly identical. For these products, advertisements create an illusion of superiority, exaggerating their features and benefits. There is only a fine line that separates good advertisements from misleading or even false advertisements, both of which appeal to our emotions. That is why a critical analysis of the specific narratives and slogans should help us make informed decisions.

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FIGURING RETICENCE IN WORKPLACE DISCOURSE

Elena-Clementina NIȚĂ*

Abstract: *The article presents a few aspects related to reticence in different spoken professional interactions in English. It is known that implying something, or leaving something unsaid rather than saying it, can be regarded as polite or as an expression of agreement or hesitation. A suitable method in conversation analysis will be applied to relevant examples in order to identify the major significations of reticence in workplace discourse.*

Keywords: *reticence, spoken professional interactions, conversation analysis.*

“If you do not understand my silence, you will never understand my words”. (Rabindranath Tagore)

Introduction

There is absolutely no doubt that almost everything has been scientifically analysed thoroughly regarding human communication: power, politeness, context, mitigation and management between equals, managing interaction in meetings, small talk and social chat at work, humour and its functions, miscommunication and problematic talk. However, the ‘no talk’, that is *reticence*, needs more attention from the part of linguists, sociolinguists, researchers and specialists in human communication.

As part of their social lives, people spend much of their time at work. Therefore, the workplace can be seen as a source of resources extracted from spoken professional interactions.

The analysis of workplace discourse involves paying particular attention to human spoken interaction, that is people say or not say something and examining how they say it. Moreover, implying something, or leaving something unsaid rather than saying it, can be regarded as polite or as an expression of agreement or hesitation. As Jakobson (1937:151) stated, referring to de Saussure: “language can tolerate the opposition between something and nothing, and, it is precisely this ‘nothing’ opposed to ‘something’, or, in other words, *the zero sign*”.

In the context of this article, in order to identify reticence and its significations in workplace discourse, it is worthwhile to consider workplace as an important social context. Moreover, general issues concerning the use of language in the workplace will be highlighted. For the particular purpose of this article, workplace discourse and institutional discourse will be utilised interchangeably to describe professionals interacting with professionals and professional interacting with lay-individuals in a professional context.

Workplace discourse can appear in a wide range of settings, its forms varying from talk between co-workers to interactions in service encounters with lay-individuals to

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international business communication (Koester, 2006:3). One aspect to notice is that at workplace, co-workers can 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” (Homes, Stubbe, *op.cit.*:2). Also, co-workers “may have similar values and attitudes towards work and the objectives of their organisation” (*ibidem*). Furthermore, for Hynninen (2016:42) this is explained through the concept of ‘community of practice’ which was first introduced to ELF studies by House (2003) where “what is relevant and appropriate is thus defined, negotiated” and, also, “what matters in a specific community may have little to do with prescriptive language standards” (Hynninen, *ibidem*: 42). Therefore, participants in the community of practice need to learn to function in the specific community and to observe its norms. What is more, standard language can acquire particular values in such a community.

Another aspect to consider is the distinction between ordinary conversation and workplace discourse. Unlike workplace discourse, ordinary conversation involves no specific orientation to some “core goal, task or identity (or set of them)” (Drew, Heritage, 1992: 22). This means that, for example, the goal can reflect in the specific types of discursive activity at the workplace such as instruction-giving, decision-making, briefing. Moreover, at the workplace, the discourse is task-oriented and follows a number of phases “with a particular role in terms of the overall goal of the encounter”. (Koester, 2006:4)

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”. (*ibidem*) This means workplace interactions may be asymmetrical, people having different roles in terms of initiating and controlling the conversation. (Koester, 2006:5) Therefore, in the case of co-workers there can be more symmetry than asymmetry in the spoken interaction because they share the same workplace culture. However, in lay-professional encounters, there can be more asymmetry because the lay-person may be unaware of the respective workplace culture. Constraints can also be reflected in the lexico-grammatical choice, for example using technical or professional jargon and polite formulae of turn-taking in the spoken interaction. (*ibidem*: 4)

Another specific trait of workplace discourse is represented by “the inferential frameworks and procedures” (*ibidem*) which represent the numerous specific institutional contexts. This means that there is a particular turn design and a specific adjacency pair structure, that is “the action a turn is designed to perform and the way in which it is responded to” (Heritage 1997 in Koester, 2006:4).

Aim

The article attempts to identify major significations of reticence which may appear in workplace discourse. Suitable examples of spoken professional English, that is audio texts utilised in teaching *professional English classes* will be utilized to support the theoretical approach. These might be relevant whilst listening to examples of professional English audio texts in the EFL classroom, the teaching aim being that of endowing students with specific skills necessary for future engineering communication.

The article is not an exhaustive and comprehensive treatment of the area which is rather broad and complex, it only offers a general overview and illustrative examples discovered during teaching practice.

Aspects to consider

The research in this article builds on existing knowledge in the field of discourse and communication analysis. There are several methodological approaches to the study of discourse and communication such as discourse analysis, discursive psychology, rhetorical psychology, speech act theory, Foucauldian discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis. However, the key methodological approach to the study of verbal interaction is Conversational Analysis (CA) - “the study of talk” (Hutchby, Wooffitt, 2002:13), because it offers extremely valuable accounts of the organisation of verbal interaction. Conversation Analysis can be seen as an exploration, aiming at discovering regularities of verbal human interactions, previously unknown. (Sidnell, Stivers, 2013:77): “Talk is at the heart of human existence. It is pervasive and central to human history, in every setting of human affairs, at all levels of society, in virtually every social context”. (Zimmerman and Boden, 1991: 3)

The CA approach is useful in examining *reticence* and discovering its significations in workplace discourse. CA, developed by Harvey Sacks (between 1964-1975) studies human interaction in society and encompasses interactions of all sorts, ranging from informal to formal, from sociable to task-focused, and from face-to-face to synchronous interactions mediated by technology such as video talks and video conferences. Also, CA can be understood as “a partial synthesis of ideas concerning the institution of interaction, norms of interactional conduct, and the methods of reasoning implicated in the production and recognition of action”. (Gee, Handford, 2012:120) The central goal of CA is the description and explication of the competences that speakers can use and rely on in participating in socially organized interactions: “[...] one of the tasks of conversation analysis is to discover and describe the architecture of this structure: the properties of the ways in which interaction proceeds through activities produced through successive turns”. (Wooffitt, 2005:8)

Furthermore, numerous researchers in the field of CA has sought to describe general practices used in interactions and systems of practice such as turn-taking, the sequencing of action, the repair of misunderstandings, the relationship between vocal and nonvocal behaviours. Other researchers have explored generic practices of talk for specific institutional tasks and their influence on bureaucratic and professional outcomes. Also, there are research works which address subjects like the relationship between interaction and racial and gender identities, the cultural difference and the historical change, and the conduct of social scientific inquiry itself (Gee, Handford, *ibidem*: 121).

Typically, CA methods examine primarily how participants manage interaction as it proceeds, enabling to view the social world and to analyse social interaction:

“how they make sense of the moment-by-moment unfolding of interaction;
it describes the highly patterned sequential structures through which
particular activities are accomplished; and it discovers the methods used to

effect turn-transfer, or to identify and address troubles, such as misunderstandings, errors and corrections, and so on". (Wooffitt, 2005: 79)

In this context, it is worthwhile to identify and analyse the presence of *reticence* in workplace discourse. Approaches in CA will be applied to relevant examples in order to identify the major significations of *reticence* in spoken interactions. In particular, the word which needs to be clarified for the purpose of this article is *reticence*. The definitions of the word *reticence* offered by dictionaries are the following: "an unwillingness to do something or talk about something, for example because you are nervous or being careful", having as synonym: "not saying much" (Cambridge Dictionary online), "the quality or state, or an instance, of being reticent", having as synonym: silence, reserve, restraint, quietness" (Collins Dictionary), "a lack of willingness or desire to do or accept something", having as synonyms: "disinclination, hesitance, hesitancy, reluctance, unwillingness" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). Therefore, in this article, *reticence* in the workplace discourse will be used with the meanings of 'not saying much', 'silence', and 'hesitancy'. In its turn, *silence* will be utilised with the meaning of 'absence of sound or noise, 'absence of mention' (Merriam-Webster Dictionary), and 'incapacity for or restraint from speaking' (Merriam-Webster). Also, *hesitancy* will be utilised with the meaning of "hesitation or indecision" (Collins Dictionary).

The research in the article utilises the CA method which will highlight the way turn-taking turns into talk-in-interaction, that is sequential order of talk (Hutchby, Wooffitt, 1998: 38). Moreover, two aspects need to be examined: the *next turn* - the place where speakers display their understanding of the prior turn's possible completion" and the *prior turn's content* - "the action it has been designed to do" (*ibidem*). Also, CA can examine the *inferential order of talk*: "the kinds of cultural and interpretative resources participants rely on in order to understand one another in appropriate ways" (*ibidem*:39). Another aspect of the analysis is concerned with the classes of utterances which conventionally come in pairs called *adjacency pairs*. They are considered as "a powerful normative framework for the assessment of interlocutors' actions and motives by producers of first parts. This shows that talk-in-interaction is not just a matter of taking turn but is a matter of accomplishing *actions*" (*ibidem*:43). It is important to notice that adjacency pairs have a normative character which means that "whatever utterance follows a first pair part will be monitored by the first speaker for whether, and how, it works as a relevant second part" (*ibidem*:42). In addition, the non-appearance of a second pair part may lead to the inference that the first speaker is not given any attention by the second speaker and, consequently, the first speaker may infer a reason for this *noticeable absence* (*ibidem*). This relationship within the adjacency pair is described as conditional relevance (Schegloff 1968). Moreover, the concept of *preference* constitutes one of the inferential aspects of adjacency pair sequences and develops as the result of certain first pair parts which make alternative actions relevant in second position, such as offers (accepted or refused), assessments (agreed or disagreed with), requests (granted or declined) (Hutchy, Wooffitt, *ibidem*:43). Furthermore, silences in speech, no matter how long or short they are, can have some interactional significance (Davidson 1984; Pomerantz 1984).

Method and Material

The method used to obtain data for analysis was that of listening to examples of workplace discourse in English and teaching professional English interaction language rules during ESP classes during a whole year of study. The conversation analytic technique utilised in the research is the one presented in *Conversation Analysis: Principles, Practices and Applications* (Hutchby, Wooffitt, 1998) based on Sacks, Schegloff and Jefferson (1974). Throughout the analysis suitable examples will be examined in order to identify the presence of *reticence* and its major significations in workplace discourse.

The examples are extracted from textbooks utilised during ESP classes. These examples are primarily meant to serve as learning resources for professional communication in English.

Procedures and Practice

The analysis of workplace discourse will be realised with the help of CA following the pattern offered by Hutchby and Wooffitt (1998), as mentioned above. This method is preferred for the examination of examples of workplace spoken interactions because CA is “the study of recorded, naturally occurring talk-in-interaction” (*ibidem*:14).

Moreover, regarding *reticence* in the workplace discourse, the following will be utilised as its dictionary meanings throughout the analysis: ‘not saying much’, ‘silence’, and ‘hesitancy’. Also, throughout the analysis the major significations of *reticence*, such as *politeness*, *agreement*, and *hesitation* will be emphasised. The procedure will analyse the *conditional relevance* within the adjacency pairs, emphasising the *next turn* and the *noticeable absence*. In addition, the focus on *preference* as inferential aspect within the adjacency pairs will lead to figuring the significations of *reticence* in workplace discourse. Also, items such as *mm hm*, *yeah*, *oh*, *well*, and *okay* will be utilised with the name of tokens (“acknowledgment tokens” or “backchannel” communications in Gee, Handford, *op.cit.*: 128). However, the present analytic research will not interpret the function of these tokens.

Henceforth the following examples will be examined to demonstrate the existence of *reticence* in workplace discourse and its major significations.

I. *Reticence* as politeness

(1) F: Anything I can help?

P: Well, there is something ...I’ve just received an email. (Unit 3, Transcript 3.1, *Emailing*)

In (1), *reticence* is marked by the token ‘well’ and the dots [...], being a double *reticence*, which combines the types ‘not saying much’ and ‘silence’. The adjacency pair is made of question and answer and observes the *conditional relevance* norm. The *preference* for silence, the *noticeable absence* of speech, can lead to the inference that the major signification of *reticence* in this specific pair-context is *politeness*. Also, hesitation can be identified in the next turn because the pause in speech is made longer intentionally by the speaker in order to be polite.

(2) Viktor: Exactly. I mean, to diamond drill the number of holes we're talking about will take, um . . .

Rajesh: It'll take forever and a day, won't it? (Audioscript 6.5, *Negotiating*)

In (2), there is a double *reticence* made of the token 'um' (which signifies *not say much*) and *silence* marked by dots [...] The first pair of the adjacency pair is followed by a *next turn* pair made of question+question tag. Thus, the *conditional relevance* is fulfilled within the pair. In addition, the *reticence* of the first speaker can infer politeness and also hesitancy. Clearly, the first speaker would not choose to give a direct reply being engaged in a professional talk. In addition, the second speaker interprets the reticence of the interlocutor correctly, that is the speaker is hesitant and polite at the same time, and takes the *next turn*.

II. *Reticence* as agreement/disagreement

(1) Toby: I 'm an engineer that's why I, um ...

Esther: Oh, I see. Yes, titanium's great. It's expensive obviously but very light. That's the big advantage. Ideally, you want it to be lightweight, to give you better control.

Toby: Nn.

Esther: These are the most impressive things, though, the burs on the end. The latest ones can rotate at over half a million revs per minute.

Toby: Nn.

Esther: They're coated with tungsten carbide, which I think is one of the hardest materials in existence isn't it? Along with diamond. That's also used.

Toby: Nn. (Audioscript 2.4, *Cambridge English for Engineering*)

In (1), the turn-in-interaction is built asymmetrically because the speaker Esther does much more of the talking than speaker Toby. However, the conversation observes the norms of interaction organisation. The double reticence expressed in the first pair consists of the word 'um' (which signifies *not say much*) and dots [...] replacing *silence*. However, the signification of reticence in the first pair is discovered in the next turn. Speaker Esther intervenes abruptly in the conversation using the token 'oh' and interrupts the other speaker's turn. Yet, *the conditional relevance* within the adjacency pair is fulfilled. The following turns in the interaction can be considered more than relevant for the signification of *reticence* in workplace discourse. Speaker Toby's turns express *reticence* as agreement because he knows what the interlocutor talks about. This simple *reticence* is made of the token 'Nn' signifying 'not saying much'. Moreover, he is reticent and listens to all the details offered by the interlocutor. The *preference* for reticence in the reply turn signifies agreement with the interlocutor.

(2) Kasia: It's not far now. We'll be there in five minutes.

Mr. Syms: Great (Unit 8, Exercise 8, *English for Socialising*)

In (2), *reticence* is understood by the presence of the token 'great' (*not say much*) in the *next turn* of the adjacency pair. This simple *reticence* infer agreement. Norms of *conditional*

relevance and *preference* in the turn-in-interaction organization of the conversation are observed.

III. *Reticence as hesitation*

(1) F: Hmm...I can't really compare, as I haven't asked anyone else for a quote - but it is more than we can afford. Um...perhaps you'd like to reconsider your price - or offer a discount [...]

M: A discount? We don't usually offer discounts, I'm afraid. (Unit 1, Transcript 1.1, *Negotiating*)

In (1), an extract from a negotiation at the workplace between two professionals from different companies, the spoken interaction is rich in marks of reticence. The first pair part starts with the token 'hmm' (*not saying much*) followed by dots [...] (*silence*). This double reticence can infer *hesitation*. There is also *reticence* in the second sentence of the first pair part, made of the token 'um' and dots [...]. Again the inference to which can lead is *hesitation*. The *next turn* in the second pair part is a question with resumes the final word of the first pair turn, 'discount'.

(2) I: So, you're sitting in front of your computer... somewhere, how do you set about getting into someone else's system?

R: [...] Once you connect to the computer it will ...ask you to...log on and type an ID and password. (Unit 20, *Oxford English for Information Technology*)

In (2), the interaction, which is an extract from an interview, offers suitable examples of *reticence*. In the first pair part, *reticence* is present as *silence* marked by the dots [...]. In the second pair part, reticence is marked by the presence of dots [...] expressing *silence*. In this example reticence can infer hesitation as a major signification, in both pair parts.

Conclusion

Conversational analyst research in workplace discourse can lead to important findings useful in further studies on language and communication. From the analysis of examples several important aspects can be underlined, although the article is not comprehensive enough to draw significant conclusions. Therefore, *reticence* can be present in all forms of workplace discourse. Typically, *reticence* can be simple and double, its meaning being those of 'not saying much', 'silence', and 'hesitancy'. The following significations inferred within the turn-in-interaction can be considered as major significations of reticence in workplace discourse: *politeness*, *agreement*, *hesitation*. To conclude, it is important to raise awareness as regards the significations of reticence in workplace discourse to enhance the understanding of the English business culture, and to promote communicating at workplace in a more effective and efficient way. The findings will add an important dimension to the study of reticence in spoken interactions at the workplace and also have implications for the exploration of effective communication in English, in general.

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LA GRAMMAIRE –RETICENCE OU OUVERTURE EN DIDACTIQUE DU FLE?

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Abstract: *The reluctance of French teachers to use contexts and the idea of continuing to use the conceptualization of grammatical notions, followed by standard exercises are two types of attitudes that we encounter in teaching today in Romania. The openness of French teachers to the use of communicational situations / life contexts / simulation, to make grammar “live” and restore it to the appropriate place would be a way to develop oral and written communication skills. Our article sets out to demonstrate that the teaching of grammar is necessary, but the approach should be modified towards a contextualized teaching of grammar.*

Keywords: *grammar, context, curriculum.*

Au XVIII^e siècle, la grammaire était, d’après Antoine Rivaroli (1784), un instrument qui pouvait aider et rendre les choses plus faciles, ou bien l’art de supprimer les difficultés d’une langue; il ne fallait donc pas que le levier soit plus lourd que le fardeau. Cela était une première manière de montrer que la grammaire ne doit pas être vue comme un obstacle contre la communication, mais plutôt comme un moyen de connecter les mots qui composent la communication soit-elle orale ou écrite.

Dans le Dictionnaire *Larousse*, la grammaire est définie comme « étant un ensemble de règles qui président à la correction, à la norme de la langue écrite ou parlée et en même temps un ensemble des structures linguistiques propres à telle ou telle langue ; description de ces structures et du fonctionnement de cette langue »¹.

À présent, dans la littérature de spécialité, on parle de plusieurs types de grammaire : la grammaire prescriptive, la grammaire traditionnelle, la grammaire contrastive, lexico-grammaticale, universelle, pédagogique. Ces types de grammaires sont mentionnés par des linguistes tels : *Saussure* (2002), (Williams : 2005), Battistella (2005), Chomsky (2006), Davies (2007), Carroll (2008), Hazen (2015).

Dans cet article, nous nous proposons d’analyser le concept de «grammaire pédagogique, didactique» de la perspective de l’enseignement roumain de FLE et des documents qui le réglementent ; le professeur doit tenir compte d’un côté du profil de l’adolescent et, de l’autre côté, du curriculum roumain projeté pour l’enseignement-apprentissage du FLE au primaire, secondaire, lycée-cycle inférieur.

