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Proemial Study

Quantum Histories, Contingency, and Stardom: Narrativizing the Self in *Music, in a Foreign Language* and *My Life is like a Fairy Tale*

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Abstract: Andrew Crumey’s *Music, in a Foreign Language* (1994) and Robert Irwin’s *My Life is like a Fairy Tale* (2019) foreground protagonists who undertake writing as a – fictional or fictionalised – means of representing the self against the pressures of collective histories represented by totalitarian regimes in the background. As contextualised, their practice emphasises the temporal dimension of both subjectivity and reality. While diametrically opposed, their approaches encompass a space that occasions the problematisation of such notions as history, temporality, and consciousness, at the intersection of chance and determinism, as well as the questioning of the interactions between their representations across a number of disciplines. The following study draws on theories from history, chaos theory, and quantum mechanics as discourses interwoven in the textual fabric of the two novels in order to examine the means by which fiction affords the exploration of the interplay of theoretical constructs while repositioning itself in the process.

Keywords: history, temporality, determinism, chaos theory, quantum mechanics

Published twenty-five years apart and inscribed in the Scottish and English literary traditions, respectively, Andrew Crumey’s *Music, in a Foreign Language* (1994) and Robert Irwin’s *My Life is like a Fairy Tale* (2019) confront the reader with complementary perspectives on a shared topic: narrative attempts at representing subjectivity against the background of totalitarianism. While neither work directly confronts the latter in terms of its political implications, it allows, nonetheless, for the staging of ideology as a privileged, empowered narrative operating as an immutable set of constraints deeply ingrained in

the fabric of their storyworlds, which, instead of completely erasing alternative discourses, becomes complicit with them in engendering historical contingency. As the protagonists are engaged in specific historical contexts, temporality is foregrounded as a framing factor circumscribing the possibilities for self-representation they afford, while the various undertakings towards the latter reflect back on the former, bringing it under scrutiny.

On the surface, the characters in the two novels and the worlds they inhabit could not be any farther apart or more unrelated – nor could their approaches to history, whether personal or collective. Crumey's ontology is predicated entirely on the subjunctive: England has been occupied by Germany during World War II, then it shortly became a communist dictatorship; the narrator is a former lecturer in physics now in exile in Italy, teaching English to earn a living. He is somewhat knowledgeable in literature and music history and can play piano, albeit not outstandingly well. Irwin's story is set in Germany, before and during the Second World War, suffused with historical detail; his focal character is a fictional Dutch minor actress who has come to Berlin in the 1920s in order to fulfil her dream of becoming a movie star, but never quite made it, and whose most conspicuous literary accomplishment is a failed attempt at reading *Ivanhoe* in school. The epistemological methods underlying their understanding – and representation – of both reality and themselves are, thus, diametrically opposed: while the former's is informed by his academic background, consequently – at least apparently – reliant on rational empiricism and prone to constant questioning, the latter's is based on a simple, uninquisitive mechanism of immediate emotional response and quick dismissal of anything that she perceives as boring or otherwise unattractive:

She never bothered with the political and military news. That would only depress her and what would be the point of that?

The horoscope was usually more cheerful and certainly more useful, as the horoscope told her what was going to happen, whereas the news only told you what had happened. (Irwin 2019: 30)

A certain sense of symmetry emerges in the approaches proposed by the two novels: the former engages the factual in a counterfactual background, while the latter plunges the counterfactual into the factual. This act of mirroring acquires, however, a further level as the two protagonists are portrayed as being in the process of writing – the former using it as a fictional exploration of the interplay of chance and determinism operating between personal and collective histories, rooted in the many-worlds interpretation of quantum mechanics, the latter intent on writing her autobiography, yet projecting it as she would have liked it to be, or what she thinks it *ought* to be, markedly different from the reality of her predicament. For all their overt – and intentional – reliance on textual (re)construction, within the compass of their respective narrative frames of reference, both entail a sense of realism – the former, with respect to the counterfactual nature of the alternate history he inhabits, the latter, in agreement with her own rendition of the factual. The fact that neither project should manage to reach completion only highlights Barthesian notions of intertextuality at work in their endeavours to render the self in writing and calls into question the possibilities and limitations of representing reality or making sense thereof, as the gaps – in meaning, as well as experience – are only deferred and multiplied in the process and the writerly subject remains confined within the folds of contingency and uncertainty.

Both contingency and uncertainty prove to be pivotal in the very disciplines that inform the approaches deployed in the two novels: physics and history – both concerned with producing accurate, *factual* renderings of reality, both related with temporality, and both faced with the conundrum of taking

individual consciousness into account, thus forced to become self-reflexive and verge on philosophical questions. In his introduction to *Virtual History: Alternatives and Counterfactuals* (1997b), a collection of essays exploring plausible alternative outcomes of a series of major historic events – including a German invasion of Britain in WWII – that he describes as “separate voyages into ‘imaginary time’” (Ferguson 1997a: 89), historian Niall Ferguson develops an ample metahistorical apparatus in order to prove both the legitimacy and the necessity of counterfactual approaches to historical data. In the process, he traces the recurrence of an overarching determinism underlying ideas of history as far back in time as Classical culture and beyond, being ultimately rooted in divine agency (cf. *ibid.*: 20 ff.), running parallel to a cyclical view, which he discards as no more than a reflection of “the profession’s inherent limitations” (*ibid.*: 90) – in terms that are of the same order as those underlying the reasoning employed by Crumey’s physicist to the same effect, as he grounds it in “an image of the world as a certain limited repertoire of patterns with which to make sense of events” (Crumey 2004: 1287). Yet, at the same time, Ferguson shows that “determinist theories really do play a role in history” (Ferguson 1997a: 88), in that they act as triggers – or, for reasons that will shortly become apparent, *attractors* – for events, enabled precisely by human consciousness, as the latter is genetically and intrinsically conditioned to survive and, to these ends, “seeks, prior to acting in the present, to make sense of the past and on that basis to anticipate the future” (*ibid.*). Moreover, he highlights the *belief* in such theories as the driving force behind both historical conflict and the long trail of victims history has left behind – in other words, operating in the guise of ideologies – and proposes the counterfactual as an antidote (*ibid.*: 88–89).

Ferguson’s paradigm echoes not only the theory of history voiced by Charles King – the closest approximation to an alter ego, albeit merely potential, that the narrator embeds in his novel

in *Music, in a Foreign Language* –, but also the approach to personal history adopted by the latter. King’s representation acknowledges the same degree of determinism as Ferguson’s. In the metaphor of the river that he employs, following the chain of causality upstream from the “thick line which represents the river at its fullest” (Crumey 2004: 80) into multiply branching tributaries ends up in a “feathery pattern of mountain streams which is how the whole thing began” (ibid.), while “[t]he course of the river [...] is dictated by the shape of the landscape, and the force of gravity” (ibid.), which also dictates the course of each individual stream that ends up fuelling it, as the metaphorical counterpart of the survival instinct. Yet this is as far as determinism is operational in his model, for, as his historian friend Robert Waters suggests, “[t]he river doesn’t simply follow the landscape – it changes it” (ibid.: 81). Moreover, further complexity emerges, preventing even the consideration of a singular, unifying, and stable ground:

But my picture is more complicated even than that. Not only does this “river of history” change the landscape which it flows through, but the landscape itself is constantly changing anyway, because of other factors. You could think of each person as having his own personal “landscape” determined by the way everyone else behaves; and he in turn affects other people’s behaviour. It’s a dynamical thing. (Ibid.)

In the outer frame, following up on an idea that he cannot account for, which occurred to him accidentally ten years earlier, the narrator undertakes the project of writing the fictional account of a young couple, Duncan and Giovanna, who meet on a train, replicating a chance encounter in his own life, which, in turn, replicates his meeting his future wife in similar circumstances a while earlier. Originally, it is supposed to be “*a novel about fate, and the strange contortions of history*”; and it would be about two

people who meet on a train, and *the turn of events (wholly arbitrary, like all fiction) which has caused them to come together in this way*” (Crumey 2004: 12, *emphasis mine*), yet it quickly becomes obvious that even this design is underlain by a deeper realisation – that “by taking any particular course of action, one denies and loses for ever all the other paths along which one could have ventured” (ibid.). Seen through this lens, writing becomes a means of exploring one’s own virtual histories targeted at mitigating the effects of all-encompassing determinism.

Crumey’s narrator is assigned a detached observer’s position – intellectually and physically so – as he muses on historical transformations of his home country from the vantage point of his exile in Italy and his writing in retrospect, looking back at both Britain’s past and his own, which affords him an overarching perspective that should allow for patterns to be derived. In Irwin’s novel, *Sonja*, however, is granted no such advantage – partly because her gaze is not informed by discourses that might permit it and partly because she is placed in the midst of unfolding events and emerges as an object of study, rather than a subject conducting it. This difference in perspective is further reinforced by the first-person narrative of the former, as opposed to the third-person account of the latter. In the terms of King’s representation above, she is one of the minute streams not “trying to find a river to flow into” (ibid.: 80), but “simply responding to the force of gravity” (ibid.), yet inextricably bound within the flow of a history that she cannot identify with and which is no more legitimate than her own:

For Joseph [Goebbels], film was war by other means and the victory commemorated in this film was more important than the reality of imminent defeat. [...] ‘From the ashes and rubble, like a phoenix, a new people will arise... a new nation!’ That might have been what they did in 1807, but the Folk in 1944 were hungry, sleepless, and resigned to the worst of what was to

come. ‘The people rise up: the storm breaks!’ No, they did not and it did not. At most there was a thin drizzle. Sonja did not care about the Folk. Germany had denied her the stardom that should have been her destiny. Germany did not deserve to survive her. The nation that was soon to be destroyed was like a vast stage set that would echo on a magnified scale her personal defeat. Even if she were to survive the coming debacle, her life, at least all that mattered in her life, would be over. (Irwin 2019: 268)

Such a realisation of the shifting nature of her own personal landscape under the misleading forces of a deterministic wider ground can only occur to an otherwise unsuspecting Sonja as predicated on the virtual history of her projected autobiography. While she is not endowed with the means to acquire a deeper insight that Crumey’s academics are equipped with, her employment of the distorting mirror of fiction parallels the method adopted by the physicist, in confirmation of Elana Gomel’s observation that “[h]uman beings are [...] *narrative animals*” (Gomel 2014: 4), whose “‘operational spaces’ are as much a product of the stories [they] tell [themselves] about the world [they] live in as they are of [their] sensory capacities” (ibid.). It also hints at Ferguson’s acceptance of determinism on the levels of both genetics and consciousness, although the mechanism becomes more nuanced, as the only way in which Sonja’s autobiography can be seen as the product of a will to survive is metaphorical – her decisions lean more towards fictionalised self-fashioning than towards self-preservation. While allowing for a certain amount of light to be shed on her predicament, it does not, however, provide her with a solution. In similar fashion, King’s understanding of the complexity of the system of forces at work in historical development does not grant him an escape route. He remains ineluctably caught in contingency and the play of possibilities, a condition that, despite

his privileged vantage point, the narrator acknowledges, in turn, with respect to both himself and his own act of writing, foregrounding chance as the driving force of reality and, consequently, history:

what we regard as reality is only a point in an infinite space of possibilities. And everything we see has come about by an accumulation of accidents; the random preference for one possibility over another. [...] There is no inevitability about any of it; we might as well argue about why the sun shines today when yesterday it was cloudy. (Crumey 2004: 39)

It is the same line of reasoning – including the meteorological allusion – that Ferguson’s argument in favour of counterfactuals relies on, as he draws on a range of theories in physics and mathematics – including quantum uncertainty, relativity, and chaos theory – to dismantle determinist visions of history. Noting that, as the world is bound to observe the second law of thermodynamics positing increasing entropy – disorder –, what counts as historical evidence is subject to chance and events are stochastic in nature, while “human consciousness [...] only adds to the impression of chaos” (Ferguson 1997a: 89), he evinces intrinsic failure in attempting to derive universal laws at work in history (*ibid.*). Instead, he proposes “‘chaostory’ – a chaotic approach to history” (*ibid.*) based on the theory by the same name, as a scientific method of reconciling the seemingly opposite notions of causation and chance.