La grammaire pédagogique ou didactique est présentée dans une étude faite par l’Université de Lyon, comme « une grammaire de la langue cible dans sa variante standard, mais elle est aussi une grammaire générale, en ce qu’elle ne dépend pas des objectifs

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¹https://www.larousse.fr/dictionnaires/francais/grammaire/37802_20 août 2020, 15.30)

immédiats de l'enseignement, tout en restant un mécanisme qui permet à la fois de produire des phrases correctes et de bloquer les erreurs »¹.

Selon Cuq (2018 : 343), « en classe de langue on développe l'interlangue en termes de taille et précision, c'est-à-dire on utilise toutes les stratégies d'enseignement pour faire la langue étrangère ressembler à la langue cible. » Quand on parle de « taille », on parle d'activités communicatives et quand on parle de « forme », on parle de précision, de la grammaire et des faits de langue.

Il affirme que l'on doit trouver une formule intermédiaire pour corrélérer la taille et la forme, pour donner de la cohérence au processus didactique en classe de langue. En même temps, selon lui, la grammaire a toujours eu un rôle d'ordre essentiellement didactique, représentant le souci de prescription, un chemin pour l'éducation.

Les limites temporelles de la classe de FLE impliquent le fait que la complexité des questions grammaticales doit être sous une forme facilement et vite compréhensible ; par conséquent, on ne peut pas prétendre d'épuiser toutes les explications grammaticales, on doit en présenter l'essentiel d'une manière intégrée, créer des contextes et des situations pour donner du sens à la grammaire et l'intégrer dans la communication.

Selon Mariana Dragomir (2008 :36), la grammaire a représenté dans la tradition pédagogique, pendant une très longue période, l'essentiel dans l'enseignement-apprentissage du FLE et la méthode a été nommée méthode grammaire-traduction. Comme réactions à cette méthode, on a essayé d'en proposer d'autres qui semblaient ne pas accorder la même importance à la grammaire et en en faisant seulement un moyen, et non plus un but. Les méthodes qui suivent la méthode grammaire- traduction sont :la méthode directe, qui peut être une réaction à la méthode « grammaire-traduction », la conversation, qui est l'appui sur lequel se construit la langue tenant compte du fait que l'apprentissage de la parole se fait par la parole, en observant en dialogues comment on peut s'exprimer; l'approche communicative, qui consiste dans l'apprentissage du FLE seulement par des activités de communication orale et écrite et c'est à partir de ces situations de communication que les élèves observent, donnent des exemples, utilisent et conceptualisent les éléments de grammaire.

En ce qui suit, nous présentons une synthèse concernant la place de la grammaire dans les principales méthodologies d'enseignement-apprentissage du FLE.

Méthodologie	Traditionnelle	Directe	Audio-Orale	Structuro-Globale Audiovisuelle	L'approche communicative	Méthode actionnelle
Rôle de la	La langue étrangère était décortiquée et présentée comme un ensemble de	L'enseignement de la grammaire étrangère se fait d'une manière	On emploie les exercices structuraux et le laboratoire de langues	L'apprenant saisit les règles de manière intuitive.	La grammaire enseignée de manière inductive et explicite; grammaire de	La grammaire est présentée comme un instrument

¹<http://theses.univ-lyon2.fr/documents/getpart.php?id=lyon2.2000.cjamet&part=18872>(28.08.2020)

grammaire	règles grammaticales et d'exceptions, qui pouvaient être rapprochées de celles de la langue maternelle.	inductive (les règles ne s'étudient pas d'une manière explicite). On privilégie les exercices de conversation et les questions-réponses dirigées par l'enseignant.	pour réaliser une acquisition et une fixation d'automatisme linguistique.		l'oral et du discours – regroupant les contenus grammaticaux autour de macro objectifs : décrire, raconter, exprimer son opinion, argumenter	pour la réalisation de tâche de travail qui peut être réalisées à travers des projets des groupes ou en petits groupes.
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Tableau 1. Le Rôle de la grammaire dans les méthodologies d'apprentissage

Mariana Dragomir propose une approche de la grammaire en trois étapes : pratiquer la langue à partir d'un document authentique, réfléchir sur des exemples et parvenir à la règle, à travers une démarche inductive

Pratique de la langue en partant de l'oral à l'écrit, d'une conversation grammaticale, si possible situationnelle, à partir d'un support iconographique; réflexion sur les exemples démonstratifs, ce qui signifie que les professeurs trouvent de nouvelles situations dans lesquelles les apprenants peuvent appliquer les exemples et finalement on va faire la réflexion et on va voir quels sont les moyens linguistiques qui aident à construire une communication correcte et principalement cohérente et la réflexion sur la réflexion, ce qui débouche sur l'abstraction, surtout au niveau avancé. (Dragomir, 2008 :36)

Selon Georgescu (2011 : 137), il y a six principes pédagogiques généraux pour l'enseignement de la grammaire en didactique du FLE : l'étude systématique, la contrastivité, la gradation, la singularité, la relation inductif-déductif, la fonctionnalité. Il est très important de retenir le fait que la grammaire ne représente pas un but en soi-même, mais un moyen pour atteindre les objectifs visés et aider au développement de la compréhension et de la production orale et écrite.

Lorsque l'on a changé le curriculum roumain, on a opéré également le changement du curriculum pour l'enseignement-apprentissage du FLE¹ à tous les niveaux d'enseignement :2006- le curriculum pour FLE-lycée, 2009-lycée, cycle inférieur, 2013-le curriculum pour la Communication en langue étrangère- curriculum commun pour toutes les

¹<http://programe.ise.ro> (20 août 2020, 15.45)

langues étrangères étudiées en Roumanie- cycle primaire et en 2017 pour le FLE-collège, première et seconde langue étrangère étudiée.

En 2013, au cycle primaire, il y a des nouveautés dans le curriculum : « L’articulation claire et la transcription sur le tableau noir des mots pour aider les élèves observer certaines questions de grammaire ; ainsi, les élèves peuvent structurer progressivement la règle »¹, puisque les contenus représentent vraiment des instruments, des moyens d’apprentissage, et non pas de buts, en essence. La grammaire, les éléments constitutifs ne sont pas présentés explicitement, mais implicitement, comme partie composante des actes de langages : « solliciter des informations sur les nombres, sur les prix, exprimer l’heure, faire des descriptions simples : personnes, personnages, traits caractéristiques »². L’accent est mis sur la communication avec ses deux facettes : orale et écrite. Il y a le premier pas contre la réticence et en faveur de l’ouverture pour un enseignement-apprentissage du FLE communicationnel où la grammaire devient explicitement un instrument qui mène au développement de la compétence de communiquer en langue étrangère.

C’est ainsi qu’en Roumanie, dans le curriculum pour le FLE, la grammaire commence à devenir un moyen aidant à faire acquérir aux apprenants les compétences prévues dans le CECRL : la compréhension orale et écrite, la production orale et écrite et en même temps l’interaction :

Un grand pas pour l’enseignement des éléments langagiers sans utiliser le métalangage est le curriculum pour la langue étrangère au cycle primaire où il n’existe pas de liste de « contenus de grammaire », mais une rubrique appelée *Grammaire fonctionnelle*³ qui est mise en relation directe avec les actes des langages qui vont être exercés dans la salle de classe pour améliorer les compétences de l’apprenant. Très important est l’apprentissage en contexte. Le développement des compétences de communication se fait en contextes de communication est un but qui doit être compris par les apprenants. Faute de contexte, les élèves arrivent à réciter seulement des mots et des phrases mémorisées sans pouvoir faire le transfert aux autres situations. Les personnes apprennent mieux s’ils comprennent pourquoi ils apprennent ce qu’ils apprennent.⁴

Au cycle secondaire, le curriculum est construit d’une manière générale pour toutes les langues étrangères étudiées en Roumanie et, à la fin du document, il y a une liste qui n’a pas de caractère obligatoire et qui contient les contenus thématiques, les actes de langages et les contenus de grammaire qui peuvent aider à construire une communication cohérente et correcte dans la langue étrangère. Le principe d’élaboration de chaque liste est le même : la

¹http://programe.ise.ro/Portals/1/Curriculum/2014-12/20-Limba%20moderna_clasele%20a%20III-a%20-%20a%20IV-a.pdf (25 août 2020, 16.30)

²idem

³http://programe.ise.ro/Portals/1/2013_CP_I_II/24_CL_moderna_CP_II_OMEN.pdf (25 août 2020, 14.45)

⁴http://programe.ise.ro/Portals/1/2013_CP_I_II/24_CL_moderna_CP_II_OMEN.pdf (25 août 2020, 14.50)

mise en relation des éléments de langue avec les actes de langage qui vont être performés en classe de FLE à partir des « panneaux, affiches, horaires- les jours de la semaine, les mois de l'année, les saisons. »¹

Au lycée, le curriculum est construit pour chaque classe, profil et spécialisation et il contient les compétences, les actes de langage et les éléments de grammaire, mais le principe est le même : « les catégories grammaticales énumérées appartiennent au métalangage de spécialité. Dans la communication didactique, elles seront introduites rationnellement, en répondant de pratique /enrichissement de fonctions communicatives et elles ne feront pas l'objet d'une évaluation explicite. »²

Pour mettre en relation les éléments de grammaire avec les actes de langage, on doit créer des contextes à l'intérieur desquelles on puisse « exposer clairement les compétences (savoir, savoir-faire et attitudes) que l'utilisateur de la langue construit au fil de son expérience et qui lui permettent de faire face aux exigences de la communication par-delà les frontières linguistiques et culturelles (c'est-à-dire, effectuer des tâches et des activités communicatives dans les divers contextes de la vie sociale, compte tenu des conditions et des contraintes qui leur sont propres) ».³ Il y a des situations d'apprentissage, de communication qui ont le rôle de faciliter l'intégration naturelle des éléments langagiers sans faire un cas de discussion.

On propose des situations d'apprentissage qui vont illustrer l'intégration de la grammaire en contexte. Les contextes peuvent être divers, selon la thématique proposée par le curriculum. En même temps, on peut utiliser le projet thématique comme méthode d'enseignement et enseigner la grammaire d'une façon inductive : les faits de grammaire sont observés dans des situations de communication, ils sont pratiqués et puis on en extrait les règles d'utilisation des éléments langagiers.

Pour optimiser l'utilisation du temps de la classe et pour lui permettre d'être bien structurée, il est important pour l'enseignant comme pour l'apprenant que les activités soient clairement identifiées. Précisons tout de suite que les activités grammaticales ne doivent pas pour autant obéir à une logique d'enseignement de la grammaire, c'est-à-dire d'un savoir uniquement déclaratif, mais elles doivent être contextualisées et soumises à des objectifs fonctionnels : c'est à cette condition qu'elles permettront le passage à un véritable savoir procédural. (Cuq, 2018 : 348)

Pour enseigner la grammaire, on peut recourir à des projets thématiques : on réunit les élèves en petits groupes et on leur donne des tâches de travail. Par exemple, on peut enseigner aux élèves comment faire des achats, en utilisant comme moyen langagier l'article partitif. La thématique peut être diversifiée et répondre à leurs besoins ; on en cite quelques-uns : l'amitié, la correspondance, les réseaux médias, les films préférés. Ils peuvent

¹<http://programe.ise.ro/Portals/1/Curriculum/2017-progr/21-Limba%20moderna%202.pdf> (26 août 2020, 15.50)

²http://programe.ise.ro/Portals/1/Curriculum/Progr_Lic/LC/MOD/Limba%20franceza%201_3_clasa%20a%20IX-a.pdf (28 août 2020, 16.30)

³<https://rm.coe.int/16802fc3a8>, (août 2020, 19.50)

représenter la thématique choisie de leur propre façon, sous forme de bande dessinée, texte, collage, et ils peuvent ajouter une chanson ou représentation théâtrale. De la même manière, on peut faire des simulations en classe de FLE et on peut enseigner aux élèves de demander et de donner des informations pour s'orienter, en utilisant l'impératif, à partir d'un plan d'une ville ou d'une carte avec certains objectifs touristiques.

La grammaire n'est pas un but, mais un moyen au cours de l'apprentissage du français langue étrangère. On suit le processus naturel de compréhension et utilisation de la langue comme elle a été conceptualisée par les linguistes : au présent, les professeurs de FLE ne doivent plus manifester de réticence par rapport à la grammaire ou bien au fait que leurs élèves sont réticents eux-aussi à l'étude de la grammaire ; la grammaire enseignée à partir des contextes, des situations de communication, elle est exercée et puis l'apprenant en extrait les règles d'utilisation qui lui serviront à communiquer.

La grammaire ne doit pas représenter un « carré » qui doit limiter l'apprenant, mais un parcours flexible qui doit s'adapter aux besoins langagiers des apprenants et aux contextes communicationnels. La réticence quant à la grammaire provient du fait que le professeur n'a pas assez de données quant aux approches modernes spécifiques à l'apprentissage des langues étrangères ; par contre, si on se rend compte que la grammaire n'est pas un obstacle, mais un outil, on réussira en tant que professeur à l'expliquer, à la faire exercer et à y voir une nécessité lorsqu'il s'agit d'une communication correcte et cohérente.

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LES ENVIRONNEMENTS D'APPRENTISSAGE INTERACTIF - DES CADRES DISSIMULATEURS DE LA RÉTICENCE

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Abstract: *Even though great importance is given to the use of teaching techniques in the Quebec public education system, students' resistance to express themselves remains a difficult obstacle. Classroom management helps create a good climate to help alleviate this issue for all levels of education. Silence in class is often seen as a negative aspect of learning, as is hesitation or lack of preparation on the part of the student. However, the need to interact with one's peers to validate one's opinions can also be perceived as disruptive when it interrupts the teacher's explanation. It often happens that the teacher considers the students to be unruly, whereas they feel they are being treated unfairly. These embarrassing situations arise because of the lack of communication between the students and the teacher. In well-planned interactive environments, depending on the needs of the students where they are the actors and the teacher their guide, there is no place for reticence.*

Keywords: *interactive, public, technique*

Introduction

Depuis quelques décennies, on insiste beaucoup sur la collaboration entre l'étudiant et l'enseignant ainsi que sur le travail en équipe qui favorisent le développement des compétences. On exige que l'enseignant soit un gestionnaire efficace qui soit capable de maximiser le temps consacré à l'apprentissage, créer et maintenir un climat propice et favoriser le développement des compétences. Souvent, même les adultes ont besoin de se faire rappeler les règles. Ainsi, dès le début du cours, le professeur doit fixer les règles et les procédures en ce qui concerne une bonne ambiance dans la salle de classe. Ceci explique de façon claire et précise la nécessité des règlements. Les étudiants doivent se sentir impliqués dans le développement du climat de la classe. Une variété de pratiques éducatives favorise la coopération et l'engagement des étudiants dont l'un des buts est d'atténuer l'apparition des problèmes de toutes sortes. L'encadrement des étudiants s'avère motivant. Il est donc important de rappeler l'importance de leur collaboration à ce processus qui vise à les rendre plus responsables, ainsi que les motiver à adhérer aux choix retenus et développer leur sentiment d'appartenance au groupe.

L'enseignant doit concentrer son attention sur les besoins de ses étudiants, pour qu'il puisse les guider. Archambault et Chouinard constatent que l'« on n'enseigne plus pour “passer son programme”, mais pour que les élèves apprennent. D'une pédagogie centrée sur le contenu, on se dirige plus vers une pédagogie centrée sur l'apprentissage de l'élève, donc sur l'élève lui-même. En ce sens, connaître l'apprentissage, ses processus et ses mécanismes devient primordial » (2003 : 4).

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Pourtant, le plus empathique des enseignants ne réussira pas à observer et soutenir chaque étudiant. Une attention particulière peut déranger les personnes discrètes alors que les étudiants motivés peuvent se sentir négligés. De telles situations peuvent entraîner de la réticence et de l'embarras chez les deux catégories d'étudiants. Par conséquent, l'enseignant doit diversifier ses méthodes pédagogiques en introduisant le travail en équipe et l'utilisation de la technologie afin de diminuer la réticence chez les étudiants. Cette démarche pourrait être prise comme un signe d'une bonne gestion de la classe, car l'enseignant détient le contrôle. Plus les étudiants ont de la liberté, plus ils se sentent dans leur zone de confort. Un cadre interactif où la communication entre les étudiants et l'enseignant est basée sur le respect et sur des règles déjà établies encourage le travail individuel et d'équipe, car l'enseignant intervient en tant que guide.

Étude

La majorité des études scientifiques qui parlent de la « réticence » chez les étudiants relèvent du domaine de l'enseignement des langues secondes. Parmi ces études, on remarque Jim King avec *Silence in the Second Language Classroom* et *The Emotional Rollercoaster of Language Teaching* ou Dat Bao avec *Understanding Silence and Reticence: Ways of Participating in Second Language Acquisition*. Peter MacIntyre écrit dans la préface du livre *East Asian Perspectives on Silence in English Language Education* que « [l]a réticence fondée sur la peur fait partie des nombreuses raisons du silence, un état indésirable aux conséquences potentiellement durables » (2020 : 19).¹ La liste peut continuer avec Tannen, D., l'auteur de *Reticence and Second Language Anxiety etc.* Tous ces auteurs prennent en considération l'aspect émotionnel et affectif chez les étudiants qui ressentent de la peur et de l'hésitation à s'exprimer. Selon Keaten et Kelly, « la réticence est un problème de communication de dimensions cognitives, affectives, et comportementales causé par la pensée que l'on devrait rester tranquille plutôt que de risquer de sembler stupide » (Li, Lu, 2011 : 962) (ma traduction)².

Sans aller trop en profondeur chercher des problèmes particuliers ou se référer à des catégories des personnalités, être réticent est une attitude normale quand l'étudiant a l'impression de ne pas avoir suffisamment de connaissances de fond pour pouvoir participer à une conversation dans laquelle il doit répondre à un moment où il ne se sent pas à l'aise. Remplacer les situations où l'on pose des questions précises par des projets où on construit des connaissances détend les étudiants, car leur attention est concentrée sur leur projet. Ils sont observés discrètement pendant leur travail.

¹ Reticence based on fear is among the many reasons for silence, an unwelcome state with potentially enduring consequences.

² « Reticence is a communication problem with cognitive, affective, and behavioural dimensions and is due to the belief that one is better off remaining silent than risking appearing foolish (Keaten & Kelly 2000 qtd. in Li & Lu, 962)

École secondaire francophone

Un étudiant parisien récemment arrivé dans une école secondaire francophone montréalaise a éprouvé beaucoup de réticence lors de sa rentrée scolaire. Même s'il avait été bien accueilli par ses nouveaux collègues, il se sentait étranger. En dépit de ses efforts pour l'intégrer aux activités de la classe et aux équipes de travail et pour le nommer porte-parole de l'équipe, l'enseignant décide de laisser ses coéquipiers le soutenir dans ses tâches. L'enseignant l'a même placé avec les étudiants « forts » pour les travaux d'équipe afin qu'il puisse bénéficier des meilleurs guides possibles. Malgré les interventions concises et l'aide des collègues, le nouvel étudiant ne réussissait pas à se détendre et sortir de sa coquille.

Pendant une activité dans le laboratoire informatique, les étudiants devaient travailler en équipes pour créer une histoire d'aventure. L'étudiant est devenu très communicatif après avoir fait sa recherche sur Internet. D'une façon naturelle, il a commencé à échanger ses idées avec ses collègues comme s'il faisait partie de cette classe depuis longtemps. Devant la classe, il a présenté sa partie de l'histoire en PowerPoint.

Enseignement aux adultes

Il n'est pas facile d'assurer que l'enseignement des adultes se déroule d'une façon très efficace, étant donné que les étudiants ne sont plus obligés de suivre des cours. On remarque que des étudiants préfèrent étudier à la distance, considérant les cours inutiles et une perte de temps. Tel est le cas d'un groupe d'étudiants de l'Université McGill incluant Claire Trottier, Joanna Li, Ali Mohammed et Chalani Ranasinghe. Ils ont présenté leur recherche pendant la conférence Saltise à Montréal en 2017. Ils ont dévoilé leurs préférences et celles de leurs collègues à la fois pour des cours enregistrés à la place de la participation en classe. Leur présence n'était pas justifiée, car ils devaient juste écouter et prendre des notes, ils n'étaient pas impliqués dans le cours. Dans ce cas-ci, on ne peut même pas parler d'éliminer la réticence des élèves, car ils n'avaient même pas la chance de s'exprimer, ce qui a entraîné leur démotivation.

Depuis quelques années, on utilise l'approche « classe inversée » qui vise à éliminer la réticence des étudiants en classe, à les encadrer mieux dans les thèmes de sorte qu'ils puissent travailler les activités avec leurs pairs. Un bon déroulement stimule aussi leur motivation.

L'objectif principal de la « classe inversée » est d'impliquer les élèves dans le processus éducatif à travers l'environnement d'apprentissage adaptatif. Cet environnement est conçu pour préparer et motiver les étudiants d'accomplir en toute confiance les tâches d'apprentissage, l'auto-évaluation de leurs propres réalisations grâce à l'interactivité et la rétroaction, qui sont stratégiquement mises en œuvre à toutes les étapes de ce modèle pédagogique (Kuzmina, Nazarova, 2018 : 6) (n.t.)¹.

¹“The main purpose of Flipped classroom is to involve the students in the educational process through the adaptive learning environment. This environment is designed to prepare and motivate the students for confidently completion of learning tasks, self-assessment of their own achievements through

De plus, ce n'est pas sans raison qu'en 2019, des institutions comme l'Université Concordia et le collège Dawson ont créé des environnements d'étude active visant à attirer les étudiants vers leur propre recherche sur les thèmes étudiés. Un tel milieu fait en sorte que l'étudiant se sent plus intégré dans son travail. En contact avec tant de sources d'informations et étant exposés à un encadrement aussi actif, les étudiants deviennent responsables d'apporter leur meilleur effort au projet.

Le programme Baccalauréat International (du primaire jusqu'au collège) vise le développement de certaines compétences chez les étudiants : la créativité, ouverture vers d'autres cultures, capacité critique et habileté à trouver l'équilibre dans la vie, de respecter des principes, etc. Le cadre d'enseignement interactif vise l'implication des étudiants dans des projets. Le travail d'équipe facilite le développement des compétences communicatives entraînant de nouvelles idées constructives dans la réalisation du projet final. Au début du projet, chacun prend des responsabilités. Lors de l'évaluation du projet, les étudiants reçoivent une note pour leur travail individuel, mais aussi une note par projet. Le succès de l'enseignement consiste à assurer la réussite en ce qui concerne la construction de leurs connaissances en les incitant à apporter leur contribution à la réalisation d'un projet dont ils vont être fiers à la fin. La réticence chez les étudiants n'a pas de place dans ce cadre, car les acteurs sont très impliqués et préoccupés par les responsabilités prises.

Conclusion

Avant de traiter des cas spéciaux (timidité, manque de confiance en soi, sentiments d'infériorité), on associe la réticence chez les étudiants à leur manque de motivation ou intérêt. À n'importe quel niveau d'étude, une planification qui vise l'efficacité et les objectifs bien définis entraîne toujours des résultats satisfaisants. En créant un cadre d'apprentissage interactif, avec ou sans technologie, l'enseignant place les étudiants dans la réalité du monde du travail. En prenant part à un projet, les étudiants deviennent responsables de réagir en donnant des réponses et en partageant leurs idées. Leur implication dans la recherche individuelle et le travail en équipe stimulent leur intérêt de réussir et d'être fiers de leur contribution. Il n'y a aucune recette pour trouver la meilleure méthode d'enseignement. Cependant, concevoir les planifications dans des cadres interactifs et établir des principes comme celui de Doug Lemov, « Une séquence qui commence par un élève incapable de répondre à une question doit se terminer avec l'étudiant répondant à cette question aussi souvent que possible » (2010 : 28) (ma traduction)¹, ne laisse pas de place à la réticence chez les étudiants.

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interactivity and feedback cycles, which are strategically implemented at all stages of this pedagogical model" (Kuzmina, Nazarova, 2018: 6).

1 "A sequence that begins with a student unable to answer a question should end with the student answering that question as often as possible" (Lemov 28).

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LA PLACE DE LA MEDIATION DANS LE VOLUME COMPLEMENTAIRE AU CECRL

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Abstract: *The CECFRL: Learning, Teaching, Assessment. Companion Volume with New Descriptors (2018) provides its readers with new perspectives upon the concept of “mediation”. Although it was mentioned and defined in the CECFRL, changes have been made in the sense of its being more precisely defined. Therefore, it includes mediating a text, mediating concepts, and mediating communication. This view brings about its being related to building on plurilingual/pluricultural repertoires. Our paper aims at showing that mediation as a skill may be seen as subordinated to plurilingual/pluricultural competence.*

Keywords: *mediation, plurilingual, pluricultural*

1. Le Cadre Européen Commun de Référence – repère pour l’enseignement-apprentissage des langues étrangères

Le Cadre européen commun de référence paru au début des années 2000 constitue une révolution dans l’enseignement des langues étrangères en Europe et non pas seulement. Sans se vouloir une « Bible » dans le domaine, il assume, pourtant quelques objectifs essentiels dont on cite : offrir une base commune pour l’élaboration de programmes de langues vivantes, de référentiels, d’examens, de manuels, etc. en Europe, définir les niveaux de compétence, donner des outils aux administratifs, aux concepteurs de programmes, aux enseignants, à leurs formateurs, aux jurys d’examens, etc., pour réfléchir à leur pratique habituelle. (CECRL¹ :2001, 9)

Étant donné les objectifs clairement mentionnés par le CECRL, il s’ensuit qu’il représente une manière d’uniformiser la façon dans laquelle l’enseignement des langues se fait en Europe, sans pourtant se constituer dans une obligation d’être respecté à la lettre. Il constitue donc un point de départ pour rédiger des programmes et un instrument pour évaluer les compétences de langue, similairement, partout en Europe.

Les auteurs du Cadre proposent une autre perspective concernant l’apprentissage des langues étrangères, une perspective qu’ils décrivent par le terme « actionnel » :

La perspective privilégiée ici est, très généralement aussi, de type actionnel en ce qu’elle considère 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. (*ibidem* :2001, 15)

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¹ *Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues.*

Il s'agit notamment de regarder l'apprenant comme « acteur social » qui doit agir dans la société, de manière concrète, mais aussi en se servant de la langue, pour atteindre certains buts, c'est-à-dire pour mener à bien ce que le Cadre appelle « tâches » ; l'apprenant en tant qu'acteur social déroule ses actions se rapportant à un certain domaine, et en agissant dans des circonstances et dans un environnement qui lui sont imposés par le but à atteindre. Pour y arriver, l'apprenant a besoin de « compétences générales » et de la « compétence à communiquer langagièrement ». (*op.cit* :2001, 16-17) Ce second type de compétence se manifeste lorsque l'apprenant agit par l'intermédiaire des activités langagières :

La compétence à communiquer langagièrement du sujet apprenant et communiquant est mise en œuvre dans la réalisation d'activités langagières variées pouvant relever de la réception, de la production, de l'interaction, de la médiation (notamment les activités de traduction et d'interprétation), chacun de ces modes d'activités étant susceptible de s'accomplir soit à l'oral, soit à l'écrit, soit à l'oral et à l'écrit. (*op.cit* :2001, 18)

Le CECRL mentionne les quatre catégories dans lesquelles les activités langagières peuvent s'encadrer : la réception, la production, l'interaction et la médiation. On pourrait les grouper en activités primaires (réception et production) et activités secondaires (interaction et médiation) ou dérivées, en comprenant par cela que l'interaction et la médiation recourent d'une manière implicite à la réception et à la production. Pour ce qui est de l'interaction, elle implique la réception des messages, la production des messages, en étant, par sa spécificité, beaucoup plus que ces deux processus considérés séparément. La médiation, d'une façon similaire, n'exclut pas les deux activités que l'on pourrait appeler primaires, en allant beaucoup plus loin :

Participant à la fois de la réception et de la production, les activités écrites et/ou orales de médiation, permettent, par la traduction ou l'interprétariat, le résumé ou le compte rendu, de produire à l'intention d'un tiers une (re)formulation accessible d'un texte premier auquel ce tiers n'a pas d'abord accès direct. Les activités langagières de médiation, (re)traitant un texte déjà là, tiennent une place considérable dans le fonctionnement langagier ordinaire de nos sociétés. (*op.cit* : 2001, 18)

Quelle que soit la forme d'activité langagière, réception, production, interaction ou médiation, l'accent tombe sur le rôle social que joue l'apprenant : il n'apprend pas la langue pour la « savoir », mais pour l'employer dans la communication avec les autres, pour devenir capable d'atteindre ses buts sociaux. Cette dimension sociale de la langue étrangère qui n'existe plus en tant que « somme de connaissances », mais plutôt comme « outil » détermine l'importance de plus en plus grande accordée à ce que nous avons appelé « activités secondaires ou dérivées », c'est-à-dire l'interaction et la médiation. Notre présent travail s'occupera de la médiation, surtout parce que celle-ci est approchée d'une manière plus détaillée, voire différente, dans le Volume complémentaire du Cadre Européen Commun de Référence paru en 2018 que dans le Cadre publié en 2001. Nous considérons, comme hypothèse de départ, que la médiation, par les caractéristiques et par les types proposés par le *Volume complémentaire*, se subordonne à la compétence plurilinguistique et pluriculturelle.

2. Le concept de « médiation » dans le CECRL de 2001

La médiation est mentionnée par le CECRL dans la Section 2.1.3. à côté de la réception, de la production et de l'interaction :

Participant à la fois de la réception et de la production, les activités écrites et/ou orales de médiation, permettent, par la traduction ou l'interprétariat, le résumé ou le compte rendu, de produire à l'intention d'un tiers une (re)formulation accessible d'un texte premier auquel ce tiers n'a pas d'abord accès direct. Les activités langagières de médiation, (re)traitant un texte déjà là, tiennent une place considérable dans le fonctionnement langagier ordinaire de nos sociétés. (*op.cit.* :2001, 18)

Le Cadre la présente donc en quelques mots précisant : la médiation peut se dérouler sous forme d'activités orales ou écrites ; elle implique à la fois la réception et la production et se réalise par l'intermédiaire des activités de traduction ou d'interprétariat ; le médiateur recourt, pour atteindre son but, au compte-rendu ou bien au résumé. Bref, la médiation implique le transfert d'un message d'une personne A vers une personne B, sous une forme qui soit accessible à la dernière :

Personne A/ Message A → Médiateur/Message A' → Personne B/ Message A''

Dans ce sens, la médiation agit principalement entre les langues à travers des activités telles l'interprétation (orale) et la traduction (écrite), mais il arrive qu'elle agisse à l'intérieur de la même langue, sous forme de résumé ou de reformulation, « lorsque le texte original est incompréhensible pour son destinataire. » (*op.cit.* :2001, 4.4.4.) Elle revêt donc deux formes, orale et écrite, ayant à leur tour, des manières différentes (*ibidem.* :2001, 71) de se réaliser que nous résumons dans le tableau ci-dessous :

Médiation orale	Médiation écrite
-interprétation <i>simultanée</i> (congrès, réunions, conférences, etc.)	- <i>traduction précise</i> (de contrats, de textes de loi, de textes scientifiques, etc.)
-interprétation <i>différée</i> ou <i>consécutive</i> (discours d'accueil, visites guidées, etc.)	- <i>traduction littéraire</i> (romans, théâtre, poésie, livrets, etc.)
-interprétation <i>non formelle</i> -pour des amis, de la famille, des clients, des visiteurs étrangers, etc. - de visiteurs étrangers dans son propre pays ; - de locuteurs natifs, à l'étranger ; - dans des situations de négociation et des situations mondaines ; - de pancartes, de menus, d'affichettes, etc.	- <i>résumé</i> de l'essentiel (articles de journaux et magazines, etc.) en L2 ou entre L1 et L2
	- <i>reformulation</i> (textes spécialisés pour non spécialistes, etc.).

3. Le concept de « médiation » dans le *Volume complémentaire* de 2018

Si dans le *Cadre*, la médiation était définie comme pouvant être utilisée « à l'intention d'un tiers », pour offrir « une (re)formulation accessible d'un texte premier auquel ce tiers

n'a pas d'abord accès direct » (*op.cit* : 2001, 18) sans d'autres précision, le *Volume complémentaire* en dit beaucoup plus :

Dans la médiation, l'utilisateur/apprenant agit comme un acteur social créant des passerelles et des outils pour construire et transmettre du sens soit dans la même langue, soit d'une langue à une autre (médiation interlangues). L'accent est mis sur le rôle de la langue dans des processus tels que créer l'espace et les conditions pour communiquer et/ou apprendre, collaborer pour construire un nouveau sens, encourager les autres à construire et à comprendre un nouveau sens et faire passer les informations nouvelles de façon adéquate. Le contexte peut être social, pédagogique, linguistique ou professionnel. (Vol. compl.¹ : 2018, 106)

Il s'agit donc de préciser la position de l'utilisateur/apprenant qui devient un intermédiaire, agissant soit à l'intérieur d'une langue, soit entre deux langues, dans le but de communiquer et collaborer avec l'autrui. La médiation acquiert donc à part le côté de processus *social* (qui était déjà impliqué par le CECRL, lorsqu'il mentionnait le fait que la médiation est employée à l'intention d'un tiers), celui de processus *culturel*. (*ibidem* : 2018, 109) Le médiateur n'agit donc plus pour mener à bonne fin une tâche qui le concerne, mais surtout pour aider l'autre, faisant preuve d'intelligence émotionnelle, d'empathie ou d'ouverture.

Il agit dans des contextes différents dont le premier est le contexte social ; pourtant, le médiateur et donc la médiation comme processus se font place dans la formation (le contexte pédagogique), dans la vie professionnelle (le contexte professionnel) ou bien dans l'apprentissage des langues (contexte linguistique).

Lorsque la médiation agit entre deux langues, on ajoute aux compétences sociale et culturelle du médiateur, la compétence plurilingue.

Conformément au *Volume complémentaire*, il y a trois types d'activités de médiation : médiation de textes, de concepts et de la communication. (*op.cit.* : 2018, 108) et on renonce à la délimitation médiation orale / médiation écrite. En ce qui suit, nous présenterons les définitions fournies par le *Volume complémentaire* aux trois types de médiation.

a) La médiation de textes a comme but de « transmettre à une personne le contenu d'un texte auquel cette personne n'aurait pas accès, souvent à cause de barrières d'ordre linguistique, culturel, sémantique ou technique ». (*op.cit.* : 2018, 109)

b) La médiation de concepts « facilite l'accès au savoir et aux concepts, en particulier pour des personnes qui sont incapables d'y accéder directement ». (*op.cit.* : 2018, 109)

c) La médiation de la communication se propose de « faciliter la compréhension et de façonner une communication réussie entre les utilisateurs / apprenants qui ont des perspectives individuelles, socioculturelles, sociolinguistiques ou intellectuelles éventuellement différentes. » (*op.cit.* : 2018, 110) L'unification des perspectives s'accomplit par des capacités telles « la diplomatie, la négociation, la pédagogie ou la résolution du conflit ». (*op.cit.* : 2018, 110)

¹ *Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues : apprendre, enseigner, évaluer. Volume complémentaire avec de nouveaux descripteurs.*

L'approche de la médiation offerte par le *Volume complémentaire* a à la base la vision de Coste et Cavalli, concernant la médiation qui est vue comme un processus absolument nécessaire au niveau social, devenant un instrument capable de réduire la distance sociale et culturelle et, implicitement, de réduire ou d'éliminer les tensions que celle-ci pourrait engendrer :

« Par médiation, on désigne toute opération, tout dispositif, toute intervention qui, dans un contexte social donné, vise à réduire la distance entre deux (voire plus de deux) pôles altéritaires qui se trouvent en tension l'un par rapport à l'autre. » (Coste, Cavalli : 2015, 28) Celle-ci agit à un niveau macro-social entre des individus/instances sociales (acteur, collectivité, institution), mais aussi, au niveau micro-social, dans un contexte pédagogique, à l'intérieur des institutions d'éducation. Dans ce type de contexte, le médiateur est représenté non seulement par l'enseignant, mais aussi par les manuels, des matériaux différents, par les activités proposées en classe ou bien par d'autres apprenants appartenant au groupe ; à son tour, le processus de médiation n'est pas seulement orienté vers un individu et devient plus complexe, en visant « les savoirs, savoir-faire, dispositions et attitudes (savoir-être) » (*op.cit.* : 2015, 29) que les apprenants veulent/doivent avoir comme but. Tenant compte de ces éléments, les auteurs (*op.cit.* : 2015, 29) établissent deux types de médiation : la médiation cognitive (« transmission / construction de connaissances et d'appropriation de ce qui est d'abord perçu comme altérité ») et médiation relationnelle (« la gestion des interactions, des relations voire des conflits et, plus généralement, ce qui touche à la réduction des distances interpersonnelles, à la facilitation des rencontres et des coopérations et à l'instauration d'un climat favorable ») Ces deux types de médiation mis en évidence par Coste et Cavalli sont à la base de la définition fournie par le *Volume complémentaire* au concept de médiation : la dimension cognitive relève de la compréhension et de la construction d'un nouveau sens, tandis que la dimension relationnelle est liée à l'activité de communication, de collaboration, d'encouragement par laquelle la transmission des informations passe. De plus, les trois types de médiation présentées dans le *Volume complémentaire* (de textes, de concepts, de la communication) se superposent sur les deux dimensions, la dimension cognitive et la dimension relationnelle, envisagées par Coste et Cavalli.

4. Approche contrastive de la « médiation » dans le CECRL et dans le Volume complémentaire

Pour comparer les types d'activités de médiation dans le CECRL et dans le Volume complémentaire, on propose le tableau suivant, dans lequel on a intégré seulement la médiation de textes, étant donné le fait que les deux autres se concentrent plutôt sur la dimension relationnelle de la médiation :

Médiation écrite (CECRL)	Médiation orale (CECRL)	Médiation de textes (Volume complémentaire)
- <i>traduction précise</i> (de contrats, de textes de loi, de textes scientifiques, etc.)	-interprétation <i>simultanée</i> (congrès, réunions, conférences, etc.)	Traduire un texte écrit à l'oral et à l'écrit

- <i>traduction littéraire</i> (romans, théâtre, poésie, livrets, etc.)	-interprétation <i>différée</i> ou <i>consécutive</i> (discours d'accueil, visites guidées, etc.)	
- <i>résumé</i> de l'essentiel (articles de journaux et magazines, etc.) en L2 ou entre L1 et L2	-interprétation <i>non formelle</i> -pour des amis, de la famille, des clients, des visiteurs étrangers, etc. - de visiteurs étrangers dans son propre pays ; - de locuteurs natifs, à l'étranger ; - dans des situations de négociation et des situations mondaines ; - de pancartes, de menus, d'affichettes, etc.	Transmettre des informations spécifiques à l'oral et à l'écrit Traiter un texte à l'oral et à l'écrit Expliquer des données à l'oral et à l'écrit Prendre des notes
- <i>reformulation</i> (textes spécialisés pour non spécialistes, etc.).		
		Exprimer une réaction personnelle à l'égard de textes créatifs (dont la littérature) Analyser et critiquer des textes créatifs (incluant la littérature)

Par conséquent, dans la vision du CECRL, la médiation recouvre des activités écrites ou orales, mettant l'accent sur la transposition des informations d'une langue à l'autre ou à l'intérieur de la même langue, d'une manière intégrale, abrégée ou sous forme explicative. Le Volume complémentaire apporte deux modifications essentielles :

- a) L'ajout d'une dimension interprétative des textes pris en considération qui vient, d'une manière explicite, accorder une place à part au texte littéraire (dans le cas de la médiation de textes) ;
- b) L'ajout explicite de la dimension relationnelle, surtout dans le cas de la médiation des concepts et de la communication.