While such issues find echoes in the historically-oriented debates between King and Waters, as well as in the narrator’s own reflections on the issue, the latter’s case opens onto a collateral dimension, as his writerly undertaking is explicitly fictional in nature – as is, to a certain extent, Sonja’s. Chaos theory provides the bridge between the (counter)factual and the fictional. Following a line of approach that is similar to Ferguson’s, Jo

Alyson Parker (2007) proposes what she refers to as “narrative chaotics” (2007: 21), based on a representation of narrative that draws on chaos theory. She argues that, to the extent that the process of reading is to be taken into account, the literary work is not a static structure rendering a fixed meaning (ibid.) – a conclusion that is further reinforced, although on different grounds, by phenomenology and Derridean deconstruction –, which prompts her to substitute Paul Ricœur’s notion of *structuration* for the more rigid, and less accurate, idea of “structure”, thus provisioning for the determinism related to the materiality of the text. This allows for describing narrative as a dynamical system, falling within the compass of chaos theory and consequently described by attractors – i.e. patterns that the evolution of the system evolves towards (ibid.: 12) –, testifying to deterministic behaviour. Within the variety of narrative forms, she identifies a series that she “characterize[s] as chaotic” (ibid.: 25) and should therefore be modelled as nonlinear dynamical systems – described by *strange* attractors, which do not exhibit a stable, identifiable pattern (ibid.: 13) –, “undermin[ing] classical notions of stability, repeatability, predictability, causality, absolute time, and observer objectivity” (ibid.: 25). In her framework, what distinguishes chaotic narratives among other forms is their inherent subversion of conventional order, repetition, temporality, and reading (ibid.: 25–26).

Constantly under revision and never achieving completion, the evolution of the two narratives in question subscribes to the chaotic, meeting all four criteria outlined above. Crumey’s narrator spends ten years playing out the story in his mind, considering appropriate beginnings and changing it every time until he is forced to concede, in retrospect, that the characters and events started to “take on a life of their own” (Crumey 2004: 11), amounting to “foreign lives springing up in [his] head” (ibid.). When he does decide to write it, he only does so on trains while

commuting, always with a fresh stack of paper lest he might lose the lot, and always subject to interruptions, distractions and influences from other books he reads at home, acknowledging to “a certain amount of repetition or self-contradiction” (ibid.: 109) in his work. The result is a story of multiple subtly different beginnings, and potential outcomes that never seem to settle. Sonja’s autobiography is an equally fleeting presence. While at several points alluding to having written some of it, no part is ever actually rendered. She is constantly engaged in planning and considering ways in which it *should* be written, but she admits to being “so vague that she had difficulty in remembering what she had actually written as opposed to merely thinking about writing” (Irwin 2019: 158). Consequently, she, too, ends up with potential versions of events instead of fixed representations. The trajectories that both stories delineate are at best likely to answer to the description of those lying on strange attractors, as they “never reach a fixed point; the system is always in the process of becoming” (Parker 2007: 26).

The identity of attractors is codified in initial conditions (cf. Ibid.: 12). Yet, given the chaotic nature of the narratives, as Parker herself warns, “we often have difficulty discerning the initial conditions that gave rise to the current situation” (ibid.: 25). Trying to work out the initial conditions in the cases at hand can prove exceptionally daunting. Going backwards in time in a nonlinear, branching and versioned temporal organisation is hardly likely to evince a convergent pattern – a higher probability would be that it should turn out as divergent as moving in the opposite direction, all the more so as both narrators are engaged in the task themselves – unsuccessfully so as they are faced with the hurdles set up by their own memories. While Sonja simply contents herself with – repeatedly – acknowledging her hopelessness with chronology, to such an extent that “[g]etting things in the right order was all but impossible” (Irwin 2019: 84–

85), the physicist takes a complementary route – granted the clarity and coherence of remembrance, it is impossible to safely assert its veracity as the very act of remembering potentially affects its result:

The image constantly amended with each successive act of recollection, until what is left bears little relation to what was originally seen. Whatever it really is (and I have often wondered), memory is not merely some kind of neurological video recorder. (Crumey 2004: 9)

Establishing the exact moment – empirically, the initial condition – when the idea of his future novel occurred to him proves to be an issue “it is impossible to conclude [...] with any degree of certainty” (ibid.), since, as vivid as the memory of the event seems to be, he finds himself forced to concede that it might be “a pure invention, or at least a confabulation; an accretion of successive imperfect rememberings” (ibid.). This mode of operation of the narrator’s memory – as well as Sonja’s, albeit inadvertently – amounts to the famous measurement problem in quantum mechanics. Besides lying at the root of interpretations such as the many-worlds theory, which informs the physicist-narrator’s writing strategy, it ushers in an underlying understanding of reality which is better suited to the ontologies of the two novels. The paradigm shift occasioned by quantum mechanics lies in disrupting the tradition of classical mechanics – according to which, even in Einstein’s relativistic framework, knowledge of a particular state of the universe allows for using the laws of physics “to predict everything about the universe arbitrarily far into the future or to figure out what it was like arbitrarily far into the past” (Greene 2005: 79) –, revealing probability “deeply woven into the fabric of quantum reality” (ibid.: 11) and uncertainty, “built into the wave structure of quantum mechanics” (ibid.: 98), supplanting complete determination. While relying on different

epistemological assumptions, both quantum mechanics and chaos theory produce representations of reality that emphasise chance over determinism. And this holds not only with respect to the future, but also with respect to the past, as shown by Richard Feynman's theory of *sum over histories*, according to which "a probability wave embodies all possible pasts that could have preceded a given observation" (ibid.: 180), even though the act of observation itself evinces one single strand over all possible others. As Brian Greene concludes, "although the quantum evolution from the past until now is unaffected by anything we do now, the story we tell of the past can bear the imprint of today's actions" (ibid.: 191). What such an understanding foregrounds is the quantum measurement problem itself – the apparent collapse of the wave function upon observation – and the many-world interpretation mentioned above – according to which, measurement results in multiple universes, each with its own strand of history, while the totality is globally maintained in the non-collapsing wave function.

While the role of consciousness in the quantum framework has not been successfully rejected, it remains central to the two chaotic narratives under consideration and any attempt at disentangling the quagmire of histories it is embedded in will have to take it into account. It is, after all what both figures are intent on accomplishing. Solving the problem in a purely deterministic, Newtonian manner is relatively simple. In *Music, in a Foreign Language*, it can all be traced down to that moment in the bathroom when the narrator got the idea of the novel. In *My Life is like a Fairy Tale*, Sonja states that "[i]t was because of her impatience, sitting around during shoots in the studios, waiting for the leading man to turn up, then for the lighting to be adjusted, and then for the actual shooting to begin" (Irwin 2019: 46), that is, precisely on account of one of the factors that hinder her ability to master her writing. There is an obvious amount of residual

indeterminacy in both cases, woven into the very nature of their individual consciousness and thus reflecting Heisenberg's uncertainty principle, formulated with regard to quantum reality and circling back to the mind-body problem, which is the philosophical response to the measurement problem, addressing "the relation between mind and body, or more specifically, between consciousness and physical processes" (Chalmers & McQueen 2022: 12). Whereas both characters seem to abide by a classically-informed vision of their physical histories, whereby increasing entropy governs their temporal dimension – to the physicist, life is represented as "a gradual pruning of that great tree of possibilities, until one is left with a single trunk, leading to a single branch, and a single twig on the end of which one's life reaches its ultimate conclusion" (Crumey 2004: 13), an idea that permeates Sonja's own understanding of it as a matter of "diminishing options" (Irwin 2019: 134) – and plunges the very idea of time into the field of probabilities, their consciousness, especially as engaged in self-representation, testifies to more intriguing behaviour, which answers the symmetry embedded in the theoretical, *statistical* notion of entropy, rather than its operation in macroscopic reality.

Trying to pinpoint the mechanism that initiated his idea of a novel, the physicist is bound to evince chance instead of determinism, or closure, lying at the root of it, as it is only made possible by the accidental prevention of a different memory habitually springing into his mind under similar circumstances:

Often, while urinating, I am reminded of an unfortunate incident which took place when I was very young. In my haste to zip up my trousers after using the toilet, I managed to catch a very sensitive piece of skin between the two rows of teeth. Trying to pull the fastener back down so as to release myself only made the pain worse, and I cried out for help. My father came, and struggled with the zipper – making me yelp like a dog – but still

to no avail. With his usual Biblical authority he said that this was the reason why button flies (such as he always wore) were far superior. None of which was of any help to me. Eventually, however, through the judicious use of some margarine, I was saved. Afterwards, my father laughed and said that if the operation had gone wrong I would have come out Jewish. (Crumey 2004: 9–10)

Not only does the accident in question – as well as his father’s waxing philosophical about it – *almost* make him “come out Jewish” thus outlining an idea of identity that is rooted in narrative, but it also *almost* intertextually inscribes this identity in narrative, as it *almost* replicates a similar accident in Tristram Shandy’s own history, leading to a less fortunate outcome, yet triggering a similar paternal reaction. While this is precisely the memory that does *not* occur to him, the task that he sets for himself in writing his novel parallels Tristram’s in more ways than one. Not only is he engaged in an endeavour that is doomed to failure, but it is equally circumscribed in a sense of temporality that favours chance over determinism. Moreover, it reveals the same realisation of the same amount of chance and branching at work in any historical undertaking as in the progression of events themselves – as Tristram himself complains, “when a man sits down to write a history [...] he knows no more than his heels what lets and confounded hindrances he is to meet with in his way” (Sterne 1983: 32). Upon representation, time, it follows, is as much a matter of branching and entropy increase in one direction as it is in the other – a conclusion that the physicist himself reaches first with respect to his writing – “[t]he tree of possibilities branches so quickly, that it soon becomes impossible to follow with any degree of completeness, all the many middles and ends which can spring from a single beginning” (Crumey 2004: 213) –, then in his own life, as the rehearsal of the act of beginning reconciles him with the same possibility in his future.

The “pruning of the great tree of possibilities”, then, translates as further branching. Yet the whole intertextual reference is relegated to the domain of alternatives. The accident has not turned him into a replica of Tristram and the memory of it has not been produced at the crucial moment. Nevertheless, it does not grant his identity an escape from textuality as the language in which he describes the process – “no such urinary *madeleine* appeared to disrupt the flow of thoughts” (ibid.: 10) – anchors his representation of the underlying mechanisms of his mind in Proust’s notion of involuntary memory – and further afield in the compass of chance. For all her systematic avoidance of novels, Sonja is no more impervious to intertextuality in her self-representation. Her recollection of her first encounter with Wieland on a tram in Amsterdam and of her impulse to follow this intriguing apparition, which, it is implied, she *did* write, is rendered through the lens of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*: “the world was not as [she] had supposed. There were holes in it through which one could tumble and find oneself in another reality” (Irwin 2019: 21). Elsewhere, she repeatedly voices her wish to strike a Faustian deal with the Devil, whereby she would trade her unwanted memory, which she calls her shadow, for a major part in a successful film. Finally, her perception of her aged reflection in the mirror is expressed in a manner that is reminiscent of Dorian Gray: “The mirror, which used to be her friend, had turned against her and these days it gloated at her future [...] If only she could have left her ugly reflection trapped in the mirror and returned to her younger self.” (ibid.: 238–239).

As with Crumey’s physicist, the reality of who Sonja is is thus not simply a product of a series of events to be considered in purely deterministic evolution as a causal chain the reader – observer – could follow in reverse. The gaps the two narrators’ stories rush to fill in constitute as many points of discontinuity – quantum jumps that reflect forking histories, the only driving

force accounting for them being chance – as illustrated by figures like Mays, whom the physicist constructs into his novel in order to embody the “labyrinthine nature of Possibility” (Crumey 2004: 240), and Reinhardt, who styles himself as “a professional plotter” (Irwin 2019: 322) and precipitates Sonja to her death in the Suicide Club – another intertextual act of deferral of meaning towards Robert Louis Stevenson’s “Story of The Young Man with The Cream Tarts” – where the only certainty she can afford is that of her own death dealt by the shuffling of a deck of cards. Death – the ultimate point of absolute discontinuity – emerges, at the same time, as the ultimate trigger of narrative. It is, after all, only after his wife’s death that the physicist can actually bring himself to start putting down his novel, which constantly begins with replaying the accident that brought about Robert’s suicide that is supposed to be the driving force behind the whole plot as Duncan strives – and fails – to shed light on his father’s demise, echoing similar uncertainties in the narrator’s own experience resurfacing upon his father’s passing. Death is found to be one of the strange attractors at work in *The Life and Opinions of Tristram Shandy*, the first novel Jo Alyson Parker employs to illustrate her theory of chaotic narrative. And, while Tristram’s autobiographical project is prevented from reaching its conclusion by its very design, the narratives of both Sonja and Robert are not, as the former dies in mid-sentence and the latter does so in order to make it possible for the story to begin – and keep beginning towards no resolution. Robert’s suicide letter, which the writer-narrator cannot bring his own character to find, except in the field of the hypothetical, finds its mirroring in Sonja’s autobiography. Both missing from their respective plots, they reveal a subjectivity that writes from beyond death as absolute absence. While Robert starts his confession with the statement of his being already dead, Sonja rejects the idea of resorting to a ghostwriter despite not really knowing what a ghostwriter is on account of the fact that “employing such a

literary wraith would make her feel that she was already dead, or soon would be. The ghostwriter would be like her double helping to usher her into the Other Realm” (Irwin 2019: 273–274). Both functions will be fulfilled by Reinhardt, who convinces her that the Suicide Club would be “the only chance that [her] life will have any meaning” (ibid.: 322) by providing an ending to her story, assists her in the process, and, eighteen months later, starts to write *Her Life was like a Fairy Tale* after having secured access to her diaries, the reading of which “will be as if, from the grave, [she] had written [him] a long, sad letter” (ibid.: 349).

As a strange attractor, death is responsible not only for the structuration of narrative, but also for the multiplication of versions under the pressure of chance and entropy, enacting temporal symmetry not in terms of flow, but in terms of branching. “The tales I have written are no more than shadows” (Crume 2004: 226), writes the narrator in *Music, in a Foreign Language*, before going on to elicit failure as implicit in the nature of the shadows as “attempts to understand the vocabulary of events which my observations have revealed; events which I cannot understand, and which may perhaps have no meaning, and yet which seem to come together into some kind of pattern, or hierarchy of patterns” (ibid.). The same insufficiency is alluded to in the lack of capitalisation in the spelling of the verb “to be” in Sonja’s title, which carries on – or is a reflection of – Reinhardt’s. The only reality – either within or without the characters’ consciousness – thus made potentially available would best be described by Arkady Plotnitsky’s concept of “reality without realism” (Plotnitsky 2019: 250), which he defines in his examination of the inextricable relationship between consciousness and quantum theory:

By *reality* I refer to that which is assumed to exist, without making any claim concerning the *nature* of this existence, which thus may be placed beyond representation or even conception. I

understand existence as a capacity to have effects on the world with which we interact and that, because it exists, has such effects upon itself. (Ibid.: 252)

In this light, all narratives constructed in the terms of the novels under scrutiny emerge as shadows of an object that can be neither represented nor conceived – yet that does not invalidate them as narratives. One of the central themes in *Music, in a Foreign Language* is – musical – variation. What the narrator shares with both King and Waters, apart from variations on totalitarian ideologies – fascist and communist alike – in the background, as well as in the discourses that inform their worldviews and their decisions, just as Sonja's are based on Nazism and celebrity culture, is their passion for music. To be more precise, it is precisely his own musical inclination that mediates his characters and their interactions, while variations radiate from music to his writerly attempts on every level. Even the phrase that gives the book its title and empowers Mays to play out the labyrinthine variations of possibilities is a line on a scrap of paper torn randomly from a sheet containing Robert's variation on a poem by C.P. Cavafy. Fashioned after the paradigm of the many-worlds interpretation, the narrator puts forth the model of a gigantic universal Library hosting any possible book created by every possible combination of symbols, allegedly borrowed from imaginary writer Alfredo Galli, in order to conceive of the universe of the mind – or of the representations it could possibly produce. Like Schrödinger's wave function, it encompasses all possible narrative variations, factual and counterfactual alike. Sonja's own predicament of considering, contemplating both the events in her life (along with the wider historical context) and the possibilities of rendering them in her autobiography also amounts to a series of variations. Her own ontology can thus be described as a superposition of variations that never collapses – the universal wave function that fuels the multiverse with each of her

‘observations’ –; then, one ontological level up, the whole narrative of her doing so is infinitely multiplied in the image of Reinhardt *beginning* to write her story, displaced into the third person (just like the narrative that contains it) – another superposition of variations that cannot be brought about to collapse – in a reverse image of the measurement problem. While Galli’s library is, by virtue of its construction, finite, when pitched against the reality without realism of death, it cannot find closure, since, as Michel Foucault observes in “Language to Infinity” (1998), “[h]eaded toward death, language turns back upon itself; it encounters something like a mirror; and to stop this death which would stop it, it possesses but a single power – that of giving birth to its own image in a play of mirrors that has no limits” (1998: 90). When the symbols on paper turn to language, like the original Greek version of Cavafy’s poem, in which King struggles to see an actual language instead of mathematical notation, the variations are pushed to replicate themselves infinitely under the strange attractor of meaning – or of its shadows.

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***Orlanda via Orlando* : de la métamorphose à la transidentification projective**

(*Orlanda via Orlando*: from Metamorphosis to Projective Transidentification)

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Abstract: This article proposes a series of reflections on the novel *Orlanda*, published in 1996 by writer and psychoanalyst Jacqueline Harpman. Drawing on Virginia Woolf’s *Orlando* (1929), the author constructs a remarkable female character: a teacher of literature specialised in Proust immersed in the search for the most plausible possible answer to the sudden and unaccounted-for transformation of a young man into a woman upon an interrupted seven-night sleep. The revelation of the metamorphosis is occasioned by a process of shattering of the self, of identification and, above all, of projective transidentification, according to the theories of Klein and Grotstein. Along with a narratological reading of *Orlanda*, the study proposes multifaceted, mainly psychoanalytic, approaches.

Keywords: androgynie, double, intertextuality, psychoanalysis, projective (trans)identification.

En raccourci

Androgynie (psychologique), dédoublement et double littéraire, (in)complétude de l’être, identité insatisfaisante, fracturée, identité fabriquée d’une manière *trans*- (générationnelle, sexuelle), identification projective, inter- et métatextualité, intermédialité, éclatement du narrateur-personnage-auteur-lecteur dans un *je* pluriel, règne de l’introspection, 1519 occurrences de « je », 362 de « j’ » et 276 de « moi », « *je* est un autre », « je suis moi ». Besoin quasi impératif

de trouver des réponses plausibles et par-dessus-tout non superficielles, formes diverses d'addiction, présence souvent mal dissimulée de l'œil du psychanalyste qui se permet de laisser le contrôle des actions et des réactions aux acteurs de la fiction. Dénouement poignant genre crime passionnel un peu dans le sens tchékhovien de l'emploi des accessoires, solution quantique, structure textuelle littérairement postmoderne et psychologiquement kleinienne, suggestion de lecture « à la manière de » Rorschach. Style élégant, bienséant, décourageant les barbarismes et la gaillardise, exigence de la relecture de Virginia Woolf en premier, de Marcel Proust, Julien Green, Balzac et d'autres écrivains pris pour référentiels et ce n'est pas tout. Dire seulement que le roman *Orlanda* de Jacqueline Harpman, publié en 1996 chez Grasset, répond à un haut niveau aux exigences d'une perspective postmoderne appauvrirait une œuvre bien plus riche de sens multiples à déchiffrer.

Intermède

Affirmant l'idée de perfection ontologique, symbole de l'harmonie, de la complétude et de beauté cosmogonique, l'androgynie est « une métaphore : celle de l'expression achevée du génie. » (Ladjali, 2004 : 99) ; Barthelme nuance davantage cette notion en la particularisant comme une métaphore identitaire (2011). Être mythique, issu de la genèse du monde, l'androgynie est aussi sujet à controverse, considéré comme une anomalie (Ladjali, 2004 : 95), sous sa forme hermaphrodite d'« être dissemblable » (Guillois, 1986 : 76).

Voici quelques exemples de textes qui mettent en œuvre des représentations diversifiées de l'androgynie. En tant qu'image d'un être absolument accompli, l'Adam-Ève primordial inégalable et suprême, car exempt de tout antagonisme, peuple des œuvres telles qu'*Adam et Ève* de Ramuz (1932), *Adam și Eva* de

Rebreanu (1974), *La véritable Histoire d'Adam & Ève enfin dévoilée* de Le Moal (2005), *Pommes* de Milward (2007).

Le désir de parfaite unité ou le désir d'être autre, souvent né de l'existence hermaphrodite, hybride ou transfigurée, a inspiré de nombreux écrivains, parmi lesquels Antoine Héroët (*L'Androgyne*, 1536), Balzac (*Séraphita*, 1834), Gautier (*Mademoiselle de Maupin*, 1835), Sand (*Gabriel*, 1856), Mendès (*La fille-garçon*, 1883), Rachilde (*Monsieur Vénus*, 1889), Şuluţiu (*Ambigen*, 1934), Gassel (*Éros androgyne. Journal d'une femme athlétique*, 2000), etc.

Les variations littéraires de l'androgyne vont dès l'Antiquité de Platon (*Le Banquet*) et d'Ovide (*Métamorphoses. Livre IV. Récit d'Alcithoe : Salmacis et Hermaphrodite*) jusqu'aux années 2000, selon l'étude élaborée par Gonneau (2013), appuyée sur quelques écrivains britanniques : Brigird Brophy (*In Transit : a Heroi-cyclic Novel*, 1971), Angela Carter (*The Passion of New Eve*, 1977), Jeanette Winterson (*Written on the Body*, 1992), Will Self (*Cock and Bull*, 1992), Peter Ackroyd (*Dan Leno and the Linehouse Golem*, 1994).