Nous synthétisons en ce qui suit les activités de médiation de concepts et de la communication, telles qu'elles sont présentées dans le *Volume complémentaire* (2018 : 107):

Médiation de concepts		Médiation de la communication
<i>Coopérer dans un groupe</i>	<i>Mener un groupe de travail</i>	
-faciliter la coopération dans les interactions avec des pairs	-gérer des interactions	-établir un espace pluriculturel
-coopérer pour construire du sens	-susciter un discours conceptuel	-agir en tant qu'intermédiaire dans des situations informelles -faciliter la communication dans des situations délicates et des désaccords

La dimension relationnelle est omniprésente lorsqu'il s'agit de la médiation des concepts et de la médiation de la communication : les idées de coopération et d'interaction sont les deux idées qui soutiennent ces types de médiation ; pourtant, un autre élément nouveau s'en dégage, élément, nous osons dire, essentiel, dans le processus de réduction des distances culturelles et d'élimination des conflits : c'est l'« espace pluriculturel » qui se construit à travers la médiation.

Cette notion est anticipée dans une recherche parue en 2003 et coordonnée par Geneviève Zarate dans laquelle les auteurs prennent en considération la notion de « médiation culturelle », comme « ensemble d'attitudes, de stratégies et de savoir-faire, contrepont aux préjugés, stéréotypes et représentations xénophobes » (Zarate, 2003 :17). La dimension culturelle de la médiation s'en dégage clairement. Médier c'est créer des liens entre des acteurs appartenant à des cultures différentes, parlant des langues différentes. La langue étrangère devient un véhicule culturel et le plurilinguisme facilite le développement de ce que l'on appelle « compétence interculturelle » :

L'acquisition d'un répertoire plurilingue tout au long de la vie est associé au développement d'une conscience de la complexité culturelle de l'environnement (...). Les individus peuvent devenir capables de vivre avec d'autres dans de nouveaux environnements linguistiques et peuvent par conséquent devenir capables de s'identifier aux valeurs, croyances et comportements d'autres groupes. Là où de tels changements ont lieu, les individus ont une compréhension et une expérience d'au moins certains aspects de la vie de personnes d'autres langues et cultures. Cela signifie aussi qu'ils ont le potentiel d'interpréter et d'expliquer un mode de vie à ceux qui vivent autrement. Cette *compétence interculturelle* est cruciale dans le développement d'une compréhension mutuelle de groupes différents et c'est le rôle de *médiateurs interculturels* de toutes sortes, guides de voyages, enseignants, diplomates ... La compétence interculturelle et la capacité de médiation culturelle sont ainsi l'un des buts potentiels de l'enseignement des langues, ce qui donne la capacité aux individus plurilingues d'acquérir une capacité de vivre dans l'environnement multilingue qu'est l'Europe contemporaine. (Byram, Beacco, 2002 :37)

La compétence interculturelle joue donc un rôle essentiel lorsqu'il s'agit de médiation, lorsque celle-ci implique la mise en relation des acteurs appartenant à des cultures différentes. Il aurait donc été souhaitable d'intégrer également un quatrième type de médiation, c'est-à-dire la médiation culturelle parmi les types proposés par le *Volume complémentaire*. A cet égard, Christien Puren remarque que « la grille *Exploiter un répertoire pluriculturel* du VC est en réalité une grille de médiation culturelle ». (Puren, 2019 :57). D'autre côté, la compétence plurilingue et pluriculturelle implique quatre types d'échelles : établir un espace pluriculturel, exploiter le répertoire pluriculturel, la compréhension plurilingue et l'exploitation plurilingue. (*op.cit.*, 2018 :164-165) On remarque donc le lien existant entre la médiation et la compétence plurilingue et pluriculturelle la double implication entre les deux. Par conséquent, la condition *sine qua non* pour avoir une bonne compétence de médiation est le développement de la compétence plurilingue et pluriculturelle. En ce qui nous concerne, c'est justement pour cette raison que nous considérons que la médiation pourrait être vue comme subordonnée à la compétence plurilingue et pluriculturelle.

5. Conclusions

Le XXI^e siècle est une époque riche en provocations sociales : globalisation, migration, guerre, pandémie n'en sont que quelques-unes. C'est pour cela que la communication interindividuelle et internationale est essentielle. Celle-ci ne peut exister que par la mise en relation des individus appartenant à des espaces politiques et culturelles différents. C'est pourquoi la médiation devient vitale. *Le Cadre européen commun de référence* paru au début des années 2000, au-delà de ses perspectives unificatrices, offrait à l'enseignement-apprentissage des langues étrangères une nouvelle place, en les transformant d'une activité à dominante éducative en activité à dominante sociale, par le fait que l'apprenant était vu comme « acteur social » pour lequel la langue étrangère était un outil l'aidant à agir à l'intérieur de la société pour accomplir certaines « tâches ». Dans ce contexte, celui-ci devait faire appel à la « compétence à communiquer langagièrement », par la réception, la production, l'interaction et la médiation. La dernière était vue, principalement, comme visant des activités de traduction, d'interprétariat ou de résumé/compte rendu et établissant un lien entre deux acteurs/textes pour transposer certaines informations.

Le Volume complémentaire paru en 2018, profitant d'un contexte politique différent, surtout par le phénomène de la migration qui a déterminé des changements sociaux et mentaux considérables, approche la médiation sous un autre angle, ce qui entraîne la distinction entre la médiation de textes, la médiation de concepts et la médiation de la communication, mais la nouveauté essentielle n'est pas celle-ci ; les recherches entreprises entre la parution du CECRL et celle du *Volume complémentaire* déterminent un déplacement d'accent ; celui-ci va du résultat (le texte traduit/interprété/résumé) mis sur le premier plan dans le CECRL vers le processus et surtout vers la personne qui moyenne ce processus, en faisant la médiation acquérir la noble mission de réduire la distance culturelle entre deux pôles. Et, même si les auteurs du *Volume complémentaire* ne parlent pas de « médiation culturelle » en utilisant ce concept, il est clair que le phénomène ne puisse se produire hors de la compétence plurilingue et pluriculturelle de la personne jouant le rôle de médiateur. Cela étant dit, la médiation (quel que soit son type) ne pourra jamais exister sans / en dehors de ces deux types de compétences ce qui, sans considérer cela une solution définitive, pourrait nous faire l'envisager comme un élément de ce que l'on appelle compétence plurilingue et pluriculturelle.

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LE RÔLE DU MENTORAT DANS L'INSERTION PROFESSIONNELLE

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Abstract: *This paper, structured in three parts, presents the benefits that mentoring could bring to beginning teachers. The first part has the role of demonstrating the importance given to the subject by the researchers, which is concretized in a large number of researches around the mentees. Then, the article describes the difficulties, internal or external, that the professor encounters at the beginning; finally, we try to review the mentoring activities and analyse the modality in which they facilitate professional integration.*

Keywords: *professional integration, mentoring, mentee.*

Considérations introductives

Les débuts de la carrière enseignante sont difficiles, l'entrée dans la profession est un véritable passage « d'une rive à l'autre : de l'institut de formation au plein exercice, de l'enseigné à l'enseignant, d'un poste à l'autre et des certitudes aux doutes ». (Devos, Mouton *et alii*, 2013 : 37)

L'insertion professionnelle est d'autant plus difficile que, les dernières années, les conditions d'exercice du métier ont beaucoup changé. Le public est hétérogène, les attentes des élèves, des parents et des institutions sont plus grandes et ciblées ; parfois, les débutants doivent travailler avec des collectifs d'élèves difficiles, pour la gestion desquels ils ne sont pas encore préparés, ou ils doivent accomplir des tâches identiques à celles de leurs collègues plus expérimentés.

L'entrée dans la carrière didactique ne se réalise pas de manière progressive, ainsi que le débutant peut se sentir comblé par la multitude de tâches et de sentiments, qui affecteront à coup sûr son efficacité. La réalité immédiate peut être complètement différente à l'horizon d'attente de l'ancien étudiant.

Parfois, ces facteurs conduisent à l'abandon après une ou deux années de travail. Pour le prévenir, les systèmes éducatifs de certains pays ont introduit un instrument d'accompagnement pour les débutants, le mentorat. L'intérêt accordé à ce dispositif est de plus en plus grand les dernières années. Pour pouvoir s'assurer de ses avantages, de nombreuses recherches ont étudié la nécessité et l'utilité d'implémenter le mentorat comme soutien à l'insertion professionnelle.

Liliane Portelance, Stéphane Martineau et Annie Presseau (Portelance, Martineau *et alii*, 2010 : 39-41) de l'Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières ont présenté, dans « Chronique sur l'insertion professionnelle - Quand un enseignant expérimenté parle à un débutant » les résultats d'une recherche à laquelle ont participé quatre dyades (mentors et mentorés), dont l'un des objectifs était d'étudier la collaboration entre enseignants

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expérimentés et enseignants débutants¹. Selon ce rapport, les mentorés ont exprimé les besoins suivants :

1. Stratégies d'apprentissage, moyens de stimuler la motivation, l'évaluation des apprentissages (des savoirs psychopédagogiques) ;
2. Stratégies d'intervention permettant d'offrir le soutien approprié à chaque élève, connaître les besoins affectifs et cognitifs des élèves (savoirs sur les élèves) ;
3. Leurs savoirs sur le métier sont plutôt théoriques.

Les mentors s'avèrent être, conformément au même rapport, de très bons connaisseurs du milieu scolaire et des jeunes. Ils savent, ils conseillent, ils partagent et transmettent, ils renseignent et encouragent.

Dans la conclusion de l'article, les auteurs attirent l'attention sur le fait que ni les mentorés, ni les mentors n'engagent le dialogue sur la didactique de la discipline enseignée et réaffirment que la relation construite entre mentor et mentoré peut faire place à un partage de savoirs professionnels.

Christelle Devos, Marine Mouton et Stéphanie Marigliano (Devos, Mouton *et alii*, *op.cit.* : 40-48) ont fait l'analyse de la manière dont ceux-ci perçoivent le mentorat, après avoir mené une enquête auprès de 216 enseignants expérimentés et 144 débutants.

D'une part, l'enquête a mesuré les potentielles conséquences du mentorat pour les débutants (bénéfices et inconvénients) et pour les enseignants expérimentés, d'autre part. Les questions adressées portaient sur la perception de l'utilité globale, les apports, les effets sur le bien-être et sur les inconvénients. La conclusion en est que les participants sont favorables au mentorat et perçoivent clairement son utilité, qui apporterait un soutien émotionnel aux mentorés, faciliteraient la collaboration entre les novices et leurs collègues, permettrait la réduction de l'isolement professionnel et une meilleure insertion au sein de l'école.

Claire Duchesne et Ruth Kane ont rédigé un article (Duchesne, Kane, 2010 : 55-68) qui présente les points de vue de 27 nouveaux enseignants « qui se sont exprimé sur le jumelage mentor/mentoré, sur la structure et la nature des rencontres avec le mentor et sur l'expérience de la relation mentorale qu'ils ont vécue ». Selon les auteurs, les professeurs débutants rencontrent des défis quant à la gestion des classes, la motivation des élèves, l'utilisation des stratégies d'évaluation, auxquelles s'ajoute la peur de ne pas être au niveau attendu par leurs supérieurs.

L'étude montre que :

1. Généralement, les novices ont eu l'occasion de choisir eux-mêmes le mentor parmi les membres du personnel, mais il y a eu aussi des situations où le mentor a été imposé. Les débutants ont apprécié de pouvoir choisir seuls et la relation entre les deux partenaires a été construite sur la base de la compatibilité, tandis que les relations « imposées » ont parfois donné l'impression d'obligativité.
2. En ce qui est la structure des rencontres, la majorité ont été ponctuelles et informelles, en fonction des besoins du débutant. Cependant, il y a eu aussi des rencontres selon un horaire bien établi, alors que le mentor et le mentoré ne travaillaient pas dans le même établissement

¹ La recherche a été menée par les chercheurs du Laboratoire d'analyse du développement et de l'insertion professionnels en enseignement à l'aide d'un financement du Conseil de recherche en sciences humaines du Canada

scolaire. Ce qui est à retenir est que les débutants ont beaucoup apprécié l'assistance à une leçon de leur mentor.

3. Les vastes connaissances des mentors, la discrétion, l'attitude ouverte, chaleureuse et encourageante, la disponibilité, ont également été appréciées par les mentorés. Ainsi, la relation s'est développée tout au long de l'année et s'est parfois transformée en véritable amitié.

Insert'Prof (Beckers, Andrianne et alii, 2006 : 111-113) a eu quatre objectifs, parmi lesquels d'identifier les besoins des jeunes enseignants et d'expérimenter des modalités d'accompagnement qui favorisent la construction d'une identité professionnelle positive et autonome. Le projet a été articulé autour de deux axes :

1. Des activités avec les enseignants débutants sous la forme de réunions mensuelles (informatives, formatives et projets) ;
2. Une enquête par questionnaire auprès des chefs d'établissements et des organismes de formation afin d'identifier les mesures qu'ils prennent déjà en matière d'insertion professionnelle.

Selon la recherche, les besoins des débutants portent sur l'information spécifique, le désir d'analyser leur pratique et de constituer des réseaux pour réaliser des projets et des outils communs. D'autre part, l'analyse des mesures existantes montre qu'elles sont encore peu connues et disparates.

La revue canadienne *Vie pédagogique*¹ a consacré le numéro de septembre-octobre 2003 au dossier *L'entrée dans la profession : un moment névralgique dans la carrière*, où les auteurs ont analysé quelques exemples d'ailleurs quant à l'insertion professionnelle. Ils ont retenu trois pays, l'Écosse, le Japon et la Nouvelle-Zélande, et une province canadienne, l'Alberta, qui accordent une importance particulière au sujet. En Écosse, les débutants sont soumis à une *année probatoire*, durant laquelle ils bénéficient d'une tâche réduite pour pouvoir aussi s'investir dans des activités de développement professionnel. Ils sont accompagnés d'un enseignant expérimenté, qui leur est assigné. Au Japon, les jeunes enseignants sont placés par les bureaux régionaux de telle façon qu'une école n'accueille qu'un ou deux débutants. De plus, autant que possibles, les classes les moins problématiques sont celles qui leur sont offertes. En Nouvelle-Zélande aussi, les débutants bénéficient d'une tâche réduite, des classes moins exigeantes et d'un mentor, qui leur consacre cinq heures par semaine. En Alberta, le placement dans les écoles est effectué par le *General Teaching Council*, selon les préférences des débutants.

Toutes ces recherches et beaucoup d'autres conduisent à la même conclusion : le mentorat est nécessaire pour soutenir l'insertion professionnelle des jeunes enseignants, qui ont beaucoup de besoins, partant de l'émotionnel pour arriver au professionnel.

Les difficultés de l'insertion professionnelle

En effet, l'entrée réussie dans la carrière peut être un facteur déterminant pour le développement du sentiment d'efficacité personnelle du nouvel enseignant et pour sa

¹ *Vie pédagogique*, no. 128, septembre-octobre 2003, pp. 21-57, www.viepedagogique.gouv.qc.ca, consulté le 09/07/2020

rétenction dans le système. L'insertion professionnelle est « un processus formel et planifié visant à introduire, à orienter ou à initier les nouveaux enseignants à leur emploi, afin de maximiser, aussitôt que possible, leur satisfaction, leur motivation au travail et leur rendement. Elle est un processus par lequel les nouveaux employés deviennent conscients de diverses facettes de leur emploi et des implications qu'elles ont pour eux ». (Weva, 1999 : 189)

À l'entrée dans la carrière, le débutant rencontre plusieurs défis :

1. Le passage du statut d'étudiant à celui d'enseignant (de l'accompli au novice) ;
2. La socialisation professionnelle (il va redéfinir sa représentation du monde enseignant au sein de celui-ci) ;
3. Il doit déplacer ses préoccupations vers la satisfaction des besoins des élèves et sur le perfectionnement de ses pratiques (réorganisation de son répertoire comportemental) ;
4. La crainte de ne pas être au niveau attendu.

D'autre part, les difficultés d'insertion professionnelle peuvent être internes (individuelles) ou externes (systémiques). Les difficultés individuelles peuvent concerner :

- a) La réaction du débutant à ce qui lui arrive. La personnalité de l'enseignant peut influencer la façon dont il reçoit les conseils ou les critiques. On peut rencontrer le novice pour qui l'estime de soi est basse et qui ressent la critique comme preuve de son incompetence, ou bien, au contraire, le débutant qui ne tient pas du tout compte des conseils et continue de sa manière, sans aucune remédiation.
- b) Le côté socio-professionnel- le débutant a des difficultés à s'intégrer dans l'équipe de l'école, à collaborer avec ses collègues ;
- c) La pédagogie et/ou la didactique de la matière enseignée- il s'y agit soit de la gestion des classes difficiles, soit de la réalisation des documents scolaires demandés, ou de l'organisation de certains examens ou concours scolaires, ou même de l'évaluation.

Toutes ces provocations sont d'autant plus fréquentes que la distance entre la formation initiale et la réalité est grande.

Les difficultés systémiques concernent l'organisation de l'institution où le débutant pratique. Parfois, dans les établissements scolaires il n'y a pas de différenciation conceptuelle entre les débutants et les expérimentés, d'où l'insatisfaction professionnelle du novice.

La mobilité du personnel est une autre barrière à dépasser, vu qu'assez souvent les jeunes occupent des postes de courte durée, ils changent d'école, donc de collègues, d'équipe en général et la nécessité de s'adapter fréquemment peut constituer un véritable défi.

L'absence de mesures formelles d'accompagnement à l'entrée en carrière s'avère être un obstacle indéniable à l'insertion professionnelle ; c'est pourquoi de nombreux systèmes éducatifs s'efforcent d'implémenter un dispositif de soutien. Bien qu'il y ait une pluralité de formes, toutes suivent les mêmes objectifs généraux : permettre aux novices de dépasser les barrières psychologiques, augmenter leur efficacité, favoriser leur rétention dans le système, augmenter leur satisfaction professionnelle.