Sujet impliquant des perspectives diverses (christianisme, gnose, kabbale, mysticisme, etc.), ainsi qu'une variété de termes connexes à définir (hiérogamie, hiérophanie, *coincidentia oppositorum*, bi-unité, totalité, plénitude, ambivalence, double, etc.), l'androgyne, « en tant que perfection à atteindre ou en termes de conjonction des opposés » (Guillois, 1986 : 76) a suscité de nombreuses études. Notre intention n'est pas de survoler l'histoire de la littérature universelle ni d'offrir une synthèse ou une méta-analyse des textes théoriques et critiques traitant du fameux mythe. Mircea Eliade (1962), Jean Libis (1980), Frédéric Monneyron (1994) sont quelques exemples d'auteurs offrant des travaux de référence dans ce domaine. Nous souhaitons plutôt mettre à en avant une possible expérience androgyne, telle qu'illustrée dans le roman *Orlando* de Virginia

Woolf, et complexifiée par un embarras introspectif, rétrospectif et projectif, du clivage de l'*ego* émergeant en des *moi* séparés dans le roman *Orlanda* de Jacqueline Harpman.

Orlanda via Orlando

Orlando de Virginia Woolf est présent par des citations, des allusions, des pastiches, ainsi que par une herméneutique plus ou moins conforme mais généralement plausible, à l'intérieur du roman *Orlanda* de Jacqueline Harpman. À commencer par l'instance qui parle, celle-ci est représentée par le métissage entre narrateur, personnage(s), auteure (Jacqueline, la psy), voire lecteur, si l'on considère d'abord le jeu embrouillé des pronoms : *je / moi* ; *Orlanda / il* ; *je* du narrateur (« Etc., je saute dix minutes de dialogue répétitif. », Harpman, 1996 : 139) ; *je* des personnages tour à tour ; *nous* du narrateur, parfois aussi du lecteur rendu complice (« nous savons ce qui les unit », p. 117 ; « nous qui connaissons la légende, nous savons que les deux moitiés brûlent de se retrouver et de reconstituer l'unité perdue », p. 138).

À l'imbrication de focalisations, il convient d'ajouter également l'ambivalence évidente de la voix du récit : un narrateur manifeste à l'opposé du narrateur du dehors, tantôt discret, tantôt intrusif, parfois injonctif (« Écoutons quelques instants. », p. 93) sentencieux et/ou didactique (« Il est périlleux d'être bon », p. 217 ; « Les passions rendent stoïques », p. 237 ; « Il est conseillé de respirer profondément quand on veut se détendre. », p. 221). Il peut également être omniscient, se déclarant parfois « stupéfait » (p. 201) face aux mots et aux réactions de ses personnages (« Aline ne cesse pas de me surprendre », pp. 159-160). En se comportant comme un « rapporteur impavide » (p. 211), soucieux de ne pas négliger ses « devoirs du conteur » (p. 113) et certains aspects essentiels pour son histoire et ses interprétations possibles, ce narrateur dialogue à maintes reprises avec Virginia Woolf et démontre une culture et

une documentation considérables dans plusieurs domaines (littérature, architecture, musique, psychologie, physique, etc.), et arrive, dans sa construction narrative sophistiquée et dense, à dire « Je m’y perds. » (p. 204). Et pourtant, ce ne doit être là que le reflet de l’identification projective du lecteur. Quant au narrateur d’*Orlanda*, il ne faut pas tomber dans le piège de croire en une confusion avouée : il maîtrise minutieusement l’art du meneur du jeu, portant une profonde introspection envers ses personnages, ceux d’autres écrivains, les écrivains eux-mêmes, lui-même et le lecteur.

Aline, trente-cinq ans, est une belle femme mais elle n’y réfléchit pas particulièrement, car elle ne prend pas son corps pour une priorité. Elle est entièrement absorbée par sa profession. En tant qu’enseignante universitaire de littérature, elle a commencé avec une thèse remarquable sur Marcel Proust et elle s’efforce maintenant de trouver une justification à la métamorphose d’Orlando de Virginia Woolf en femme pour le cours qu’elle prépare. Aline est une réplique donnée à Orlando, mais dédoublée, ou plutôt dissociée. Avec Jacqueline Harpman, on est dans le domaine du *trans* : il ne s’agit pas seulement du passage du masculin au féminin, mais d’une métamorphose vers un dédoublement, comme le souligne Hélène Barthelmebs (2011), qui ajoute que « d’unique, ce personnage deviendra donc triple. » On lit dans le roman de Jacqueline Harpman qu’Aline et Orlanda sont « dédoublées, mais pas identiques » (Harpman, 1996 : 206). De plus, l’on se retrouve dans une situation où la jurisprudence fait défaut : « Le Code civil ne prévoit pas son crime, qui est double puisqu’il a dérobé la moitié de son âme à une femme et tout son corps à un garçon. » (*Ibid.*, p. 85).

Atteint du « mal de la lecture » en solitaire (Woolf, 2018 : 89) – attribut qui particularise Aline en égale mesure –, Orlando est le protagoniste d’un événement bizarre : il « ne prit aucune nourriture ni ne montra le moindre signe de vie durant sept jours

pleins » (p. 81) ; il dort d'une façon ininterrompue jusqu'au septième matin lorsqu'il « s'éveilla à son heure habituelle » (*Ibid.*) et « s'adonna à une existence solitaire à l'extrême » (p. 83). L'expérience de ce sommeil inhabituel d'une semaine ne reste pas singulière et, quelque temps après, un autre sommeil profond, cataleptique, de sept jours d'affilée mènera Orlando à une révélation exceptionnellement inouïe : « Il se leva (...) – c'était une femme. » (p. 149) *Il* avait trente ans.

Si le devin mythologique Tirésias fut transformé en femme « aussitôt » et redevint homme après sept ans, toujours en un instant, Orlando ne connaît pas cet aller-retour entre les deux sexes / identités consécutives. Cependant, on peut retenir le chiffre sept avec sa symbolique polyvalente et la vie longue qui s'étend sur plusieurs générations et, donc, plusieurs siècles, tant pour Tirésias que pour Orlando.

Ainsi, un homme se couche le soir, dort plusieurs nuits sans interruption aucune et se réveille femme. Il n'y a pas de désir ou de besoin identifiables qu'il/elle voudrait revenir à sa version d'origine. Virginia Woolf n'éclaircit pas l'imbroglio d'une telle conversion, mais en rajoute : « Bien des gens, (...) tenant qu'un tel changement de sexe est contre nature, n'ont eu de cesse de prouver : 1° qu'Orlando avait toujours été une femme, 2° qu'Orlando est à cet instant un homme. » (p. 150)

Pour sa part, Aline de Jacqueline Harpman ne se métamorphose pas, mais perd une partie de soi, qui choisit le corps d'un jeune homme pour s'y installer. Il s'agit de Lucien Lefèvre, un blond d'une vingtaine d'années, journaliste pour « un magazine (...) immensément *chébran* car il s'était choisi pour titre un terme ésotérique en diable : *Les Paincos* » (Harpman, 1996 : 58) contrastant avec les goûts de l'universitaire penchée sur les écrits qui privilégient le flux (intermittent) de la conscience. Il a une très belle allure et « n'avait commis dans sa vie qu'une erreur, il s'était trouvé sur le chemin d'Aline au mauvais moment » (p.

249), sur la terrasse de la Brasserie de l'Europe, en face de la Gare du Nord à Paris. Préoccupée par le sens sous-jacent qu'elle devra donner pour ses étudiants à la transformation d'Orlando, s'acharnant à en trouver une interprétation différente par rapport aux autres nombreuses lectures critiques livrées depuis la parution en 1928 de la biographie imaginaire que Virginia Woolf dédie à son amie Vita Sackville-West (qui s'identifia avec le personnage éponyme), Aline lança tout simplement : « Et si on changeait de sexe ? » (p. 10). Et la partie quittant Aline pour s'incruster dans le corps de Lucien fut baptisée, cela va de soi, Orlanda.

Voici des équivoques pronominaux qui vont engendrer toutes sortes de calembours pronominaux. Orlando était *elle*, Orlanda dénomme un *il*, mais « *il* ou *elle*, ce n'est que par convention » (Ladjali, 2004 : 97). Une hétérogénéité s'insinue néanmoins et elle est résolument non-délétère, bien au contraire : si Orlando homme se réveille femme, sans que sa métamorphose soit délibérée ou préméditée, eh bien, Orlanda s'avère être le fruit d'un choix assumé, au moins partiellement. Si on revient au cas de Tirésias, Orlanda lui ressemble avant tout par l'expérience des deux sexes / identités à la fois simultanées et consécutives. Pourtant, à une époque liée indéniablement à la vitesse – puisque Orlanda est un produit 100% fin XX^e siècle –, le transfert Aline-Lucien-Orlanda n'a plus la durée de sept ans, mais de sept nuits (plus un matin, plus une heure). Aline et Orlanda sont deux fragments vivant ce temps-là comme des parts entières dans deux corps différents qui agissent en *addicts*, avec la nécessité impérieuse de se retrouver deux fois par jour, par toute ruse des toxicomanes sans scrupules (p. 220), afin de prendre leur « dose » qui les rassure : « Aline tendit le front, Orlanda baissa la tête. Sitôt, qu'ils se touchèrent, le calme se fut en eux (...) » (p. 215). Sinon, le sevrage devient cruel : « Nous ne pouvons pas rester séparés. Nous serons éternellement comme deux infirmes,

condamnés à ne pas se quitter, accrochés l'un à l'autre, boitillant au long des jours, et peu à peu nous nous haïrons. » (p. 239).

Orlando est un texte factuel, historique, descriptif dans une large mesure ; dans certains autres sens, c'est un parcours parodique de l'intertextualité, une exploration de la référentialité, du pouvoir de représenter le sensible. Il représente également une révolution du genre biographique, une mise-en-abyme iconotextuelle (voir, par exemple, les cinq photos de Vita Sackville-West insérées dans le livre), appuyée sur « une forme de portrait total, où peinture, photographie et signes linguistiques sont mis au service d'une réforme générique » (Reviron-Pégay, 2019 : 36). Dans la même direction d'approches multiformes, *Orlanda* est un récit fantastique (Arráez Llobregat, 2006 : 9), une fantaisie littéraire et mythique (Romeral Rosel, 2011 : 100, 106), une recreation de la complexité extraordinaire du texte-prétexte de Virginia Woolf, proposant un parfait mélange de fiction et réalité, à travers la présence à la fois de l'auteur(e) et d'un(e) narrateur-narratrice, peu importe le genre car l'être en train d'écrire l'androgyné est neutre et « *asexué* » (Ladjali, 2004 : 95, 97). *Orlanda* est une mise-en-abyme appuyée sur une relecture et une réécriture de Woolf et sur Woolf, bien que délocalisée : elle commence à Paris et se passe majoritairement à Bruxelles, ainsi qu'intérieurement dans le flux des pensées, réflexions, hypothèses et *insights* des personnages.

L'*Orlanda* et ses expériences sont indépendants par rapport à cette voix narrative, de même que la fiction gigogne qui se développe (par exemple, *Orlanda* réécrit Balzac ; Aline invente une histoire alternative à l'existence d'*Orlanda*, la vérité étant « impossible », p. 156) ; le grand nombre de traces intertextuelles et interdisciplinaires peut engendrer des lectures à différentes lentilles de ce texte fondé sur une multiplication des références intertextuelles et la polyphonie en tant que technique narrative (Barthelmebs, 2011).