En effet, selon les témoignages de quelques enseignants débutants, les trois ingrédients de départ pour une insertion harmonieuse sont : « un accueil stratégique du début de l'année, la reconnaissance d'un statut de membre à part entière d'une équipe-école

[...], la désignation d'une personne de référence et l'allocation de temps nécessaire à l'observation, l'échange et l'interaction ». (Vie pédagogique, 2003 : 31)

Le rôle du mentorat

Le mentorat est la forme la plus répandue d'accompagnement, qui s'étale le plus souvent sur une ou deux années, tantôt perçu comme une mesure de soutien, tantôt comme un programme de soutien à l'entrée en carrière. C'est une relation interpersonnelle d'apprentissage, de soutien, d'échanges, établie entre un professeur expérimenté et un débutant, dans laquelle le premier investit ses connaissances psychologiques et de spécialité, son temps, sa disponibilité, sa sagesse, dans le seul but de faciliter le début du deuxième, qui a des compétences à acquérir, une identité professionnelle à construire, un style personnel à développer, des objectifs à atteindre.

Les activités de mentorat les plus fréquentes sont les rencontres périodiques, les discussions (formelles, le plus souvent), les classes assistées et la participation à des stages de formation.

Le *Livret des mentors*¹ stipule qu'au début le mentor et le mentoré doivent élaborer la *Stratégie individuelle du PIPNPE*² ; ensuite, pendant l'année scolaire, ils devraient développer un plan d'action, adapté aux défis rencontrés. Le document propose aussi un modèle de planificateur personnel, qui contient des fiches mensuelles, où le mentor fait des remarques à propos de ce qu'il a observé et propose des stratégies de remédiation, mais aussi des activités d'autoréflexion pour le nouveau professeur, tels les questionnaires visant des aspects ciblés (enseignement aux élèves ayant des besoins particuliers, communication avec les parents/les tuteurs, ou actualisation linguistique en français etc.), qui incitent à donner le meilleur de soi-même, d'encourager le dialogue professionnel et de fournir des idées. En tant que consultant, collaborateur et coach, le mentor offrira du soutien et des ressources, encouragera l'épanouissement professionnel et facilitera la vision professionnelle.

Alain Baudrit (Baudrit, 2011 :78) parle de *Teacher Support Systems (TSS)*, en vogue dans les pays anglo-saxons, qui sont « des organisations mises en place au sein des établissements scolaires afin de favoriser l'intégration des nouveaux collègues, pour les accueillir le mieux possible ». Le mentorat a donc sa place dans les TSS, grâce à l'attention portée aux débutants. Il apparaît sous diverses formes : *individualisé* (association d'un professeur expérimenté avec un collègue débutant), *collectif* (un mentor s'occupe d'un groupe de novices), mais il y a aussi les *groupes coopératifs*, où il s'agit simplement des rencontres entre collègues dont l'expérience diffère, qui travaillent ensemble en exploitant les potentialités individuelles, animés par un but commun. Après avoir analysé plusieurs dispositifs mis en pratique par des systèmes d'enseignement différents (des États- Unis, de l'Estonie etc.), l'auteur conclut que l'entrée dans le métier pourrait être facilitée par l'adoption de dispositifs comme les TSS, qui permettent aux débutants d'être près de leurs

¹ *Livret des mentors*, septembre 2010, www.edu.gov.on.ca, consulté le 10/05/2020

² Programme d'insertion professionnelle du nouveau personnel enseignant

mentors, de pouvoir se confier à eux, d'échanger à propos des pratiques professionnelles ou même de bénéficier de support psychologique.

Bien que la relation mentorale se réalise entre deux personnes, les bénéficiaires d'un bon programme de mentorat sont plus nombreux. Pour le mentor, cette activité pourrait conduire à un accroissement du sentiment d'utilité. Chez le mentoré, la durée des doutes, des hésitations, de l'insatisfaction serait réduite ; au contraire, son sentiment d'appartenance à un système, à une catégorie socio-professionnelle ou même à une école serait développé, tout comme ses capacités communicatives, d'autoévaluation et de réflexivité. Pour les élèves, les bénéfices sont évidents. Leur professeur (débutant), confiant en soi, serait plus apte à transmettre, à gérer les situations difficiles, à les motiver et à les accompagner dans le processus d'apprentissage. Par la suite, l'établissement scolaire aurait à gagner, vu la pratique enseignante enrichie.

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INDUIRE LA PERCEPTION NÉGATIVE SUR LES RÉFUGIÉS À TRAVERS LE DISCOURS. ANALYSE D'UN CORPUS MÉDIATIQUE FRANÇAIS

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Abstract: *This communication aims to analyse the way in which the migration crisis is represented in journalistic discourse and the images commonly attached to the refugee crisis in order to reveal the discursive strategies used to influence the perception of the phenomenon by readers. Our analysis will be carried out on titles extracted from the French media press.*

Keywords: *refugee, crisis, discourse.*

Introduction

Dans cette étude, nous nous proposons de prendre le désignant *crise migratoire* comme point de départ et d'analyser la manière dont il a été employé dans le discours médiatique par rapport au sujet de la crise des réfugiés en Europe. La problématique migratoire en Europe est très actuelle et le sujet de la crise des réfugiés qui a débuté en 2015 a été fortement médiatisé.

Notre objectif principal est d'analyser dans quelle mesure la presse a influencé la perception du grand public sur la problématique des réfugiés, plus précisément on va mettre l'accent sur les titres d'articles issus en 2015. On se propose aussi d'analyser la manière dont le discours médiatique relatif à ce sujet se construit et de distinguer entre les informations supposées et présumées.

Depuis 2015, l'Union Européenne fait face à un grand nombre de migrants et de réfugiés, de nombreuses personnes quittent leurs pays pour fuir des zones de guerre et de conflit. Plus d'un million de personnes sont venues en Europe en 2015, dont presque 50% ont été des Syriens qui se sont enfuis de leur pays à cause de la guerre.¹ La majorité a préféré prendre la route des Balkans et ils sont passés par la Grèce, les autres sont passés par l'Italie. Il s'agit de la plus grande crise migratoire en Europe depuis les dernières décennies et c'est la première fois dans l'histoire de l'Union européenne qu'un nombre si grand de réfugiés d'autres continents soient entrés dans le continent européen ². Les États membres de l'Union européenne sont devenus la destination pour les réfugiés ressortissants des pays

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¹ Cf. Eurostat : <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/population-demography-migration-projections/migration-and-citizenship-data>

² Cf. Eurostat : <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/population-demography-migration-projections/migration-and-citizenship-data>

comme la Syrie ou l'Afghanistan, mais aussi le Soudan, l'Érythrée et la Libye, généralement des pays où la guerre, les conflits armés et la pauvreté font la loi.¹

Malheureusement, beaucoup de personnes ont péri dans la Méditerranée en essayant de traverser la mer pour arriver en Europe. Selon les dernières statistiques présentées par Eurostat et l'OIM - Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations, plus de 3500 personnes ont péri ou disparu pendant l'année 2015 ; le nombre de décès signalés a augmenté en 2016 de 20%, même si le nombre de ceux qui ont essayé de traverser la mer a diminué.

On a observé dans la presse la nécessité de clarifier la situation de cette crise migratoire. En septembre 2015, *Le Monde* a publié une recherche² selon laquelle en 2015 plus de 3000 personnes ont péri dans leur essai de rejoindre l'Europe et plus de 350 000 personnes ont traversé la Méditerranée. Ils sont considérés des réfugiés puisqu'ils fuient la guerre et les persécutions en Syrie et d'autres pays. L'article présente cette situation comme la vague de réfugiés la plus massive que l'Europe ait connue depuis la Seconde Guerre Mondiale. Les valeurs de l'Union européenne sont mises à l'épreuve face à cette crise humanitaire représentée par le grand nombre de réfugiés.

Les migrations font partie de l'histoire de l'humanité. Aujourd'hui, les populations qui tentent de gagner les rivages de l'Europe le font pour différentes raisons et par différents moyens. Elles cherchent à emprunter des voies légales, mais elles sont également prêtes à risquer leur vie pour échapper à l'oppression politique, à la guerre et à la pauvreté, ainsi que pour accéder au regroupement familial, à la création d'entreprise, aux connaissances et à l'éducation. Chaque migration raconte une histoire personnelle.³

C'est avec ce fragment que la Commission européenne commence l'agenda européen en matière de migration publié le 13 mai 2015. On voit dans ce petit fragment le phénomène de la migration présenté comme une réalité qui existe depuis toujours et qui a été provoqué par des causes diverses – l'oppression politique, la guerre, la pauvreté, le regroupement familial, l'accès à l'éducation.

Cadre théorique – Sur le discours médiatique

Dominique Maingueneau nous rappelle la distinction entre discours et récit. Pour Maingueneau, le discours est « le symptôme d'une modification dans notre façon de concevoir le langage » qui « résulte de l'influence de divers courants des sciences humaines qu'on regroupe souvent sous l'étiquette de pragmatique ». (Maingueneau, D., 2016 :46). « Le discours », ajoute Maingueneau, « est une forme d'action », plus précisément c'« est une forme d'action sur autrui » et pas seulement « une représentation du monde ». (*Ibidem*)

¹ Cf. Eurostat : <http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/population-demography-migration-projections/migration-and-citizenship-data>

² Cf. https://www.lemonde.fr/les-decodeurs/article/2015/09/04/comprendre-la-crise-des-migrants-en-europe-en-cartes-graphiques-et-videos_4745981_4355770.html.

³ Cf. <http://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2015/FR/1-2015-240-FR-F1-1.PDF>.

Patrick Charaudeau (2011) nous conseille de prendre la route de l'exploration du discours médiatique « avec de la prudence, voire l'incrédulité d'un saint Thomas ». « Les médias ne sont pas une instance de pouvoir » car « le pouvoir ne dépend jamais d'un seul individu mais de l'instance dans laquelle se trouve l'individu et dont il tire sa force ». (Charaudeau, P., 2011 :11) Le rôle d'influencer les comportements des individus et de construire des règles de comportement et des lois de conformité revient donc à l'instance et à une « volonté collective de guider ou orienter les comportements ». (*Ibidem*) Alors, si selon Charaudeau, les médias « constituent une instance qui n'édicte aucune règle de comportement, aucune loi de conformité, aucune sanction », il se demande et nous demande « d'où leur vient cette appellation de quatrième pouvoir ? Serait-ce du fait qu'ils se prêteraient à une manipulation des consciences, malgré eux ? » (*Ibidem*)

Comment faire que l'information atteigne un grand nombre de personnes, sinon « en suscitant l'intérêt et en touchant l'affect du destinataire de l'information ? » (*Ibidem* :12), en faisant appel aux mêmes clichés depuis toujours. C'est de cette manière que les médias « deviennent manipulateurs malgré eux et, par effet de retour, s'automanipulent, entrant dans un cercle vicieux ». (*Ibidem*)

Patrick Charaudeau définit les médias comme « un miroir déformant, ou plutôt ils sont plusieurs miroirs en même temps » (*Ibidem*). L'outil de la presse est l'information qui « est essentiellement affaire de langage et le langage n'est pas transparent au monde, il présente sa propre opacité à travers laquelle se construit une vision, un sens particulier au monde ». (Charaudeau, 2011 :12)

Une distinction entre les lieux de construction du sens est nécessaire pour mieux comprendre « que l'information n'est pas quelque chose qui correspond à la seule intention du producteur de l'information pas plus qu'à celle du récepteur, mais résulte d'une co-construction comprenant effets visés, effets possibles, effets supposés et effets produits ». (*Ibidem* :15) Il distingue entre trois lieux de la machine médiatique : le lieu des conditions de production, le lieu de construction du produit et le lieu des conditions d'interprétation. Le premier « comprend les conditions socio-économiques de la machine médiatique en tant qu'elle est une entreprise dont l'organisation est régie par un certain nombre de pratiques plus ou moins institutionnalisées » (*Ibidem* :15) Le lieu de construction du produit « c'est le lieu où tout discours se configure en texte selon une certaine organisation sémiotique faite d'agencement de formes, les unes appartenant au système verbal, les autres à divers systèmes sémiologiques, iconique, graphique, gestuel ». (*Ibidem* :18) Le lieu des conditions d'interprétation se structure en deux espaces comprenant d'un côté le destinataire idéal – « celui qu'en communication on appelle le cible – qui est imaginé par l'instance médiatique comme susceptible de percevoir les effets qu'elle vise à produire. » (*Ibidem* :19) et d'autre côté le destinataire réel – « l'instance de consommation de l'information médiatique qui interprète les messages qui lui sont adressés selon ses propres conditions d'interprétation ».

L'information dépend de l'action humaine, elle « n'existe pas en soi, dans une extériorité à l'homme, comme peuvent exister certains objets de la réalité matérielle (un arbre, la pluie, le soleil) dont la signification, certes, dépend du regard que l'homme pose sur ces objets, mais dont l'existence est indépendante de l'action humaine ». (Charaudeau, 2011:18). Le fait d'informer pose divers problèmes que Charaudeau classe par rapport à la source, par rapport au récepteur, par rapport au traitement de l'information. En ce qui

concerne la source, la question se pose sur la nature de l'information, sa validité et son authenticité. Une question essentielle se pose : « Si la pertinence d'une information dépend des hypothèses que l'on peut faire, à la fois, sur l'intérêt qu'il est susceptible de porter à la nouvelle et sur son aptitude à comprendre, de quels moyens dispose l'informateur pour connaître cet état de la cible ? ». (*Ibidem*) En ce qui concerne le traitement de l'information, « l'informateur devrait se demander, non pas s'il est fidèle, objectif ou transparent, mais quel effet lui semble produire telle façon de traiter l'information, et concomitamment quel effet produirait telle autre façon, puis encore telle autre façon, avant de procéder à un choix définitif ». (*Ibidem* :19)

Corpus

Notre analyse est menée sur des titres d'articles de presse issus des journaux français *Libération* et *Le Monde* parus en 2015 sur le sujet de la crise migratoire. On a retenu premièrement les titres contenant la structure *crise migratoire*, mais des titres contenant d'autres mots forts (*crise des réfugiés, migrants et réfugiés, terrorisme, exilés*) ont attiré notre attention. On a choisi les journaux nationaux *Libération* et *Le Monde* pour observer et analyser leur positionnement en ce qui concerne ce sujet, mais aussi pour identifier des similitudes et des différences d'approche, s'il y en a, compte tenu du fait que ces deux journaux ont une orientation politique prédominante de gauche.

Libération est un quotidien français fondé en 1973 par Jean-Paul Sartre et Serge July à la suite des mouvements de protestation de mai 1968. Situé au début à l'extrême gauche, sa ligne éditoriale connaît une évolution vers la gauche sociale-démocrate et garde l'étiquette de journal de gauche jusqu'à présent. Le slogan du journal est « Peuple, prend la parole et garde-la ».

Le Monde est un quotidien français fondé par le journaliste Hubert Beuve Méry à la demande de Charles de Gaulle en 1944 suite à la libération de Paris et sa ligne éditoriale se positionne dès ses débuts au centre-gauche. Les deux journaux appartiennent au groupe de presse La Vie-Le Monde.

La crise migratoire dans la presse française

Pourquoi s'agit-il d'une crise ? Tout d'un coup le plus grand défi pour l'Union européenne fut de créer un équilibre entre le droit d'asile, l'empathie et le contrôle des frontières, et non parce que d'amples migrations n'existaient pas avant 2015, mais peut-être parce que cette fois la question commence à être très médiatisée. Mais l'Europe ne parvient pas à se mettre d'accord sur une politique commune pour l'accueil des réfugiés.

Le mot *crise* relève du vocabulaire psychologique et abonde dans le discours journalistique. Selon Larousse, la crise fait référence à un « moment très difficile dans la vie de quelqu'un, d'un groupe, dans le déroulement d'une activité, etc. ; période, situation marquée par un trouble profond ». Dans Le Petit Robert, la crise est « un accident qui atteint une personne en bonne santé apparente, ou aggravation brusque d'un état chronique. Par extension, manifestation émotive soudaine et violente. » TLFi définit la crise premièrement du point de vue médical comme « ensemble des phénomènes pathologiques se manifestant

de façon brusque et intense, mais pendant une période limitée, et laissant prévoir un changement généralement décisif, en bien ou en mal, dans l'évolution d'une maladie », mais aussi du point de vue social comme une « situation de trouble profond dans laquelle se trouve la société ou un groupe social et laissant craindre ou espérer un changement profond ». Ainsi, dans un sens pluridisciplinaire, la crise est synonyme de « trouble », « danger », « manque », « angoisse », « rupture », « maladie », « incertitude », « tension ». On se propose d'observer comment est définie et représentée la crise dans la presse.

Profil lexico-sémantique

Le syntagme *crise migratoire* (nom + adjectif) construit comme une expansion nominale, qui devient *crise des réfugiés* (nom + complément), renvoie au grand nombre de personnes qui sont arrivées dans l'Union européenne à partir de 2015 (plus d'un million de personnes seulement en 2015, selon EUROSTAT). L'adjectif *migratoire* provient d'un processus d'adjectivisation suite à l'ajout du suffixe *-oire* au nom *migration*, traduisant l'idée de « déplacement volontaire d'individus ou de populations d'un pays dans un autre ou d'une région dans une autre, pour des raisons économiques, politiques ou culturelles ». (Définition Larousse) Le nom *migration* provient du latin *migratio*, *migrare* qui signifie *s'en aller* et qui a donné en français le verbe *migrer* signifiant, selon Larousse, « se déplacer vers un autre lieu ». A la lumière de ces sens, on pourrait dire que le syntagme *crise migratoire* comprend à la fois la source de la crise, c'est-à-dire la *migration*, et le type de la crise dite *migratoire*.

Analyse du désignant *crise migratoire* et du concept de *réfugié*

Lorsqu'on parle d'une *crise migratoire* qui devient dans le discours journalistique une *crise des réfugiés* où les acteurs sont les *réfugiés*, il est nécessaire de commencer notre analyse avec la distinction entre *migrant* et *réfugié*, deux termes qui ont été souvent employés comme synonymes dans le discours des médias.

Selon Larousse :

- *migrant, migrante (adjectif et nom) - Qui effectue une migration dont migration (nom féminin) - Déplacement volontaire d'individus ou de populations d'un pays dans un autre ou d'une région dans une autre, pour des raisons économiques, politiques ou culturelles.*

Tandis que

- *réfugié, réfugiée (nom) - Personne ayant quitté son pays d'origine pour des raisons politiques, religieuses ou raciales, et ne bénéficiant pas, dans le pays où elle réside, du même statut que les populations autochtones, dont elle n'a pas acquis la nationalité.*

« Toute personne craignant avec raison d'être persécutée du fait de sa race, de sa religion, de sa nationalité, de son appartenance à un certain groupe social ou de ses opinions politiques, se trouve hors du pays dont elle a la nationalité et qui ne peut ou, du fait de cette crainte, ne veut se réclamer de la protection. »¹

A partir de ces deux définitions, il résulte que la principale distinction entre un *migrant* et un *réfugié* est la volonté de partir, chez le premier, et le fait que, contrairement à

¹ Cf. l'article 1 de la Convention de Genève relative au statut des réfugiés disponible sur <https://www.unhcr.org/fr/4bea748d6.pdf>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

un migrant, un réfugié a besoin de protection internationale. Les réfugiés sont des personnes qui quittent leur pays à cause des guerres, des désastres, des conflits, des violences ou d'autres circonstances et ils obtiennent le statut de réfugiés dans un autre pays où ils ont le droit d'être protégés. Par contre, les migrants choisissent de partir dans un autre pays pour des raisons différentes (situation économique, études, carrière professionnelle, d'autres raisons personnelles); en plus, un migrant peut revenir dans son pays d'origine quand il veut parce que cela ne représente pas un péril pour sa vie.