Approches multiformes, la psychanalyse en premier

Outre une étude sur le mythe de l'androgynisme dans le roman *Orlanda* (Domsová, 2008), plusieurs chercheurs ont tenté des lectures plurielles de celui-ci. Par exemple, Susan Bainbrigge étudie la problématique de l'identité de ce « *multilayered text* » (Bainbrigge, 2004 : 100), Hélène Barthelmebs (2011) propose une analyse basée sur les théories des *gender studies* et évoque également une possible application des *feminines studies*, tandis que Francisca Romeral Rosel (2011) offre aux lecteurs une analyse détaillée sur le thème du double, un mythe associé à celui de l'androgynisme, réactualisé par Jacqueline Harpman dans son texte qui est à la fois une histoire fictionnelle et son interprétation (Romeral Rosel, 2011 : 101). Cette dernière relie *Orlanda* au mythe de Narcisse aussi, la partie masculine conservant plusieurs aspects « féminins ou féminisants » (*Ibid.*, 104), une sorte de coquetterie représentant une réminiscence féminine d'Aline chez Lucien, un « comportement résiduel » (*Ibid.*) : soins d'hygiène, réaménagement de l'appartement, repas savoureux, expression libérée de toute contrainte de la libido, etc.

José Luis Arráez Llobregat (2006) établit un lien entre *Orlanda* et le mythe faustien et mène une application de l'Analyse Transactionnelle (AT) comme méthode d'investigation psychologique. Effectivement, la perspective psychologique, notamment psychanalytique, s'avère être très fertile pour enrichir la compréhension globale du texte et elle a déjà été utilisée par plusieurs chercheurs, malgré l'opinion de Jacqueline Harpman qui ne croit « pas du tout à la psychanalyse comme instrument de critique. » (Andrianne, 1992).

Considéré comme « point de rencontre de la psychanalyse et de la littérature » et comme un « récit d'une transmutation étonnante » (Vanbauelen, 2008 : 81), *Orlanda* vaut aussi une lecture à la clé de Jung, faite par Sylvie Vanbauelen, qui explore

plusieurs concepts jungiens, notamment le binôme *animus / anima*, intimement lié au thème de l'androgynéité. Bien que le terme « androgyne » ne soit employé qu'une seule fois dans *Orlanda*, il valide toute la richesse sémantique du mythe symbolisant l'unité ou la complétude :

Androgynes brisés par la colère des dieux jaloux, nous galopons derrière notre moitié perdue, nous tentons de reconstituer l'unité des origines : où est mon autre moi ? qu'est devenue la complétude exquise dont je me souviens et dans quelle vie l'ai-je connue ? Aline et Orlanda séparés languissent et veulent se retrouver : ensemble ils se haïssaient car, soumis à la volonté envieuse de l'Olympe, ils ne se reconnaissaient pas et se combattaient (...) La vérité est que chacun veut l'autre et qu'une bataille commence. » (Harpman, 1996 : 120-121)

L'androgynie représente traditionnellement l'union harmonieuse des aspects masculins et féminins de la psyché individuelle, ainsi que leur intégration. Basé sur la *psychologie analytique* de Carl Gustav Jung (1943), on peut parler d'une fusion de l'*anima* (l'aspect féminin de l'homme) et de l'*animus* (l'aspect masculin de la femme), un processus permettant à une personne d'embrasser pleinement sa propre diversité et sa richesse intérieure. Cette intégration est vue comme essentielle pour atteindre ce que Jung (2003) appelle l'*individuation*, un processus de développement personnel et de croissance psychologique qui fait partie de l'instinct, mais sa réalisation n'est pas accessible à tous. En fait, il s'agit d'une « réconciliation » entre les polarités de l'être humain (Gagné, 2001 : 37). Orlanda représente une fusion de ces polarités : « – Qui êtes-vous ? – Vous (...) Ou plutôt, une partie de vous. » (Harpman, 1996 : 121). Selon Hélène Barthelmebs (2011), il s'agit plutôt d'une « transindividuation » dans le cas d'Orlanda, un miroir inversé d'Orlando et révélateur de l'altérité. Séparée d'Aline, changeant de sexe chaque nuit,

Orlanda incarne littéralement une union des opposés, non sans confrontation d'abord :

– (...) je suis toi. (...)

– Vous êtes fou. (...)

[Aline] se força à détendre les épaules, laissa ses poumons se vider et essaya de récupérer la capacité de réfléchir. (...) Soyons précise : ce qu'il me dit n'a rien de surprenant, ce qui est surprenant, c'est qu'il me le dise, c'est-à-dire qu'il le sache. Voilà la difficulté décrite en ses parties, il ne reste qu'à la résoudre. (Harpman, 1996 : 123-124)

La quête d'harmonie intérieure d'Orlanda, située entre ses différentes identités, reflète en effet cette recherche d'unité et d'acceptation de toutes les parties de soi, qui sont en équilibre et en accord, plutôt qu'en conflit :

– Qui suis-je ?

(...) Quand on dit *je*, de qui parle-t-on ? si un autre peut dire qu'il est moi, où est *moi*, là ou ici ? (...) Aline (...) recula, s'appuya contre le chambranle et prononça, à haute voix, la syllabe menacée. Il ne se passa rien. Elle répéta JE pour les murs, qui ne renvoyèrent pas d'écho. Devait-elle, disant ainsi *je*, considérer qu'une partie de ce *je* logeait dans un autre corps ? Pourtant on ne peut dire *je* que de là où on est ? Lucien Lefrène prétendait qu'il était *je* comme elle. Mais il prononçait le mot avec une autre bouche que celle d'Aline. Elle respirât à fond et déclara :

– Je suis moi. (Harpman, 1996 : 128)

L'*animus* d'Aline, cherchant à se libérer de la prison étouffante où elle le retenait (« Aline a été une prison », p. 85), arrive dans le corps de Lucien. Sylvie Vanbauelen considère que cet *animus* d'Aline a « tout à voir avec l'énergie et le désir physique » (Vanbauelen : 82), ce qui en fait un *animus* atypique

par rapport aux associations jungiennes : homme – intellect, pouvoir, jugement ; femme – sensibilité, amour, relationnel. *Orlanda* représente, en effet, l'*animus* inconscient d'Aline, inconnu car refoulé par son *moi* conscient. Pour pouvoir percevoir et (ré)découvrir cette partie masculine, Aline la projette sur Lucien. La *projection*, un autre concept important de la psychologie analytique de Jung, tout comme pour d'autres psychanalystes, a lieu justement au moment où Aline essaie de comprendre la métamorphose d'Orlando. Inconscient, l'*animus* (« esprit » en latin) est le masculin resté immature et archaïque. Pour devenir un être « entier », Aline doit apprendre à développer cette partie qui l'ouvre à la connaissance de soi et du monde, processus qui la rend capable de réflexions, de délibérations et lui permet l'accès à ses arrière-plans obscurs, tout en s'inscrivant dans le social. En tant que médiateur entre l'inconscient et le conscient, l'*animus* est un élément unificateur entre *soi* et *l'autre*. Chez Aline, une « intégration » de sa partie masculine inconsciente par sa conscience féminine se produit.

Lors d'un entretien, Jacqueline Harpman a été interrogée si elle fait « un usage conscient de la psychanalyse dans [ses] romans » et que « la pratique quotidienne de la psychanalyse ne fausse-t-elle pas la création littéraire ». Voici sa réponse :

Pour autant que je sache, non. J'ai l'impression que la psychanalyse me permet d'aller plus loin dans ce que j'écris, plus profondément dans la psychologie et le comportement. (...) Lorsque j'écris, je ne « sens » nullement la présence de ma pratique professionnelle. Mais je suppose qu'elle y est bien évidemment, je suis suffisamment informée pour le savoir mais ce n'est pas conscient. (Andrienne, 1992)

Orlanda reflète une volonté de créer une identité plus libre, perçue comme authentique : « [D]epuis quelques jours, j'ai renoncé à l'hypocrisie. » avoue *Orlanda* (Harpman, 1996 : 130).

Le personnage est indéniablement allé au cœur de son soi caché, atteignant, sur un certain plan, une possible déconstruction des stéréotypes à travers la figure de l'androgyne transcendant qui met en lumière la nature arbitraire et socialement construite de ces catégories, tout en reconnaissant que « ce qu'Orlando a fait ne peut pas avoir lieu (...) On peut prouver qu'une chose existe : c'est une grande question à débattre que de savoir si l'on peut démontrer son inexistence. » (p. 85)

Adaptative, à travers une expérience qui reste pourtant en dehors de la société, Orlanda explore une identité qui transcende les attentes sociales et les normes qui lui sont imposées. Les parents, surtout la mère rigoriste d'Aline, peuvent être considérés comme les gardiens des traditions et des conventions : « – Ma mère me tuera à force de bons conseils. » affirme Aline (p. 135), aussitôt étonnée par ses propos. La voix narrative se laisse contaminée en égale mesure par la stupeur de son personnage :

Ma foi, moi aussi. Il me semble qu'une telle réflexion appartiendrait plutôt à l'Orlanda. Il est certain que la relation entre ces deux-là n'est pas facile à comprendre et je me demande ce qu'il a emporté en la quittant. J'ai déjà pu constater qu'il possédait son savoir, mais qu'elle ne l'a pas perdu pour autant : en somme, ce n'est pas un partage, mais une réduplication. Orlanda a la mémoire d'Aline et les émotions dont elle n'a pas voulu, il n'a pas consenti à la soumission qui divisait sans cesse la petite fille, il est devenu le lieu où cacher la colère. Mais alors *Ma mère me tuera* dans la bouche d'Aline ? C'est l'Orlanda qui s'est senti lentement assassiné, d'où vient qu'Aline le sache ? Quand on attaque le garçon, touche-t-on aussi la fille ? (pp. 135-136)

Des moments d'*insight* comme celui-ci sont révélateurs et essentiels pour Aline qui se rend compte que « l'autre partie d'elle » n'est pas une entité indépendante, mais forcément

refoulée à la suite de plusieurs *patterns* et clichés : « – Tu ne sais donc rien de toi-même ? (...) Je suis tout ce que maman n’a pas voulu que tu sois. » (p. 140) Orlanda navigue à travers différentes expressions de genre et cela affecte sa perception de soi et ses interactions sociales et sexuelles : « Je suis comme toi, ce qui fait que, objectivement, je suis homosexuel, alors que, subjectivement, je me sens toujours parfaitement hétérosexuelle, dit-il, et appuya sur le *e* final en riant. » (p. 141)

En revenant aux *approches psychanalytiques* de l’identité, certaines théories de Sigmund Freud et quelques-uns de ses successeurs, à part Jung déjà mentionné, peuvent être évoquées pour examiner les conflits internes d’Orlanda et ses défenses psychiques pendant le processus identitaire qu’elle parcourt. Pour explorer les relations d’Orlanda avec les autres personnages et comprendre comment ces relations influent sur son devenir, on peut interroger les *théories psychanalytiques des relations d’objet*, en particulier celles de Melanie Klein, qui a élargi et développé les idées de Freud. Celle-ci met en évidence les stades précoces du développement de la personnalité et les interactions complexes entre les différentes parties de la psyché. Par exemple, elle considérait (Klein, 2008 : 241) que le monde intérieur est composé d’objets que les nourrissons perçoivent d’abord d’une façon fragmentée et partielle, ensuite, ils en développent une image plus intégrée et complète. Il s’agit d’un processus essentiel concernant les premières interactions des enfants avec les figures prioritairement parentales qu’ils internalisent sous différents aspects et dans des situations affectives diverses, puis les emploient pour interpréter et naviguer dans le monde. Chez Jacqueline Harpman, Orlanda développe peu à peu une relation complexe avec les différentes parties de son identité qu’il cherche à intégrer pour construire une image complète et authentique de lui-même. Du côté des interactions entre Orlanda et les membres de sa famille, ainsi que ses amis, on remarque une dynamique

complexe de dépendance, d'ambivalence et de conflit : « Voilà les familles (...) on n'est pas supposé concevoir ses propres opinions. » (p. 166) L'exemple d'Aline qui « a vécu soumise aux exigences d'une mère qui ne l'avait jamais dit » (p. 165), n'est pas isolé. Annie, la sœur de Lucien, de même que Lucien lui-même, en sont également concernés. Il s'agit d'un *pattern* : « On détruit sa vie sans le savoir, pour complaire à des gens qui vous ennuiant mais auxquels on n'arrive pas à résister. » (p. 165).