Le rôle de la presse a été essentiel dans la présentation de l'arrivée des réfugiés en 2015 en Europe. Parfois, ils ont été perçus comme importuns, vulnérables ou dangereux¹. La comparaison, ou plutôt la métaphore gagne de la place dans le discours. Jolanta Dyoniziak souligne dans sa publication que le discours journalistique abonde en métaphores et mots appartenant au champ lexical de l'eau, de la mer car « l'argumentation, cette activité par laquelle le locuteur cherche, par un usage approprié du discours, à modifier les convictions d'une personne ou d'un groupe, est un domaine d'investissement privilégié de la conception pragmatique du langage. »²

Dans les médias, la Méditerranée a été comparée à un cimetière, même si elle devrait tout simplement représenter la porte d'entrée dans un monde libre :

/1/ « Sarkozy agite la menace d'un tsunami migratoire »³

/2/ « Ces enfants dévorés par notre mer d'indifférence »⁴

/3/ « Méditerranée, un naufrage européen »⁵

/4/ « L'ONU accuse l'UE de transformer la Méditerranée en « vaste cimetière »⁶

On voit beaucoup de titres du type « crise migratoire : ... » ce qui révèle la tendance de la presse de définir cette crise. Parfois, après les deux points suit la position d'un pays ou la solution choisie pour mieux gérer la crise :

/5/ « Crise migratoire : La Turquie fait des choses, mais elle peut faire plus »⁷

/6/ « Crise migratoire : Berlin instaure de nouvelles règles, la Suède durcit sa législation »⁸

/7/ « Crise migratoire : un accord minimal entre l'UE et la Turquie »⁹

De même pour le syntagme *crise des réfugiés* :

/8/ « Crise des réfugiés : Merkel de plus en plus contestée par les siens »¹⁰

/9/ « Crise des réfugiés : si cela peut nous rassurer... »¹¹

On a observé aussi la tendance d'utiliser dans le titre des termes complémentaires : le nom *règles* et les verbes *durcir*, *respecter*, les noms *amertume* et *faiblesse*, *inquiétude*.

¹ Rapport du Conseil de l'Europe DG1(2017)03, Myria Georgiou et Rafal Zaborowski, Couverture médiatique de la « crise des réfugiés » : perspective européenne, disponible sur <https://bit.ly/3mhdMgQ>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

² MAINGUENEAU, Dominique, *Aborder la linguistique*, Editions du Seuil, 2009.

³<https://bit.ly/36ahlQ3>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

⁴<https://bit.ly/2V5TomJ>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

⁵ <https://bit.ly/3lbU9W3>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

⁶<https://bit.ly/3q2enVL>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

⁷<https://bit.ly/33hvr03>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

⁸<https://bit.ly/33hvk4D>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

⁹<https://bit.ly/36eIOjT>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

¹⁰<https://bit.ly/3meHCCk>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

¹¹<https://bit.ly/3la9N4i>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

Nous remarquons une prédilection à utiliser des termes à connotation négative pour désigner le phénomène de la *crise migratoire* :

/10/ « Crise migratoire : la Turquie profite de la faiblesse européenne »¹

/11/ « Crise migratoire : l'amertume des dirigeants africains »²

/12/ « Crise migratoire : dans un foyer du centre de Paris, l'inquiétude des « anciens » face aux « nouveaux » »³

En ce qui concerne les expansions, on a vu à l'intérieur des articles qu'il y a une prédilection pour les termes du type *dramatique, majeure, inédite, contemporaine, nouvelle, sans précédent*, en définissant ainsi l'ampleur et les caractéristiques du phénomène.

/13/ « L'UE se contente d'un compromis minimal en réponse à la dramatique crise migratoire »⁴

/14/ « L'Europe mieux armée pour faire face à cette crise migratoire inédite »⁵.

En ce qui concerne les variations, comme on a déjà dit, le syntagme *crise migratoire* est souvent remplacé par *crise des réfugiés, vague migratoire, flux migratoire*, tandis que le sens du mot *migrant* est continué par les termes *réfugié, exilé*.

/15/ « Migrant, exilé, réfugié : les mots pour le dire »⁶

/16/ « Migrants et réfugiés _ des mots aux frontières bien définies »⁷

Suite à l'analyse des titres, nous avons pu observer une certaine préférence pour :

- la présence de la négation:

/17/ « Tout le monde ne veut pas venir en Europe »⁸

- l'interrogation, jouant tantôt sur la valeur rhétorique, tantôt sur l'intérêt réel pour la recherche des solutions:

18/ « Peut-on sortir de la crise des réfugiés ? »⁹

- les renvois à l'idée de conflit :

/19/ « Terrorisme, réfugiés, climat... Hollande et Merkel cherchent un front commun »¹⁰

- l'emploi des mots de la famille lexicale de l'eau – la mer étant la voie prise par les migrants et, dans une certaine mesure, la cause de la crise – par la mer ils viennent, dans la mer ils disparaissent :

/20/ « Face aux naufrages, les Vingt-Huit cherchent une parade à la crise migratoire »¹¹

Résultats de la recherche et conclusions

Le désignant *crise migratoire*, fréquemment invoqué dans les médias, à côté de *crise des réfugiés*, s'enrichit de connotations supplémentaires vu sa contextualisation dans le

¹<https://bit.ly/3l8mIU3>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

²<https://bit.ly/379rXxW>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

³<https://bit.ly/3mhcYsk>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

⁴<https://bit.ly/3fChDSW>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

⁵<https://bit.ly/3q2eGzT>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

⁶<https://bit.ly/39kMG4r>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

⁷<https://bit.ly/2Jau1xC>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

⁸<https://bit.ly/3nXwlHa>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

⁹<https://bit.ly/379s3pi>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

¹⁰<https://bit.ly/39igPkZ>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

¹¹<https://bit.ly/3fC05Xf>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

discours. L'idée d'un phénomène destructif, d'un conflit sans résolution est prédominante ; les réfugiés sont perçus comme des importuns, des personnes vulnérables et dangereuses, des personnes qui représentent une menace pour la paix et la stabilité de l'Europe. Le discours sur la crise migratoire vise à éveiller l'émotion et on a observé que les émotions suscitées pour éveiller la conscience citoyenne ont été le bouleversement, la peur, l'incertitude. On pourrait affirmer que rien ne confirme plus que « le sens d'un mot dans un discours est infléchi par son contact régulier avec d'autres mots » (Veniard, 2013).

On a trouvé dans notre analyse des références au terrorisme, une analyse en profondeur est requise pour l'évolution du sujet et de cette tendance de mettre le signe d'égalité entre les migrants et les terroristes qui a fait place à un nouveau stéréotype.

/21/ « Craintes sur l'arrivée de terroristes avec les migrants »¹

De même, on analysera dans un futur article les concepts qui ont été déconstruits dans le discours de la presse, par exemple le concept de solidarité. On a vu que le syntagme « crise migratoire » peut être remplacé par « crise des réfugiés », on a observé un nouveau syntagme/concept qui sera utilisé en se rapportant à la crise migratoire, celui de la *crise politique*, qui apparaît dans le discours de la presse et dans le discours des politiciens, pas forcément dans cet ordre.

/22/ « Quotas migratoires : l'Europe évoque enfin le principe de solidarité »²

/23/ « Dans la solidarité jusqu'au cou »³

/24/ « Les États doivent arrêter ce jeu stupide consistant à rejeter la faute sur les autres »

Le sujet de la crise migratoire reste un sujet sensible pour tous les actants impliqués. Cette recherche nous a permis d'observer la manière dans laquelle les migrants sont représentés dans les deux journaux français et de révéler comment se construit le sens discursif du désignant *crise migratoire* dans les médias.

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1<https://bit.ly/39iPn6B>, consulté le 13 octobre 2020.

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POURQUOI PAS LA LITTÉRATURE ?

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Abstract: *Even though it has been fulfilling the role of international language for a long time, French as a Foreign Language (FFL) has only become a subject of study for about thirty years. The set of methods and tools (manuals, teaching aids, software, etc.) used at a given time in the teaching of FFL, including the methodology of FFL, gives an important place to the development of skills. After a period of rejection, had the work on the literary text returned or not among the modern methods of teaching French as a foreign language? So much so that literature has taken on the mission of achieving the aims of teaching FFL, its association with culture and civilization had to involve the literary text from the beginning of learning, from the early years. The reduced use of literature at all levels of employment has enforced in view of its necessity to achieve the goals of education today which has left room for debate although the discussion is based on language or literature. Why we need to introduce literature into FFL classes is the question to which this research is intended to be the answer. Leafing through the literature and deepening the literary text, learning continues to delve most of the questions about the language in order to arrive at a better understanding and even a better production.*

Keywords: *literary text, teaching, skills.*

L'enseignement des langues a été toujours associé à l'emploi des textes littéraires malgré tous les changements pédagogiques et méthodologiques qui envisagent l'amélioration du niveau de l'apprenant. Force est de remarquer qu'il s'agit d'une relation privilégiée dont l'évolution à travers le temps a parcouru une trajectoire fluctuante partant de la place centrale, plus ou moins exclusive, et arrivant jusqu'au statut des documents authentiques auprès de petites annonces, publicités et recettes de cuisine. Il y a bien des façons en effet d'utiliser en classe de langue le texte littéraire : réaliser des documents culturels pour aborder certains actes de langage, contextualiser la grammaire ou dresser une base lexicale pour élargir le vocabulaire de l'apprenant par l'introduction des termes appartenant aux différents registres de langue.

L'un des problèmes qui se posent en classe de FLE au sujet de l'usage de ce type de texte, c'est celui du choix et surtout en fonction de quels critères (auteur, période, genre, compétences visées etc.). Il est important que l'enseignant prenne le temps nécessaire pour analyser le contenu du texte qu'il se propose d'exploiter par une mise en situation adéquate en vue de susciter l'attention et la curiosité, car selon Maria Montessori *la joie d'apprendre est aussi indispensable aux études que la respiration aux coureurs.*

Dès son début, de nombreuses approches ont influencé l'enseignement du FLE et ont mis en exergue leur lien avec les compétences comprises dans les programmes-cadres. En fait, le rôle et l'exploitation du texte littéraire comme support pédagogique, la dynamique du processus d'enseignement en plein essor et l'actualisation des méthodologies,

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pointés tout au long de l'étude du FLE, font résulter de vrais enjeux et défis. À ce titre, l'apprentissage d'une langue et de sa culture peuvent devenir des objectifs assignés au rôle et à la fonction de la littérature et du texte littéraire valorisés tout au long de l'acquisition de la langue française étrangère.

Circonsrite à la grammaire et à la traduction (la méthode grammaire-traduction), imposée par l'interdiction du recours à la langue maternelle (méthode naturelle ou directe), l'approche traditionnelle utilise le plus souvent des extraits des œuvres littéraires sans que le texte soit analysé en vue d'une compréhension exhaustive.

D'autre part, tandis que la compréhension du texte renvoie à la littérature, le travail sur le texte demande une attention minutieuse au commentaire pour comprendre toutes les significations plus ou moins cachées. Syntagmatique ou synthétique, paradigmatique ou analytique, la lecture devient authentique par l'immersion dans les détails de l'œuvre littéraire, en s'inscrivant sur une surface d'interférence entre la lecture et l'écriture. Tant qu'elle soit concentrée sur le contenu linguistique et formel du texte, la lecture attire l'attention sur les procédés graphiques (titres, sous-titres, mise en page, enchaînement des paragraphes), sur l'identification des mots et se fige à l'interprétation globale.

Quant à la méthode audio-orale, celle-ci exploite des textes courts des fois littéraires y abordant les thèmes de la vie quotidienne sans approfondir aucune valeur esthétique. En général, le texte très court est souvent considéré et exploité en tant que document mis au service de la communication et ses particularités ne sont guère prises en considération. Pour parvenir à la communication, la langue orale est privilégiée et, par conséquent, devient un ensemble d'habitudes, d'automatismes linguistiques utilisés spontanément. C'est pourquoi, le niveau sémantique perd sa place prioritaire, le vocabulaire est confiné au second plan après les structures syntaxiques.

Le texte littéraire ne reçoit l'attention de la méthode structuro-globale audio-visuelle que rarement et surtout pour l'acquisition de la prononciation. « *Le vide méthodologique qui existe à l'égard du littéraire dans la conception d'une méthodologie et le divorce qui s'est instauré entre la recherche, d'une part, et la situation de classe d'autre part* » (Cuq, Gruca, 2008 :8) expliquent les réticences d'intégration et même d'exploitation des textes littéraires dans les manuels de FLE.

En ce qui concerne l'approche communicative, celle-ci accorde le privilège aux documents authentiques en vue d'atteindre son objectif essentiel d'apprendre à communiquer. C'est alors qu'on y met le point sur le processus de la communication pendant lequel le message est construit à partir des textes de presse ou informatifs en marginalisant le texte littéraire. De nos jours, la plupart des méthodes innovent l'interculturalisme et mettent l'accent sur le déploiement de la personnalité de l'apprenant avec ses attentes et besoins qui l'amènent à chercher, à produire et à créer.

C'est la raison pour laquelle différentes stratégies didactiques doivent être choisies pour inciter/pousser l'élève à participer activement à l'apprentissage et à prendre conscience de la lecture pour qu'il puisse développer sa personnalité à l'aide du texte littéraire. Dans le choix du texte support l'enseignant favorise des thèmes d'actualité dont l'effet se manifeste surtout au niveau des attitudes et du comportement des apprenants y compris la multiculturalité et la pensée dans le contexte européen et global.

La multiculturalité, découverte dans les textes littéraires, prend en compte l'origine et les différences socioculturelles, l'identité culturelle au point qu'elle comprenne l'étude de la langue française en tant que source des connaissances pour la communication, pour la vie personnelle et même pour déchiffrer le milieu culturel des autres. La pensée dans le contexte européen et global, étendue à travers l'étude minutieuse du texte, propose aux apprenants de respecter les valeurs européennes, d'apprécier un autre milieu culturel et artistique, de comparer la façon de vivre dans les différents coins du monde sans oublier les valeurs éthiques et spirituelles.

L'enseignement du FLE amène les apprenants à acquérir des connaissances et des compétences langagières pour qu'ils puissent communiquer à l'oral et à l'écrit à propos des sujets courants, pour qu'ils établissent des relations sociales et personnelles et pour qu'ils respectent les coutumes, les traditions et la culture des autres tout en les comprenant. Centré sur l'acquisition de l'indépendance de l'apprenant, le modèle actuel de l'éducation propose, par l'introduction du Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues (CECRL), des stratégies différentes pour développer la communication dans des situations réelles. Dans cette perspective, l'enseignant doit s'assumer la position de médiateur entre le texte et l'apprenant pour que ce dernier y établisse une relation à l'aide des activités avec des objectifs diversifiés.

Document de politique éducationnelle qui comprend les dernières orientations des curricula, le CECRL contribue au développement de la compétence interculturelle par le rôle culturel de la littérature utilisée en tant que vecteur des croyances et des valeurs. Néanmoins, l'analyse du rapport entre le texte littéraire et le niveau de la langue dans les grilles d'auto-évaluation incluses dans le CECRL relève la réfutation du traitement traditionnel du texte littéraire à partir de la compréhension jusqu'à l'expression. En ce contexte, l'apprenant doit maîtriser quatre compétences de base : la compréhension de l'oral et de l'écrit et l'expression orale et écrite selon son niveau (A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2). Proposer et valoriser des extraits des œuvres littéraires facilitent les échanges et soulèvent forcément une interrogation : pourquoi la littérature n'aurait-elle pas une mission possible et suffisamment approchée à l'intérieur de l'apprentissage du FLE ? C'est à partir de cette idée que le choix d'un extrait d'une œuvre littéraire pourrait guider les apprenants à l'acquisition des connaissances linguistiques en les rendant capables de parler de leur vie et de leur environnement (préférences, goûts, travail, amis, famille etc.).

À ce titre, l'insertion en classe de FLE, à tous les niveaux, de quelques fragments d'un écrivain français pourrait avoir de meilleures conséquences, pour le développement des stratégies et des méthodes que pour les acquisitions proposées, à condition que le choix prenne en considération les critères préétablis. La comparaison entre les thématiques de CECRL, la méthode de français *Connexions 2* et le premier chapitre de *Poisson d'or*¹, comprise dans le tableau ci-dessous, facilite l'identification des fragments qui répondent aux mêmes thèmes :

¹ Le Clézio, J. M. G., 1997, *Poisson d'or*, Paris, Gallimard, pp. 11-31.

Thèmes de <i>CECRL</i> ¹	Thèmes de <i>Connexions</i> 2	Thèmes dans les fragments choisis
relations avec les autres	famille amis	la mère et le père de Laïla la grand-mère de Laïla la voisine Zohra Abel
vie quotidienne	repas goûts loisirs	menus repas de grand-mère chanteurs musique
caractérisation personnelle	décrire des personnes	Lalla Asma Abel Grand-mère
santé et bien-être	état de santé	migraines de Lalla Asma les peurs de Lalla Asma la mort de la grand-mère
lieux maison	ville logements	les rues de la ville les environnements la maison de la grand-mère
valeurs et croyances	les fêtes les traditions	religion coutumes

Comme nous pouvons observer, il existe dans ce premier chapitre des extraits qui décrivent des thèmes qui pourraient être bien connus aux apprenants.

En conclusion, considérer la littérature comme une forme particulière de communication engage l'attribution aux textes littéraires d'une place importante dans le processus d'enseignement/apprentissage du FLE. Nous ne pouvons pas les receler sous prétexte qu'ils soient susceptibles d'échapper au domaine dans lequel se réalisent les interactions verbales, dont la maîtrise permet de rendre la classe plus créative et d'accroître le désir d'apprendre une langue étrangère.

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¡A HABLAR! UN JUEGO DIDÁCTICO COMO ESTRATEGIA PARA LA EXPRESIÓN ORAL EN LA CLASE DE ELE DE LOS ALUMNOS RUMANOS

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Abstract: *This article initiates from the hypothesis that Romanian students are reluctant to interact orally in the Spanish as a foreign language (SFL) lesson. As a consequence, there is a requirement to further promote the motivation and the active participation in order to develop the students' oral competences. Thus, the study identifies some of the causes of this reluctance, such as boredom, demotivation, lack of confidence, fear of being wrong, etc. and, above all, evaluates the usage of didactic game as a necessary tool to acquire the subject's knowledge. The research methodology is qualitative, the study is effectuated in a bilingual school in Romania and leans on the continuous observation of different groups of students, of both primary and secondary studies. Different engagement games to improve the oral expression are put into practice and solutions to the encountered challenges are given.*

Keywords: *reluctance, game, oral skill.*

Introducción

Hoy en día el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje de lenguas, implícitamente del español, tiene como base el enfoque comunicativo, ya que lo que se pretende es conseguir la competencia comunicativa¹ del aprendiz. En este contexto es evidente que se realiza una ruptura con todo lo tradicional empezando principalmente por la manera de percibir el aprendizaje de lenguas. A este respecto, el Marco Común Europeo de Referencia (MCER, 2002) habla de un *enfoque orientado a la acción*² que toma en consideración no solamente los aspectos cognitivos del aprendiz, sino también los emotivos y todo lo relacionado con las competencias que este necesita dentro de la sociedad.