Le mot « mère » a 86 occurrences dans *Orlanda*, et celui de « maman » est présent 28 de fois. La présence de la mère s'avère être déterminante, que ce soit la mère d'Aline, celle de Lucien, ou encore les mères des mères mentionnées. De plus, le mot « fille » est utilisé 84 fois et « fillette » une fois. Toutes ces occurrences suggèrent que la relation mère-fille prédomine par rapport à la relation père-fille ou père-fils (« père » – 41, « papa » – 10, « fils » – 10 emplois). Aline peut être incontestablement perçue comme la construction de sa mère, une femme elle-même façonnée par un schéma transgénérationnel et psychoculturel.

Elle ressemble à sa mère, qui ressemblait à sa mère, ce sont des générations de femmes bien élevées qui ont toutes eu le bonheur de ne pas recevoir trop de talents des fées conviées à se pencher sur leurs berceaux, de sorte qu'elles se sont fort bien accommodées de ce qui leur était permis. (Harpman, 1996 : 30)

Concernant des relations d'objet et le rôle prépondérant de la relation mère-enfant dans le développement émotionnel de l'enfant, mentionnons encore Donald Winnicott (2002), pédiatre et psychanalyste particulièrement intéressé par le *self* et l'objet transitionnel tout au long du développement de l'enfant. *Orlanda* peut être analysé à travers cette perspective, basée sur la théorie de Melanie Klein, afin de comprendre comment les relations d'objet du personnage, notamment avec sa mère, influencent son exploration de l'identité. De même, Aline-Lucien-Orlanda lutte

pour découvrir et exprimer son véritable *self* au milieu des stéréotypes de la société. Selon Winnicott (2002), l'objet transitionnel aide l'enfant à faire le passage du monde intérieur au monde extérieur, représentant ainsi un espace potentiel entre le *self* et l'objet. Orlanda s'appuie sur des identités alternatives comme sur des objets transitionnels pour naviguer entre différentes réalités sociales et psychologiques. Il est important de souligner qu'Orlanda est présenté de manière persistante tout au long du livre comme un homme dont « en vérité son âme a douze ans, même si son corps en a vingt » (Harpman, 1996 : 40).

Le monde intérieur de l'enfant est profondément influencé par les expériences bonnes et mauvaises qui proviennent de sources extérieures, mais il influence également, de manière décisive, les perceptions sur le monde extérieur, ce qui aura un impact significatif sur son développement ultérieur. Pour parvenir à une identification, des mécanismes projectifs, complémentaires à ceux introjectifs, entrent en jeu dès l'âge de trois-quatre mois, lorsque le clivage et la projection sont à leur apogée. Les parties clivées et projetées continuent à exister dans l'objet et deviennent une extension de soi. (Klein, 2008 : 241-244, 247) Le moment où Aline atteint l'âge de douze ans est crucial, comme le souligne le passage : « C'est ici que tout va changer. » (Harpman, 1996 : 111), car « l'Orlanda contenait tout que sa mère avait reproché quand elle avait douze ans. » (p. 201), bien que l'analyse rétrospective se prolonge avant cet âge (pp. 203-204) : « Aline petite fille a-t-elle rêvé de se dédoubler pour avoir une compagne parfaite ? » Plusieurs réflexions sont faites à ce sujet, notamment sur « le destin des filles encombrées d'une mère impossible » (p. 216) et sur la « Pudeur de Maman » qui se révèle paralysante (p. 218).

[E]lle a douze ans, c'est une fille vigoureuse, sûre d'elle, qui avance à grands pas et rit puissamment, elle entre dans la

maison en coup de vent, jette son manteau sur un fauteuil du salon et son cartable n'importe où.

— Mon Dieu ! comme tu es masculine !

Dit Mme Berger, sa mère, en soupirant.

Ces mots ne causèrent pas d'explosion, ils entrèrent sans bruit dans Aline (...) (Harpman, 1996 : 26-27)

L'affirmation « Comme tu es masculine » peut être interprétée comme le début du processus de refoulement chez Aline et de l'abandon d'une partie d'elle-même ; elle devient ainsi un personnage stéréotypé correspondant à une catégorie qui valorise uniquement « la féminité » : elle renonce par exemple aux mathématiques, car « les femmes n'entendent rien aux chiffres » (p. 60). Ce refoulement conduit Aline à ignorer une partie de son identité.

Il est évident que la compréhension de la psyché humaine, vu la formation et l'expérience de psychanalyste kleinienne de Jacqueline Harpman (Andriane, 1992), se reflète dans la construction complexe des personnages. À travers Orlanda, on pourrait trouver une possible clé d'interprétation psychologique à l'étonnante métamorphose soudaine d'Orlando, résolue par une révélation : « – Mais il n'a jamais été un garçon ! s'écria, t-elle. Les sept jours au lit, ma mère m'en a-t-elle assez bassiné les oreilles, c'est la puberté ! Tout n'est qu'allégorie (...) » (Harpman, 1996 : 64). Cependant, ce que l'auteure intègre effectivement, dans une très large mesure, parallèlement à sa quête herméneutique, ce sont des données qui pourraient éclairer certains freins, modérations, voiles, répressions volontaires, ainsi qu'une quantité considérable d'insatisfactions et d'auto-sabotages astucieux qui poussent Aline à s'exprimer, à exposer ses fantômes profondément intimes, quasi impénétrables.

Le contexte environnemental n'est pas exempt de jouer un rôle dans la façon dont l'auteure explore certains thèmes, et l'influence de ses expériences sur son œuvre littéraire ne peut pas

être ignorée. Questionnée sur le fait que « l’auteur (...) se projette sans arrêt sous de multiples visages », se livrant « totalement » et « que le personnage d’un roman [soit] un authentique objet d’identification projective » où « le romancier y dépose du non-pensé, du refoulé, des désirs non satisfaits, du clivé dont il se débarrasse », Jacqueline Harpman affirme, entre autres, qu’« [i]l ne s’en débarrasse évidemment que temporairement (...) Tout personnage de roman est un aspect de l’auteur même, un aspect qu’il n’a pas pu mettre en action dans sa vie. » (Paque, 2002)

La réponse de Jacqueline Harpman, de même que le concept de *projection*, nous ramène à Freud qui en a donné une première description en 1895 (cf. Spillius *et al.*, 2011 : 128), la *projection* étant utilisée avec plusieurs sens : perception, expulsion, externalisation d’un conflit, projection de certaines parties de soi sur autrui. Ce mécanisme est crucial dans l’extériorisation des conflits intérieurs, dans le développement de l’*ego* qui cherche à éviter l’anxiété ou l’agression en attribuant à autrui ce qui est considéré comme indésirable en soi-même, par une sorte de relocation de l’objet interne vers l’extérieur. La vision de Melanie Klein de la projection consiste à attribuer une partie de soi à un objet extérieur, par exemple, des mauvais sentiments ou émotions non désirés, comme la colère et la haine, sont vus chez une autre personne, ce qui implique souvent la négation de ces aspects indésirables en soi-même. Chez Klein et d’autres psychanalystes britanniques, la *projection* est associée au concept d’*identification projective* (Spillius, 2011 : 455), deux concepts considérés « indissociables », le dernier étant « irréductible » (Grotstein, 2009 : 267-268), désignant plutôt un transfert de soi à l’autre, mais impliquant un processus plus détaillé (concernant le contenu de la projection, l’objet projeté et les conséquences de la projection). Le sujet projette inconsciemment sur autrui des aspects de lui-même, tout en s’identifiant à ces attributs projetés. Jacqueline Harpman explore

habilement toutes ces zones qui lui sont familières, à partir, en effet, des concepts : « Il [Orlanda] serait donc *irréductible* ! » (Harpman, 1996 : 239, c'est nous qui soulignons).

L'identification projective, telle que décrite par Klein (1946), est une fantaisie inconsciente toute-puissante, strictement intrapsychique, un fantasme défensif ayant diverses implications, notamment évacuatrices, agressives et invasives. Wilfred Bion (1962) met en garde contre son utilisation excessive et pathologique, soulignant la confusion entre le soi du sujet projetant et l'objet projeté, en opposition avec l'empathie. Intersubjective, selon Bion, cette identification projective est un fantasme « réaliste » où les émotions sont communiquées à l'objet.

James S. Grotstein (2005, 2009) nuance le concept en avançant l'hypothèse que l'identification projective intersubjective de Bion coexiste avec le fantasme inconscient d'identification projective intrapsychique de Klein, deux autres processus s'y ajoutant : 1. une induction sensorimotrice consciente et/ou préconsciente, qui inclut la gestuelle, l'incitation et/ou l'amorçage de la part du sujet projetant, suivi de 2. une simulation empathique spontanée chez l'objet réceptif. Le sujet projetant et l'objet de sa projection constituent deux systèmes indépendants avec des représentations partagées. Le sujet communique ses émotions à l'objet, selon la théorie kleinienne, il devient co-sujet (« Qu'est-ce que l'émotion devant une jeune fille qui pleure, pensa-t-il, excédé, sinon la trace en moi de cette pauvre Aline, de ses renoncements successifs et de son assujettissement à une mère timorée. », p. 70). L'objet modifie l'expérience ultime du sujet, mais ce dernier peut projeter uniquement sur son image personnelle de l'objet, pas sur l'objet lui-même. Ainsi, Lucien Lefèvre conserve une certaine autonomie par rapport à Aline. Le clivage et l'identification projective sont associés à une désintégration du soi.

L'attraction inconsciente entre Aline et Orlanda (« Ils ne comprennent pas la sourde attraction qui les meut », p. 120) génère une « angoisse de persécution » (Klein, 1946 : 246), résultant de la peur des représailles potentielles. La transidentification projective établit une résonance inductive entre les images internes du sujet, et celles de l'objet, suivie d'une introjection de l'image transformée de l'objet par le sujet : « Au sujet projetant, nous devons ajouter la capacité d'un pouvoir de type hypnotique à induire une transformation de l'objet » (Grotstein, 2005 : 1060, n. trad.). Que ce soit sous un état hypnotique ou non, la communication complexe entre Aline et Orlanda comprend divers moyens, y compris le rêve simultanément illustré par les expériences distinctes des personnages, soulignant les interférences psychiques entre eux : tandis qu'Aline « avançait dans une rue et constatait avec stupéfaction qu'elle n'avait qu'un demi-corps, une seule jambe et un seul bras » (p. 54), Lucien « commençait un rêve qui affrontait Orlanda à des personnages et des situations auxquels il ne comprenait rien (...) : pourquoi cette fuite affublée par des chemins pleins d'embûches et cette quête de recoins obscurs où se terre en tremblant ? » (p. 55).

Hypnose, fantasme, rêve, reflets de miroirs, télépathie, science-fiction, hypothèses, interprétations, exégèse, tout peut être évoqué pour soutenir ce « roman fantastique » (Harpman, 1996, p. 149), construit avec une *poiétique* particulière par une psychanalyste kleinienne chez qui l'identification, ou bien, à la lumière de la théorie de Grotstein, la transidentification projective ne sont nommées pas même une seule fois telles quelles, à part le terme « identité » présent de manière récurrente. Mieux vaut être écrivaine qu'exégète ou analyste semble dire le conseil donné à Aline : « Mais, ma fille, quand on a tant de plaisir à écrire, pourquoi diable se contenter de s'agiter sur les livres des autres ? fais les tiens ! » (Harpman, 1996 : 66). Et pourtant, Jacqueline Harpman cultive les deux à la fois : en exploitant les textes

d'autres auteurs, elle écrit le sien, encrée dextrement dans la psychanalyse qui « nous prépare » à tout « genre de phénomènes » (p. 172).

Rien n'est le fruit du hasard chez Jacqueline Harpman, malgré son affirmation selon laquelle : « J'écris pour être lue mais n'ai aucune intention de faire passer quelque message que ce soit. » (Paque, 2011) L'auteure n'engage pas un simple jeu de hasard avec *Orlanda*, même si l'acte d'écrire est pour elle une source de plaisir (Andriane, 1992). Elle entremêle plutôt son expertise en tant qu'excellente connaisseuse de l'inconscient humain, de la théorie et de la pratique de la psychothérapie, proposant des interprétations poussées, bien au-delà de simples opinions ou hypothèses. Elle explore plusieurs œuvres et écrivains qui lui ont inspiré le roman, ainsi que des aspects de la construction narrative. Il tire son inspiration d'une vaste bibliothèque comprenant même ce qu'elle qualifie de « mauvaise littérature » (p. 102), car comme elle le dit, une « bibliothèque sans livres est plus vide que le vide » (p. 154) : Woolf, Proust, Rimbaud, Balzac, Gide, Flaubert, Mauriac, Poe, John Wyndham, La Fontaine, Shakespeare, Hugo, les Goncourt, Bromfield, Pearl Buck, André Chamson, Jacques Chardonne, Duhamel, Jules Romains, etc. En se référant à Julien Green et à son roman *Si j'étais vous* (1947), *Orlanda* rejoint l'interprétation de l'identification projective réalisée par Melanie Klein (2008 : 240-293).

La conclusion d'*Orlanda* concernant son installation-projection dans un autre corps est révélatrice : « – La différence est incroyable (...) Je me sens mieux dans une identité de garçon qu'enfermé en toi. » (Harpman, 1996 : 147). À travers l'expérience de « jumeaux osmotiques » (p. 112) et « divergés » (p. 150), Aline-Orlanda traverse un processus de prise de conscience comprenant qu'elle doit « retourner à [s]es douze ans et tout recommencer. » (p. 226). « [L]'unicité retrouvée » (p. 221)

devient possible seulement lorsqu'Aline arrive à répondre à la question « Comment me récupérer ? » (p. 150) et met fin à la présence d'Orlanda qui, privé de corps, n'était plus « qu'une pensée » (p. 241). En prenant conscience de son *animus*, Aline parvient à devenir un être complet, n'ayant plus besoin de deux corps distincts pour incarner son *moi* féminin et masculin. La déclaration « Je suis moi. » (p. 244) surgit à la fin, comme résultat d'une expérience assumée. Il est possible qu'Aline n'ait plus à craindre les abîmes de son âme.

Fin

Le métacommentaire qui clôt les dernières pages du roman, « Il faut, pour pouvoir et transmettre la diversité d'une œuvre, avoir en soi un écho à tous ses aspects. » (p. 184), valide dans une large mesure l'idée que le processus de (trans)identification projective a agi subtilement sur les personnages d'*Orlanda*, ainsi que sur ceux d'autres écrivains, notamment Woolf et Proust, de même que sur les auteurs eux-mêmes, rappelant les voies énigmatiques du *transfert* et du *contre-transfert*.

Lucien étant mort, Orlanda « était entré dans l'extravagance quantique, il n'était plus qu'un ensemble de forces parmi les autres forces, il avait pénétré dans le domaine étrange où le chat de Schrödinger existe en même temps qu'il n'existe pas » (p. 241). Jacqueline Harpman avance une nouvelle histoire alternative, cette fois-ci intermédiaire, où « la physique devient de plus en plus poétique » et où l'on envisage un « champ psychique » constitué de « psychotrons » capables de franchir la barrière crânienne et d'être dirigés selon les désirs de leur possesseur. (p. 173) Comme *Orlanda* est un roman, donc, « une histoire inventée qui n'a eu lieu que dans [l]a tête » de Jacqueline Harpman (p. 251), tout semble être permis. Ni regret, ni remords, ni culpabilité non plus quant au crime d'Aline. D'ailleurs, le

revolver était dès le début dans l'appartement de Lucien, ce qui fait supposer un acte suicidaire potentiel (pp. 143, 248). On ne parsème pas l'espace de jeu d'objets-signes comme une arme sans s'en servir. Jacqueline Harpman se défend d'avoir créé la scène d'un meurtre : « Je n'ai pas de sang sur les mains, juste un peu d'encre. » (p. 251). Sachant qu'elle a conclu ses études de psychologie avec un mémoire portant sur des outils d'évaluation de type projectif, on pourrait orienter le commentaire vers le test de Rorschach, élaboré en 1921, qui implique l'attribution de traits de personnalité à partir l'interprétation de certaines tâches d'encre.

Le lecteur, tout comme l'auteure, n'est pas exempt d'avoir sa propre interprétation et son propre processus de transidentification projective. Voyageant sur les chemins avancés par Jacqueline Harpman, il reste encore une piste complètement inexplorée : l'emploi fréquent du qualificatif « pauvre ». À l'exception d'Orlanda et de la mère d'Aline, tous les autres personnages ont reçu une ou plusieurs fois une projection d'infortunés : Lucien, Aline, Marie-Jeanne, Annie, Paul, le père Berger et, non en dernier lieu, cette « pauvre » Virginia Woolf » (pp. 62, 64, 126, 162). Il est important de souligner que cela ne témoigne pas d'une attitude condescendante et méprisante de la part de Jacqueline Harpman envers ses personnages, ni envers Virginia Woolf qui fournit le point de départ décisif pour *Orlanda*. Au contraire, il semble que cela exprime plutôt l'expression de la cordialité manifestée dans cette histoire fabuleuse.

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**Metamorfozele spiritului și prefacerile literei.
Metamorfoză, anamorfoză și automorfoză în *Asuntos
de un hidalgo disoluto*
(Metamorphosis of the Spirit and Make-over of
Letters. Metamorphosis, Anamorphosis and
Automorphosis in *Asuntos de un hidalgo disoluto*)**

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Abstract: The present study is a multifaceted approach to *Asuntos de un hidalgo disoluto*'s hybrid protagonist whose ontogenetical (r)evolution is to be viewed in terms of Fr. Nietzsche's series of three metamorphoses of the spirit which he put forward as stages in life for self-overcoming. Thus, we turn a both philosophical and anthropological lens on a character orbiting around his own controversial past as he progresses from submissiveness to enlightening and emancipating rebellion. In addition to analyzing several of the mythical facets of the Columbian character, we will be also showing the ways in which the character reflects Betcherev's principles of human reflexology. Moreover, it is don Gaspar's suicide that makes it possible for us to distinguish between Gilbert Durand's regimes of writing on the one hand, and between Jean-Jacques Wunenburger's functions of the imaginary, on the other, both as applied to the novel at issue.

Keywords: Hispano-American burden vs freedom, camel→lion→child metamorphosis, ontogenesis, reflexological theory, regimes of writing

Introducere

Consacrat prin *Suntem deja uitarea ce vom fi* (sp. *El olvido que seremos*, Editorial Planeta Colombiana, 2006), scriitorul columbian Héctor Abad Faciolince este un nume de referință în orizontul literaturii hispano-americane postmoderne. Caracteristicile „generației mutante” (Mejía Rivera 2001/2: 102)

în care a fost încadrat, dar și cele ale postmodernismului neoclasic (Jencks 1996: 38), cu care, personal, îndrăznim să îl asociem¹, se vedeau, însă, chiar din romanul său de debut – *Asuntos de un hidalgo disoluto*² (Tercer Mundo Editores, 1994).

Cu toate că, la momentul respectiv, cartea nu s-a bucurat de succesul pe care l-ar fi meritat – romanul fiind neglijat de către critica din domeniu, ale căror abordări tangențiale și studii de întâmpinare parțiale au vehiculat și etichete hermeneutice limitative referitoare la un așa-zis roman parodic relativ criptic, cu un stil complicat și un protagonist narcisist articulat strict pe modelul picaresc –, ceea ce ne-a determinat să încercăm să scoatem din conul de umbră acest roman plurivoc – dedicându-i un studiu mai amplu, axat pe valorificarea și revalorizarea constituției hibride a eroului său – a fost ferma noastră convingere cu privire la faptul că tocmai în acea croială deconcertantă – din punct de vedere stilistic și axiologic – a operei și a protagonistului său deopotrivă rezidă în fapt un miez hermeneutic deosebit de provocator, cu un substrat arhetipal de o vastitate și complexitate rar întâlnite.

Câștigându-și în mod legitim eticheta de „roman de gen incert” (Escobar Mesa 2003) prin faptul că în acesta găsim elemente proprii unui *Bildungsroman*, *Künstlersroman*, roman cavaleresc, picaresc, bizantin, psihologic, de aventuri, de ucenicie, al condiției umane, al autodistrugerii, al crizei ș.a., primul roman abadfaciolincean gravitează, într-un stil inedit, în jurul unui

¹ Pentru detalii suplimentare referitoare la așa-numita „generație mutantă”, precum și la tipul de „postmodernism neoclasic” identificat în romanul columbian în cauză, a se consulta Lenceanu L. 2023a.

² Menționăm faptul că romanul columbian supus analizei în lucrarea de față nu a fost încă tradus în limba română, motiv pentru care, atunci când demersul nostru științific o va cere, vom recurge la propria variantă de traducere.

protagonist care prezintă o multitudine de valențe simbolice extrapolabile la întreaga cultură hispano-americană.

Fuzionând în creuzetul său stilistic tușele neobaroce și postmoderne în care, în mod paradoxal, se va înveșmânta eșafodajul de precepte neoclasicale ale romanului de *postboom* supus analizei în cele ce urmează, Abad Faciolince împletește dezamăgirea și autoamăgirea, patima și *spleen*-ul, cu incisivitatea și ingeniozitatea, revolta și deșădăcinarea eternului scindat și inadapdat don Gaspar într-o operă axată pe resurgența practicii alegorice, de care amintea Brian McHale, pe valorificarea relației individului cu trecutul și cultura, implicând „o relansare a trecutului recent și a culturii occidentale”, și „fiind o încercare de a-i rescrie principiile umaniste (2009: 219-220).