Al adaptar todo lo dicho a otro contexto concreto, el de Rumanía, la situación se presenta de una manera diferente. Según el profesor Alemany (2017), a pesar de la gran demanda que ha empezado a tener el español en el país³, el sistema sigue siendo muy

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¹ El Diccionario de términos clave de ELE (2008) la define como “la capacidad de una persona para comportarse de manera eficaz y adecuada en una determinada [comunidad de habla](#); ello implica respetar un conjunto de reglas que incluye tanto las de la gramática y los otros niveles de la descripción lingüística (léxico, fonética, semántica) como las reglas de [uso de la lengua](#), relacionadas con el contexto socio-histórico y cultural en el que tiene lugar la comunicación”.

² Este enfoque supone “considerar al aprendiz como un miembro de la sociedad que ha de llevar a cabo varias tareas diferentes en una situación concreta” (MCER, 2002: 9). En otras palabras, cobran importancia las competencias, las actividades y el contexto en el que se desenvuelven.

³ 12.357 personas del ámbito preuniversitario eligieron el español como primera y segunda lengua durante el año escolar 2018-2019, según Institutul Național de Statistică.

arcaico en su mayor parte. Este tradicionalismo se debe a muchos factores, como la falta de tecnología en las aulas, el uso de métodos clásicos o la resistencia de los centros educativos en cuanto a la introducción de novedades. Igualmente, el mismo autor subraya un problema sobresaliente que es la baja remuneración de los profesores, lo que afecta su rendimiento en el aula. Al tener en cuenta todo esto, no es de extrañar que el alumnado rumano presente reticencia a hablar en el aula, dado que las actividades y los métodos empleados no concuerdan con sus necesidades.

En este sentido, este estudio pretende proponer el juego didáctico como una posible solución a esta reticencia, ya que, según Pastor (2004), representa una actividad real de comunicación. Además, muchos investigadores (Fingerman, 1970; Chateau, 1973; Pastor, 2004; Labrador y Morote, 2008) señalan principalmente el valor social del juego porque fomenta el desarrollo de habilidades como la organización, cooperación, negociación, etc. Asimismo, estos subrayan el ambiente de confianza y seguridad que se establece favoreciendo la participación activa y creativa.

Bases teóricas

El juego es una de las pocas actividades universales en el tiempo y en el espacio, tal como afirman diferentes autores (Iglesias Casal, 1998; Labrador y Morote, 2008; Arias, 2014; Morales y Urrego, 2017). Cualquiera tiene contacto con el juego desde los primeros momentos de su vida, puesto que es básico para el dinamismo psicomotriz. En tal sentido, es relevante la reflexión de Molina (2016: 1):

El juego es un hecho motriz implícito en la práctica habitual del niño. Se considera el mejor medio educativo para favorecer el aprendizaje, fortaleciéndose con él todo el desarrollo físico y psicomotor, el desarrollo intelectual, y el socio-afectivo, normalmente requieren del uso mental o físico, y a menudo de ambos.

Además, existe una gran variedad de indicios y ejemplos de juegos desde los más remotos tiempos: desde la caza o las luchas de la prehistoria como actividades físicas hasta el baile, los concursos de poesía o los juegos de pelota tan conocidos en Roma y Grecia como actividades sociales y para la diversión (Andreu, 2008). No obstante, en cuanto al proceso de enseñanza y aprendizaje, desde la Antigüedad resaltan los juegos de rol para practicar el vocabulario.

Sin embargo, solamente a finales del siglo XIX y comienzos del XX se empieza a considerar el juego como una actividad esencial del ser humano para la diversión o como ejercicio de aprendizaje o desarrollo (Decroly y Monchamp, 1986). Por eso que, a partir de ese momento, empiezan las investigaciones en el campo de la educación y de las ciencias sociales (Arias, 2014).

En cuanto a la enseñanza de las lenguas extranjeras, a partir de los años 70 comienza a desarrollarse el enfoque comunicativo, lo que hace que el juego encaje perfectamente en este nuevo contexto (*ibidem*). Asimismo, Nevado (2008) recuerda el dicho que “todo se aprende jugando” para subrayar el papel fundamental del juego dentro de la programación. Al partir de los deseos de jugar todo el tiempo durante la infancia, se podría reflexionar sobre el hecho de que el juego lo facilita todo, tanto el proceso de aprendizaje como la integración grupal.

Para apuntar una definición exacta sobre qué es el juego en la educación, se considera importante el aporte de Torres y Torres (2007: 28):

Conjunto de habilidades agradables, cortas, divertidas, con reglas que permiten el fortalecimiento de los valores: respeto, tolerancia grupal e intergrupal, responsabilidad, solidaridad, confianza en sí mismo, seguridad, amor al prójimo, fomenta el compañerismo para compartir ideas, conocimientos, inquietudes. Todos ellos -los valores- facilitan el esfuerzo para internalizar los conocimientos de manera significativa.

A partir de esta definición, Nevado (2008) acentúa la contribución del juego en la formación del pensamiento teórico y práctico del aprendiente y en la constitución de las cualidades que este debe reunir: habilidades para las relaciones sociales, capacidad de decidir, dirigir, etc.

Para ser más específico y para subrayar la posibilidad de una interacción real, Andreu (2008: 122) define el juego didáctico como:

En un enfoque comunicativo entendemos por juegos didácticos o lúdico-educativos aquellas actividades incluidas en el programa de nuestra asignatura en las que se presenta un contexto real y una necesidad de utilizar el idioma y vocabulario específico con una finalidad lúdico-educativa.¹

Con todo esto, ¿por qué son fundamentales los juegos en el aula de ELE? Para recalcar que el juego didáctico realmente cambia la rutina, aumenta la motivación del aprendiz y, a la vez, satisface su necesidad de diversión, Iglesias Casal (1998) y Nevado (2008) mencionan algunas de sus principales ventajas:

- Se puede usar para cualquier etapa de la lección, para consolidar y reforzar el vocabulario o la gramática y se adapta a las destrezas interpretativas y a las expresivas;
- El docente orienta y coordina la actividad mientras que el discente es el protagonista, un elemento activo y responsable de su propio aprendizaje;
- Ofrece la oportunidad de jugar con la lengua y las palabras en contextos reales;
- Genera placer, aumenta la motivación y desarrolla la creatividad y la imaginación a la vez que fomenta la integración, la comunicación, la unión grupal y facilita las relaciones interpersonales, implicando a todos los alumnos;
- Es un buen medio para desarrollar la competencia intercultural;
- Contribuye al desarrollo del alumno en plan intelectual-cognitivo y afectivo-emocional;
- Favorece la idea del progreso. Los alumnos parten de un punto y llegan a otro, es decir, avanzan;
- Anula en gran medida los posibles conflictos de inseguridad y autoestima frente al error. Permite al alumno utilizar su personalidad.

Metodología y procedimiento

La metodología utilizada para este estudio es cualitativa. Se considera la más indicada, ya que la observación y la interacción directa con el alumnado permiten detectar mejor los problemas y encontrar posibles soluciones, en otras palabras, facilitan la comprensión de la situación “desde dentro”:

¹ Actualmente se suelen confundir los conceptos de juego y lúdico. Lo lúdico tiene un significado mucho más extenso y es de más reciente uso. Se entiende como algo “relativo al juego” (*Le petit Larousse*, 1996: 607 en Arias, 2014: 262).

[...] un conocimiento social pleno sólo se puede realizar a través de la comprensión del punto de vista de los actores sociales, mediante un proceso de identificación con sus vidas y esta identificación sólo se puede realizar con una plena y completa participación en su cotidianeidad, en una interacción continua y directa con los sujetos estudiados (Corbetta, 2007: 327).

Por ende, el punto de partida de este trabajo lo representa la aplicación de varios juegos didácticos para fomentar la destreza oral. Lo que se pretende es impulsar la participación activa en el aula y la desinhibición, estimular la motivación y la comunicación en la lengua meta. A base de estos juegos se realiza un diagnóstico de observación que se hace para encontrar posibles respuestas al interrogante: ¿por qué no comunican los alumnos rumanos en el aula de ELE?

Los juegos usados son diferentes en cuanto al nivel, a la etapa de la lección o al objetivo que se pretende¹. Son juegos que se podrían utilizar en cualquier momento porque tienen la ventaja de poder ser adaptados y porque activan emociones y actitudes positivas, crecen la motivación, relajan y sobre todo, permiten practicar lo aprendido en clase. La investigación se realiza con alumnos de primaria y secundaria del Liceul Teoretic “Eugen Pora” de Cluj-Napoca.

Resultados y análisis

Este estudio representa una parte de mi trabajo de fin de máster. En realidad, se pusieron en práctica muchos otros juegos, pero aquí se presentan solamente los que fomentan la expresión oral.

a) *Juego:* Fíjate bien y descubre. *Nivel:* A1 (2º grado). *Duración:* 15-20 minutos.

Destreza(s): expresión oral. *Tipo de interacción:* alumno-alumno, alumno-clase.

Objetivos:

- Nivel comunicativo: expresar opinión, describir los rasgos físicos
- Nivel gramatical: practicar los colores, los adjetivos de descripción, la ropa, usar los verbos tener y ser en oraciones cortas
- Nivel estratégico: observar los detalles de una persona, fomentar la concentración.

Recursos: alumnos. *Papel del profesor:* explicar las reglas, guiar, sugerir y ofrecer ejemplos. *Papel del alumno:* observar con atención y describir.

Desarrollo: Todos los alumnos se sientan en un círculo. Se eligen dos voluntarios que se sientan en el medio, uno frente al otro. Se les ofrecen 30 segundos para observarse atentamente. Después, sentados de espaldas, cada uno tiene que describir al otro ofreciendo información relacionada con el pelo, los ojos, la altura, la ropa, el color, etc. Gana el alumno que ofrece el mayor número de detalles, pero es importante que todos sean correctos. Durante todo este tiempo, los otros miran y escuchan con atención a sus compañeros porque ellos son los que aprecian si lo que dicen es correcto o no, y también ellos deciden y nombran al ganador.

Sugerencias: Si se realiza con grupos grandes, lo ideal sería hacerse fuera del aula para una mejor organización. Igualmente, se podría aumentar el tiempo para los alumnos de primaria

¹ Los juegos se inspiran en las ideas de Pizarro y Do Carmo Silva (2007) y se adaptan al contexto propio del aula.

para que todos puedan participar. Es importante explicar bien las reglas, ofrecer ejemplos para evitar molestias de tipo *Yo no entiendo. Yo quiero trabajar con mi amigo/a.*

b) *Juego:* Atención a lo que te digo. *Nivel:* A1 (3^{er} grado). *Duración:* 20 minutos. *Destreza(s):* Comprensión y expresión oral, expresión escrita. *Tipo de interacción:* en grupos.

Objetivo(s):

- Nivel comunicativo: entender la información, hacer preguntas
- Nivel gramatical: practicar el vocabulario estudiado (colores, objetos escolares, partes del cuerpo, adjetivos descriptivos, la casa)
- Nivel estratégico: evaluar el vocabulario mediante el dibujo.

Recursos: alumnos, pizarra, dibujo. *Papel del profesor:* explicar las reglas, guiar, cuidar que los niños no vean el dibujo. *Papel del alumno:* poner atención y participar en el juego.

Desarrollo: La clase se divide en cuatro grupos de 4 o 5 alumnos. Un alumno de cada grupo es escogido como representante y tiene que ir a la pizarra. Cada grupo recibe una hoja en blanco en la que tiene que dibujar por lo menos 4 objetos que estén relacionados con el vocabulario estudiado. Disponen de 5 minutos para dibujar. Después, van a la pizarra en frente de su representante y empiezan a describir el dibujo sin mostrarlo. El representante dibuja según las instrucciones de sus compañeros. Él también puede hacer preguntas en caso de que no entienda algo. Gana el equipo cuyo representante termina más rápido el dibujo, respetando las instrucciones. La idea es que se parezcan el dibujo de la hoja con el de la pizarra.

Sugerencias: Es necesario insistir en las reglas. Al trabajar con dibujos, estos deben ser fácil de entender para no causar dificultades. Al ser un juego en grupo, un aspecto importante lo representa su organización. Trabajar en grupos heterogéneos sería una buena idea para evitar que todos tengan el mismo nivel. Es mejor hacerlo con grupos pequeños, ya que para el docente es difícil poner atención a todos. Hay que tener cuidado en la organización del juego porque al ser uno competitivo, puede provocar problemas, sobre todo en primaria.

c) *Juego:* Adivina quién soy. *Nivel:* A2+ (9^o grado). *Duración:* 15 minutos. *Destreza(s):* comprensión y expresión oral, comprensión lectora. *Tipo de interacción:* alumno-grupo.

Objetivos:

- Nivel comunicativo: entender las palabras, ofrecer informaciones, describir, hacer preguntas
- Nivel gramatical: practicar las profesiones, la comida y la ropa
- Nivel estratégico: repasar lo aprendido usando la creatividad (hacer mímica).

Recursos: alumnos, post-it. *Papel del profesor:* explicar las reglas, guiar, observar los errores cometidos y la actitud de los alumnos. *Papel del alumno:* poner atención y participar en el juego (hablar y hacer mímica).

Desarrollo: La clase se divide en 2 grupos. Se eligen 3 voluntarios de cada grupo. Ellos tienen que ir al frente por turnos y se les pega un post-it en la frente para no verlo. Cada post-it tiene una palabra relacionada con el vocabulario estudiado: ropa, profesiones, comida. Los otros miembros de cada grupo tendrán que ofrecer informaciones al voluntario para adivinar la palabra. Pueden hacer mímica, pueden ofrecer cualquier tipo de información, pero no pueden mencionar la palabra escrita. El voluntario puede hacer

también preguntas para ayudarse. Se ofrece 1 punto para cada palabra adivinada y 2 puntos extra si se adivina después de 2 intentos.

Sugerencias: Este juego puede ser más interesante y divertido si cuenta con la participación del docente. Esto ofrece más confianza al alumnado, mejora la relación docente-discente y crea una atmósfera muy relajada.

Los juegos mencionados se desarrollaron en general muy bien, los alumnos se mostraron más interesados que de costumbre y los objetivos propuestos se cumplieron en gran parte. Fueron muy útiles porque relacionan el contenido lingüístico con actividades agradables para el alumnado, por ejemplo, dibujar, hacer mímica o adivinar, a la vez que fomentan la expresión oral. Igualmente, los juegos representaron una oportunidad para mostrar su personalidad, para afirmar su talento o sus conocimientos. En general, se observaron los siguientes aspectos positivos:

- entusiasmo, curiosidad de los aprendices en participar activamente: levantaron la mano, se organizaron muy rápido, afirmaron que no estaban acostumbrados a jugar en la clase de ELE y que les parecía genial.
- buena ocasión para conocerse mejor: afirmaciones de tipo: *No he trabajado con él hasta ahora. No sabía su color de ojos. Es muy bueno para dibujar.*
- muchas risas, relajación, felicidad, ayuda y colaboración, visibles por medio de los gestos, por la manera de sentarse tan relajada, por el entusiasmo y la rapidez de realizar las tareas, etc. Se apreciaron las siguientes afirmaciones: *¡Adoro hacer esto! Yo quiero empezar primero. Esta profesora es genial.*
- observación por parte del docente de los errores. Se observó que los alumnos hablan mejor de lo que escriben, sin embargo, tienen algunos problemas en formar oraciones y en conjugar los verbos en presente. La pronunciación es bastante buena, la letra z sigue planteando problemas.
- atmósfera de silencio y respeto: gracias al enfoco en el trabajo.
- evaluación de los temas estudiados. La idea de evaluar mediante el juego no asustó al alumnado y cualquier rastro de miedo, desapareció. Algunos se quedaron muy sorprendidos al enterarse que habían ganado puntos para la calificación final.
- creatividad: muy visible en las tareas realizadas (la originalidad y sensibilidad del dibujo, la forma muy entretenida de hacer mímica, las ideas y las explicaciones ofrecidas). También, se apreció mucho el intento de algunos alumnos con un nivel más bajo de pronunciar algunas palabras de un modo muy divertido. Esto causó risa y bien estar.
- aumento de la motivación y el placer: la participación de algunos más tímidos que en general no hablan en clase.
- atmósfera de confianza al ver al docente participar y reírse. Se observa un acercamiento entre el docente y sus discentes.
- diversión: a los alumnos de secundaria no les importó ganar, sino divertirse. Esto se notó en el intento de ayudar a los del equipo contrario.
- observación del lenguaje no verbal: se observó que miraban solamente al frente para mostrar el interés, el cuerpo estaba orientado también hacia el representante. Algunas veces se levantaban de la silla y movían las manos para explicar. Esto muestra su impaciencia, su deseo de lograr el objetivo.

En cuanto a los aspectos negativos, estos fueron varios:

- molestia de algunos por no poder participar. Esto se debe al gran número de alumnos existentes en cada grupo y al tiempo demasiado corto;
- problema con el espacio: en general, las aulas son demasiado pequeñas para un número tan alto de alumnos. Por lo tanto, para hacer un círculo, por ejemplo, hace falta hacer muchos cambios, que implican automáticamente una pérdida de tiempo.
- frustración de los alumnos al principio del juego de no trabajar entre amigos (en el caso del juego *Fíjate bien y descubre*, esto va en contra de las reglas).
- rechazo a participar de algunos alumnos. Afirmaciones de tipo: *No sé hablar en español. Los compañeros siempre se burlan de mí. No tengo ganas. Tengo miedo de equivocarme. No me gusta. No quiero hablar en frente de ellos.*
- uso de la lengua materna por parte de algunos aprendices. Esto les llevó a perder puntos.
- molestia de algunos aprendientes de primaria al perder por falta de costumbre a los juegos competitivos y por la edad: tiraron el dibujo y se escondieron en un rincón mencionando *Nadie me entiende... Ya no quiero jugar.*
- dificultad del docente de poner atención a todos los grupos para asegurarse del cumplimiento de las reglas. Esto lo llevó a perder un poco el control.
- ruido en algunas etapas del juego: los alumnos empezaron a hablar un poco alto y algunos hablaron al mismo tiempo. Esto obligó al profesor intervenir para restablecer el silencio.
- eliminación del juego: un alumno fue sorprendido al intentar murmurar la palabra que estaba escrita en el post-it y fue eliminado.

Además de traer muchos cambios positivos en el aula, los juegos representaron una buena ocasión para encontrar algunas causas de la falta de comunicación de los aprendientes rumanos en general. La observación y el diálogo con ellos permitieron identificar las siguientes:

Causas personales	Causas pedagógicas	Causas socioculturales y contextuales
Desmotivación y aburrimiento	La actitud del docente frente al error	Distancia entre docente-discente
Personalidad introvertida, inseguridad, ansiedad	El miedo en cuanto a la evaluación	Burla de los compañeros
Escasa competencia comunicativa	Actividades inadecuadas a las necesidades e intereses del alumnado	Cambio seguido de los docentes

Conclusiones

Después de aplicar estos juegos y otros más, se llegó a la conclusión de que un juego en verdad puede ser una buena estrategia para desarrollar la competencia comunicativa en el aula de ELE. A pesar de que el proceso de enseñanza-aprendizaje depende de cada situación docente-discente y que suelen intervenir en el proceso factores como los objetivos del alumnado, su edad, sus necesidades e intereses, su nivel, su motivación o sus propias características, se concluye que el juego puede ser de gran ayuda

para lograr el éxito, gracias a sus múltiples ventajas, tanto del punto de vista metodológico como psicológico. Además, al ponerlo en práctica en nuestra propia realidad, al ver sus beneficios en nuestros alumnos y al observar la actitud positiva que promueve, se afirma con toda certeza que es un elemento clave para superar la reticencia a hablar en el aula de ELE.

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PEUT-ON DÉPASSER LA CRISE DE LA LITTÉRATURE EN CLASSE DE FLE ?

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Abstract: *This paper has the purpose to identify the place that literature should have in a foreign language class. It aims at showing what aspects we should consider when bringing a literary text in a French class and also the effects that the literature might have upon the development of students' skills and upon cultural enrichment of those who are ready to accept its importance.*

Keywords: *literature, reticence, French teaching.*

La littérature est, dans sa totalité, plus que toute autre discipline, une question liée aux valeurs. L'attitude des uns et des autres quant à la littérature comme objet d'enseignement dépend fortement de leur profil idéologique et correspond, consciemment ou inconsciemment, à une certaine position politique. Il existe plusieurs variations en ce qui concerne la perception de l'enseignement de la littérature ; il y a ceux qui font de celui-ci une forme d'apprentissage de la vie, de préparation à l'intégration sociale ; d'autres lui attribuent des fonctions de critique de l'ordre établi, et encore d'autres en n'y voyant que la finalité du plaisir ou de la connaissance désintéressée. Quel que soit le cas, l'enseignement/apprentissage de la littérature en classe de langue est presque inexistant de nos jours et le contexte ne favorise non plus cette démarche.

Le texte littéraire est absent des manuels de français ou s'il existe par ci, par-là, il y a des fragments qui ne servent que de support ou point de départ pour travailler le lexique ou la grammaire. À cet égard, Claudette Oriol-Boyer affirme :

la lecture des textes littéraires, à des fins de culture générale, apparaît seulement quand l'apprentissage de la langue, dans ses usages ordinaires, est déjà assuré. Du collègue au lycée, le texte littéraire n'est qu'un prétexte pour augmenter le lexique ou bien pour développer la syntaxe de l'apprenant et surtout la lecture sans que la question de la spécificité ne soit posée. (Oriol-Boyer, C., 1990)

On invoque toutes sortes de causes pour ne pas accorder sa place à la littérature ; parmi ces causes-ci, il y a le manque de temps, la réticence des apprenants, l'absence des textes des manuels employés, les documents officiels ou les programmes qui doivent être respectés, la considération que l'on « perd » du temps avec la littérature etc.

Entre la littérature et les diverses méthodologies qui se sont succédées au long du temps il y a eu des rapports différents et on peut même ajouter que « la littérature a connu de façon cyclique, des phases d'abondance et d'absence, entre sacralisation et désacralisation » (Gruca, I., 1993). Tout d'abord, dans *la méthodologie traditionnelle*, la littérature jouissait d'une situation privilégiée, représentant un des aspects les plus importants pour la formation

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d'une personne. L'apprentissage de la littérature visait à la fois des objectifs d'ordre formatif, l'esthétique, l'intellectuel et moral. Ensuite, dès 1920, au cadre des *méthodologies directe et audio-orale*, celle-ci n'est plus présente, le texte littéraire devenant seulement un support linguistique car ces approches mettent l'accent sur l'oral d'où l'emploi des dialogues fabriqués effectivement à ce but. Dans *la méthodologie structuro-globale-audio-visuelle*, le texte littéraire disparaît effectivement, n'apparaissant ni même comme support d'apprentissage. À propos du rôle joué par la littérature dans ces méthodologies, Artuñedo et Boudart ajoutent que « ce genre de production ne répond pas aux exigences d'une situation réelle, d'un besoin autre que créatif. Il s'agit toujours d'une situation imaginée, fictive voire artificielle, en tout cas subjective, d'un choix conscient individuel et libre » (Artuñedo, B., Boudart, L., 2002 : 52). Le retour du texte littéraire dans le processus d'enseignement/apprentissage a lieu dès le début des années 1980 avec l'apparition de *l'approche communicative*. Mais, cette fois-ci, il est vu comme « un document authentique » parmi d'autres, sans entraîner aucun type de réflexion de nature didactique ou méthodologique. Cuq et Gruca affirment qu'« il faudrait attendre les années 1980 pour assister à une sorte de retour en grâce du littéraire, réhabilité d'après les prescrits de la méthode dite « communicative » » (Cuq, J.-P., et Gruca, I., 2005 : 254-270). Ce retour dont parlent Cuq et Gruca n'est pas lui non plus aussi clair car l'image de la littérature reste encore liée à la méthodologie grammaire-traduction et à l'approche qu'elle lui offre. Quant à la situation de la littérature, Amor Séoud (1977 : 26) constate que le développement même d'une didactique de la langue qui a entraîné cette mise à l'écart de la littérature en FLE est paradoxal. En effet, l'importance croissante de l'oral dans l'apprentissage a évincé la littérature, domaine de l'écrit par excellence et dont la langue apparaissait comme trop éloignée de la langue usuelle des natifs.

Après ce bref aperçu théorique quant à la présence du texte littéraire dans les méthodologies qui ont existé avant le CECRL¹ il est extrêmement important à voir quel rôle attribue le Cadre à la littérature en classe de langue étrangère. Selon le CECRL (2001 : 47) « les littératures nationale et étrangère apportent une contribution majeure au patrimoine culturel européen que le Conseil de l'Europe voit comme « une ressource commune inappréciable qu'il faut protéger et développer » ». Quoique présente assez peu, la littérature se voit sa place réaffirmer, grâce à sa manière plurielle d'expression et à sa capacité la plus large d'acception quant à la production littéraire. Ainsi, la langue peut rendre compte sur « l'utilisation esthétique ou poétique » et le texte littéraire, cité plusieurs fois dans la « grille pour l'autoévaluation » a pour objectif de constituer un référentiel de compétences (CECRL, 2001 : 37 ; 26-27).

Des questions surgissent involontairement lorsque l'on parle de l'introduction de la littérature en classe de langue. Pourquoi enseigner la littérature ? Quoi enseigner ? Comment enseigner ? Par quoi commencer ? Quand ? Faut-il commencer avec les plus jeunes aussi ? La réponse à ces questions n'est pas simple et sa découverte rend compte de plusieurs facteurs qui devront être pris en considération par tout enseignant visant à essayer donner sa place d'autrefois à la littérature.

¹Cadre Européen Commun de Référence pour les Langues

- a) POURQUOI ? Le texte littéraire en classe de langue touche chacune des compétences à atteindre, soit qu'il s'agisse de la *compréhension*, de la *production / expression*, soit qu'on mette en discussion la *compétence interculturelle*, très véhiculée dernièrement.

La littérature peut représenter une voie d'accès qui nous permet de découvrir et connaître nous-même et aussi l'autre, elle est une ressource qui aide la *médiation*. Selon A.-S. Morel, « elle offre des expériences propres à renforcer la conscience subjective des apprenants, en tant qu'apprenants d'une langue étrangère, mais aussi, plus largement, en tant qu'*autres*. On peut ainsi étudier en classe des auteurs qui sont dans une position « d'entre-deux », et dont l'œuvre littéraire témoigne d'un métissage et contribue à accomplir le processus de médiation entre langues – cultures d'origine et d'adoption. Le texte littéraire est plus que jamais un « laboratoire langagier », lieu d'initiation et de médiation entre Soi et les Autres et où s'exprime une langue-culture dans sa richesse et sa complexité, au-delà d'une conception purement utilitariste qui ferait de la langue un simple outil transparent de communication. » (Morel, A.-S., 2012 : 141-148). Enfin, Anne-Sophie Morel (*Ibidem.*) affirme aussi que « la littérature était l'objectif de tout apprentissage, elle le couronnait. »

- b) QUAND ? Concernant *l'âge des apprenants* qui entrent en contact avec un texte littéraire, Bertrand offre des précisions qui devraient être prises en considération par tous les enseignants. Il dit qu'à propos de « quand peut-on, et doit-on, lancer les apprenants dans les textes littéraires ? Nous allons répondre que le plus tôt est le mieux en choisissant des textes *à leur portée*. Avec un peu de patience, on peut trouver des textes accessibles aux débutants » (cf. Bertrand in Cervera, R., 2011 : 45-52).

A part l'âge, on peut prendre en considération le niveau de langue des apprenants ; à quel niveau, peut-on introduire le texte littéraire ? Le CECRL (2001 : 27) précise que pour B2, l'apprenant peut « comprendre un texte littéraire contemporain en prose ». Pour C1, il peut « comprendre des textes factuels ou littéraires longs et complexes et en apprécier les différences de style » et enfin le C2 stipule que l'apprenant peut « lire sans effort tout type de texte, même abstrait ou complexe quant au fond ou à la forme, par exemple un manuel, un article spécialisé ou bien une œuvre littéraire » (*Ibidem.*). Mais n'est-il pas trop tard pour familiariser les apprenants à la littérature au niveau B2 ? Les études montrent que la langue étrangère devrait être apprise dès âges les plus jeunes pour que le succès soit assuré... Pourquoi cette réticence quant à la présence du texte littéraire en classe de FLE¹ ? Quoi faire donc pour que la littérature soit prise en considération ?

¹Français Langue Étrangère

- c) QUOI ? Pour B2, l'apprenant doit « comprendre un texte littéraire contemporain en prose », pour C1, « des textes factuels ou littéraires longs et complexes et en apprécier les différences de style » et le C2 stipule que l'apprenant doit « lire sans effort tout type de texte, même abstrait ou complexe quant au fond ou à la forme, par exemple un manuel, un article spécialisé ou bien une œuvre littéraire » (CECRL, 2001 :27).

En choisissant attentivement *le texte support*, même s'il s'agit d'un texte littéraire, on a des chances à réussir déterminer les apprenants à aimer la littérature parce que, s'ils entrent en contact avec un certain type de texte, ils s'y familiarisent plus facilement et quand le niveau d'apprentissage va accroître, ils seront préparés à approcher la littérature. Il est encore plus difficile pour un apprenant d'être mis en face de la littérature s'il n'a pas eu un contact graduel avec celle-ci. C'est un motif qui devrait se trouver à la base des efforts des enseignants pour agir de la sorte que la littérature soit introduite dans les méthodes utilisées en classe de FLE des âges les plus jeunes. Un aspect très important dont on doit obligatoirement tenir compte en classe de langue c'est donc le choix du support didactique littéraire. Mais le domaine de la littérature française est l'un des plus riches et variés, il y a toutes sortes de textes qui pourraient être employés comme documents authentiques, en tant que support pour la démarche didactique. Comme exemple, on peut prendre le cas du poète surréaliste Jacques Prévert. Sa variété de poèmes offre la possibilité de trouver support didactique pour tout niveau d'apprentissage. Il y a même la possibilité de travailler le même texte mais avec des classes ayant des niveaux différents. *L'enseignant* joue un rôle clé dans le processus d'enseignement/ apprentissage. Il connaît mieux son groupe et il est sûrement celui qui devrait gérer la situation et le déroulement des activités dans sa classe.

L'absence des textes littéraires des méthodes de FLE est un désavantage qui pourrait toutefois être transformé dans une voie d'accès pour l'enseignant pour faciliter l'entrée de la littérature en classe de langue. Si le manuel n'en offre pas, on a la possibilité de chercher chacun pour soi et, par conséquent, l'avantage d'apporter en classe ce que l'on considère le plus approprié pour son groupe car le professeur est celui qui le connaît mieux, connaît ses capacités et ses préférences. C'est quand même question de volonté et de travail qui en fin de compte apporte la satisfaction de permettre aux apprenants de découvrir la voie vers une autre culture, un autre monde. À cet égard, Simone de Beauvoir affirmait que « c'est à travers la littérature qu'on apprend le mieux un pays étranger ». Et ainsi, selon les mots de Defays (Defays, J.-M., 2014 : 52)

loin de s'arrêter à ce qui pourrait passer pour l'âge d'or des lettres françaises, la table des matières de la littérature française, en général- inclut également la littérature française contemporaine, qui, malheureusement, est très peu connue, les littératures francophones, qui possèdent déjà leurs classiques, la littérature populaire et une catégorie globale, dite « littérature de jeunesse ». L'enseignant opérera son choix à la

lumière des critères suivants : les objectifs qu'il poursuit en retenant le texte littéraire comme support didactique, la longueur de celui-ci, le niveau de compétence linguistique de l'apprenant et le « niveau de difficulté contextuelle et référentielle » du texte.

- d) COMMENT? La richesse des textes de la littérature française est impressionnante mais on ne doit pas non plus négliger les *niveaux de compétence* linguistique qui correspondent plus au moins à chaque genre littéraire. Ainsi, les chercheurs en didactique du FLE offrent des conseils pour introduire l'étude de la poésie dès le niveau A1, qualifié, selon la définition du CECRL (2001 : 24), comme « niveau introductif ou découverte » ; à partir du niveau A2 ou « niveau intermédiaire ou de survie », on pourrait aborder le théâtre ; le récit sera introduit à partir du niveau B1 ou « niveau seuil ». Les niveaux C1 et C2 ou les niveaux avancés seront consacrés aux textes de nature argumentative ou philosophique, plus longs et plus complexes. Quant à cette répartition, Woerly explique que « les différences génériques contribuent ainsi à l'établissement d'un principe de progression qui prend en considération les difficultés de compréhension liées au niveau linguistique de l'apprenant. » (Woerly, D., 2015 : 68)

De plus, en 1982, ce que Jean Peytard ajoute avec regret concernant le texte littéraire, devrait ne pas être ignoré et constituer le point de départ de la classe de FLE :

On aimerait suggérer aux didacticiens qu'il convient de ne pas placer le texte littéraire à la fin ou au sommet, ou au hasard de la progression méthodologique, mais d'en faire, au début, dès l'origine du « cours de langue », un document d'observation et d'analyse [...] Lire le texte littéraire, c'est chercher à percevoir les mouvements mêmes du langage là où ils sont les plus forts. (Peytard, J., 1982 : 91-103)

En s'agissant de la littérature, il est important de souligner le rôle joué par **la lecture** dans une telle démarche. L'enseignant doit essayer de développer chez ses apprenants le goût de la lecture, le « plaisir du lire », de les faire « voyager » parmi les nombreuses histoires envisagées grâce aux textes littéraires. Si la lecture parvient à les enchanter, à les fasciner, ils sont gagnés pour toujours. Ils s'y impliquent, ils y participent et c'est ainsi que l'on peut aisément apporter de la littérature en classe de langue, car il intervient la curiosité et l'intérêt. À cet égard, Cicurel (1991 : 134) ajoute que « Le texte n'est pas seulement objet à étudier, objet étranger difficilement accessible, mais texte dont on s'empare, dans lequel on s'implique et sur lequel on a le droit de dire quelque chose ». F. Cicurel propose à l'enseignant d'essayer de créer trois types de relation en partant du texte proposé : la relation du lecteur au texte à travers les anticipations et les hypothèses de lecture, la relation du texte au lecteur avec les réactions personnelles du lecteur et la relation entre les différents apprenants-lecteurs à travers le travail de groupe. La lecture peut représenter également une porte qui s'ouvre vers une didactique de la littérature et comme le souligne A. Séoud (1977 : 44), « une introduction à la didactique de la littérature, puisque la dimension de l'apprentissage- comme dans toute didactique- est incontournable, doit centrer

l'intérêt sur le phénomène de la lecture, où la prise en compte du point de vue du sujet élève semble s'imposer d'elle-même... ».

La question qui implique les *méthodes et les moyens d'exploitation pédagogique du texte littéraire* doit être prise aussi en considération par les enseignants de FLE car ce n'est pas d'importance secondaire la manière dont on favorise l'approche de ce genre de texte aux apprenants et à l'aide de quels moyens on peut se servir pour y parvenir. Dans le processus d'enseignement/ apprentissage de la littérature, il doit exister un changement de rôles des acteurs impliqués. Ainsi, les apprenants doivent jouir de plein pouvoir d'exprimer leurs points de vue et une méthodologie interactive pourra assurer en classe de FLE un tel projet ; l'enseignant ne doit plus appliquer en classe ce que Puren appelle « la loi de l'isomorphisme » (Puren, 1988 : 37), c'est-à-dire la manière d'esquisser et dérouler une démarche pédagogique qui « veut que le formateur tende spontanément à reproduire dans sa pratique ce qui a présidé à sa propre formation » (*Ibidem.*). Les tâches qui ont comme point de départ le texte littéraire devraient être repensées à l'aide des méthodes actives-participatives qui aient comme objectif d'aider « les lecteurs novices à renforcer leurs stratégies en explicitant leur interprétation et en écoutant la manière dont les autres sont arrivés à formuler des interprétations similaires ou divergentes. » (Godard, 2015 : 43). Selon Morel (2012 : 143),

il s'agit ici de tenter de concilier exigences du *Cadre* – travail des compétences langagières, dimension interculturelle, pédagogie de projet – sans pour autant instrumentaliser le texte littéraire, ni renoncer à l'analyse ou plus encore au plaisir de la lecture. Pour cela, on s'emploiera à faire adopter des postures lectorales qui ne soient pas seulement la posture labourieuse d'un élève : le sujet lisant doit aller au texte comme on va à un jeu. Le risque existe en effet que les médiations et étayages que constitue la parole professorale – pour élucider références culturelles ou problèmes linguistiques notamment – aient tendance à didactiser la situation de lecture et à la rendre avant tout scolaire et non littéraire.

En guise de conclusion, on peut ajouter que la littérature aide les gens à comprendre et à se comprendre, elle aide au développement de l'identité et de la créativité et offre une perspective sur la culture de son peuple et de celle du peuple dont il apprend la langue. On peut affirmer que c'est justement par comparaison que l'apprenant se rend compte de sa propre culture. Marc Lits affirme qu'« il n'est pas possible, pour des élèves, de percevoir ce qui constitue leur propre environnement culturel sans terme de comparaison [...]. Ce n'est qu'après avoir découvert la culture de l'autre que je puis percevoir ce qui fonde mes particularités culturelles » (Lits, M., 1994 : 27). Selon Carter (1991 : 3), « Aider les étudiants à lire la littérature plus efficacement c'est les aider à développer comme individus et c'est développer leurs relations avec les gens et les institutions qui les entourent ». Ainsi, le texte littéraire est obligatoire pour se comprendre et comprendre le monde, pour développer son identité personnelle et sa créativité, il est donc fondamental dans le cadre d'une approche culturelle de l'éducation : « l'enjeu de la lecture c'est donc, la découverte de l'altérité. C'est un acte biculturel. » (Patte, G., 1995 : 210). L'importance de la littérature pour le développement de l'apprenant est incontestable et au long du temps il y a eu toute une série de débats à ce sujet. Mais

quel que soit le sens dans lequel on parle de littérature (et on joue ici sur la polysémie du mot *sens*), on ne peut la laisser de côté, l'oublier, la méconnaître. Au contraire, il faut combattre pour elle, pour que les gens comprennent que la littérature est la différence et qu'elle fait apprendre les différences, qu'elle crée, recrée et développe des individualités, des manières alternatives de penser, qu'elle offre aux gens la liberté d'agir et de sentir. (Georgescu, C.-A., 2011 :213)

On conclut en mentionnant les mots de Roland Barthes qui se constituent dans une véritable prise de position sur le rôle fondamental que devrait jouer la littérature dans le parcours des enseignants ou des apprenants : « Si, par je ne sais quel excès de socialisme ou de barbarie, toutes nos disciples devaient être expulsées de l'enseignement sauf une, c'est la discipline littéraire qui devrait être sauvée, car toutes les sciences sont présentes dans le monument littéraire » (Barthes, R., 1978 : 45).

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