În siajul „Christului castilian” cervantin (Unamuno 2015 [1896]), care, mânat de sentimentul misiunii personale, se automorfozase și opusese – din postura de cavaler rătăcitor – degradării axiologice și nonsensului existențial, vine plurifațeticii personaj hispano-american³ care se desființează, reconstruiește și **automorfozează** până la autodistrugere. Don Gaspar Medina Urdaneta, protagonistul primului roman abadfaciolincean, este, însă, unul cu o constituție **anamorfozată**, altfel spus, el este construit din elemente disparate, contradictorii și disonante, rezultate în urma procesului de dezintegrare pe care el însuși îl întreprinde, dar care funcționează, totuși, organic în poetica personajului, făcând posibil ca acesta să se preteze, însă, la interpretări la rândul lor anamorfozante, cu alte cuvinte distorsionante. În acest sens, demersul nostru de identificare și analizare a **metamorfozelor** tipologiei dongaspariene implică

³ Pentru o analiză mai amănunțită a trăsăturilor și tiparelor evolutive ale eroului abadfaciolincean în spectrul asemănărilor și al deosebiriilor care apropie sau distanțează personajul columbian de tipologia donquijotescă *vid.* Ienceanu 2017.

adoptarea acelor unghiuri hermeneutice necesare configurării unui cadru de analiză integrator. În caz contrar, aidoma efectului optic care nu se produce dacă nu se adoptă distanța optimă în cazul operelor de artă anamorfică, și receptarea protagonistului ar constitui una trunchiată, departe de adevărul totalizator, eroul fiind pe nedrept redus până în momentul de față la o simplă variantă a eroului picaresc, de anti-mit sau de anti-donquijote.

În studiul de față – una dintre multiplele faze ale procesului nostru de cercetare – ne propunem să distingem etapele traiectoriei vitale a protagonistului, și să reliefăm revoluția interioară a acestuia trasând corepondențe între etapele evoluției sale ontogenetice și cele trei „metamorfoze ale spiritului” propuse de către Friedrich Nietzsche în *Așa grăit-a Zarathustra* (2009 [1885]).

Metamorfoze ale spiritului și (r)evoluție ontogenetică

Automorfoza personajului columbian fracturat, autoexilat, răscolit și răscolitor, care colindă La Mancha italiană și columbiană, străbătând în paralel “meseta” propriilor memorii, luând diverse chipuri mitice circumscrise unui *homo viator*, *homo ludens*, *homo artifex* și *eversor mundi*, poate fi corelată cu **metamorfozele nietzscheene ale spiritului** (cămilă → leu → copil → supraom). Pe umerii unui personaj tragic, hiperlucid, dar totodată infantilizat, cu o identitate mozaicată, atârnă umbra apăsătoare a filosofului german care străbate romanul ca un fir roșu începând cu momentul în care *Știința veselă* cade în mâinile sale de adolescent.

Conform moralei spiritului liber al protagonistului⁴, intervenția antropică asupra destinului se materializează prin

⁴ Din rațiuni de economie de limbaj, vom opta pentru utilizarea, pe parcursul studiului de față, a prescurtărilor: DG = ‘don Gaspar’, respectiv HAF = ‘Héctor Abad Faciolince’.

suicid. Cititorii care vor fi acompaniat și “condus” protagonistul pe „ultimul drum” pe care acesta și-l croiește de la prima până la ultima pagină, au putut constata cum, în lipsa unei predestinări la măreție pe măsura potențialului dongasparian, prin reducerea la nimic eroul romanesc încheie într-o notă care se vrea elevată procesul **automorfozei** inițiate din clipa autoexilării. Comparată cu „cele trei prefaceri” ale spiritului expuse de Nietzsche în *Așa grăit-a Zarathustra* (2009: 18-20), fiecare etapă principală a vieții lui DG poate fi asociată cu una dintre cele trei metamorfoze: a **cămilei în leu**, a leului în **copil** și a copilului în **supraom**.

Cele trei proiecții, două zoomorfe și una antropomorfă, instrumentate de filosoful german, nu corespund vârstelor biologice sau mentale ale omului, ci sunt asociate unor etape sau stadii constituente ale unui mod **alegoric** de reprezentare a procesului de formare și transformare a conștiinței umane în ansamblul său, respectiv de dezvoltare a spiritului în travaliul de autorealizare individuală și desăvârșire existențială.

Astfel, **cămila** se vrea a oglindi individul simplu, cu fibră nobilă, cu o curiozitate înnăscută, avid de experiență și cunoaștere, dar lipsit de pretenții, obedient, subjugabil, care se lipsește, deci, de multe, dar este capabil să și îndure multe de dragul valorilor și normelor exogene impuse și, în cele din urmă, autoimpuse. Asemenea animalul de povară ajuns la capătul răbdărilor, omul încadrabil în această tipologie se lamentează de imperative și de greutatea poverii, dar nu încetează să le caute, și îngenunchează benevol în fața autorității constrictive, care îi anulează libertatea de mișcare, de gândire și chiar liberul arbitru, deformându-i voința.

Spre deosebire de cămilă, care slujește altora și se agață de povara sa în virtutea sentimentului de vină și a obișnuințelor generate de singura formă cunoscută de a fi, la care, chiar prin felul său de a fi, cămila se auto-osândește, din ipostaza simbolică de **leu**, individul se răzvrățește împotriva tiraniei moralei

tradiționale, și i se opune. Chiar dacă, în esență, omul-leu nu știe cine este dincolo de ceea ce neagă și combate, acesta se constituie în varianta emancipată a cămilei din clipa în care devine conștient de lanțurile sale, și se dezrobește până la un punct vânând libertatea ca pe o pradă, pe care dorește să o domine. Asemenea unui conchistador, leul se face stăpân pe deșert, și, în căutarea sensului existențial își impune propria voință și o opune datoriei – pe care Nietzsche o asimilează unui dragon sau balaur –, în continuare luptă pentru aceasta, își face sceptru din dreptul la libertatea de a avea alte valori față de cele predominante, și o apără ca o fiară, chiar dacă încă nu este în măsură să creeze un sistem axiologic nou după care să își guverneze viața.

Adevărata instanță împuternicită în triada nietzscheeană este cea antropomorfă a copilului. Acesta se află cel mai aproape de ipostaza demiurgică, reprezentând acel „da” neconvențional și recivilizator rostit de spiritul liber, care, în inocența sa – corelată la propriu cu neștiința –, ignoră regulile vieții, le învață din mers pe cele strict necesare, și își exercită creativitatea funciară creând altele noi pe măsură ce interacționează cu mediul înconjurător și alteritatea. Copilul, susține filosoful german, se joacă, dansează cu viața, lepădând povara sterilă a valori, normelor, prejudecăților și conceptelor limitative impuse, pe care le duce în spinare cămila, iar în el nu se manifestă nici descărcarea furiei, a revoltei și a respingerii pe care o personifică leul, care din neglijență poate involua până la stadiul de cămilă. Raportându-se, nu combativ, ci intuitiv și ludic la mediul înconjurător, copilul transcende lupta, demonstrând faptul că libertatea și autenticitatea pot fi atinse doar părăsind deșertul, care nu rămâne decât un spațiu de joc.

În lumina celor de mai sus ne propunem să reconstituim traiectoria existențială a donquijote-lui septuagenar din *Asuntos de un hidalgo disoluto*, avansând o corespondență între etapele procesului ontogenetic dongasparian și fazele de evoluție a

conștiinței și dezvoltarea spirituală aferentă, propuse de filosoful german și detaliate *supra*.

În orizontul diegetic, aventura lui DG debutează cu un personaj **picarizat**, aflat în faza de **cămilă**, reliefată de momentele în care, în ciuda emancipării simbolice prin lepădarea numelui de familie patern – Urdaneta – după înmormântarea bunicii paterne, eroul dezvoltă rușinea față de neam, și continuă să poarte în spate, alături de solidele rezerve axiologice primite prin (auto)educație, toată suita de complexe intrinseci, care îl vor stăpâni, și de care nu se va putea debarasa în cea mai mare parte a vieții. Cu toate că făcuse dovada rezilienței, și fugise de ceea ce nu dorea să mai suporte, spiritul dongasparian, vioi și puternic, avansează apăsător de un pregnant complex de inferioritate. În pofida revoltei interioare, personajul se arată supus și îndurător, se lasă îngenuncheat de neîncredere, și umilit în numele datoriei pe care consideră că nu o onorase față de patrie, și pe care are senzația că o ispășește pe continentul european. Atunci când este subjugat de iubire, este tras înapoi de rețineri, nu se încumetă să meargă până la capăt și se smulge din brațele femeii iubite, la care nu se va mai putea întoarce. Ajuns în pustiul deziluziei de lume și de sine, după îndoliata rătăcire orbecăindă prin lume, singuraticul drumeț – rătăcitor – o ia pe a doua cale deschisă cămilei, optând pentru a merge mai departe, în loc să se sinucidă atunci. DG nu renunță, deci, în acel moment, la viața lipsită de sens, precum Cesare Pavese⁵ în urma despărțirii de Constance Dowling. Tânărul îmbătrânit columbian străbate în continuare alienat “deșertul”, căutând printre dunele europene ale diverselor domenii alte valori cu care puțini oameni se identifică.

Mergând mai departe, la un moment dat DG încearcă o despovărare de trecut, acaparată fiind de spiritul **leului**. Complexul de inferioritate apare, însă, la suprafață preschimbat în complexul

⁵ V. Pavese 2006.

de superioritate al spiritului care reclamă propria libertate de acțiune. Instinctul de a deveni „stăpânul propriului său stăpân” (Nietzsche 2009: 19), care îl vânașe, înmugurește în patria columbiană, acolo unde, odată întors, DG se hotărăște să ceară “partea leului” conștient de propria sa valoare. Consecința firească a acestei prefaceri de esență este incursiunea în politică a eroului. Izbit de „balaurul” (*ibid.*) îndobitocirii, care în Columbia lui HAF topise și virtuțile universale de bun simț, absolutizând morala de turmă și imperativul acționării în spiritul corupției, al ignoranței, al violenței social acceptate care să permită integrarea și plasarea în fruntea acesteia, spiritul aristocratic dongasparian, care prinsese în gheare mandatul de senator, spre uimirea tuturor îi dă drumul pur și simplu înapoi în mocirla politico-socială⁶.

Pentru acela care aspira să guste din beția puterii, derularea campaniei electorale va avea efectul unei îmbătări cu apă rece, drept urmare DG va ieși dezgustat din hora în care intrase. Criza existențială, din care *doctor Medina* ieșise temporar, se acutizează în urma episodului politic. După încercarea eșuată de integrare și potențială mesianică păstorire, don Gaspar face un pas fundamental spre **copilul** și apoi spre **supraomul** nietzschean, recurgând la a „opune o dumnezeiască negare” (*ibid.*) pseudovalorilor lumești. Orgoliul, dorința de ascensiune imperială și furia sunt, prin urmare, re canalizate în opera sa, unde făurește, ordonează și impune propriile valori, călăuzit de acel „tot ce e valoare strălucește în mine” interiorizat (*ibid.*).

Dacă învăpăiatul Cavaler al Leilor cervantin întruchipa gustul pentru acțiunea mântuitoare pus în practică pe plan social, în cazul cavalerului voinței de stil cu o dominantă apolinică, același gust este transferat în acțiune pe plan literar. În memoriile columbianului răsună, prin urmare, ambiția și voința de a domina,

⁶ *En el fango de la política*, HAF 1994, p. 214.

care sunt proiectate printr-un demers psihoterapeutic în cucerirea lumii interioare în care acesta se reinstalează și domnește prin împlânzirea propriului eu. „Cel ce pierdut-a lumea vrea să-și câștige lumea lui *proprie*”, semnala Nietzsche (*idem*: 20), iar aceasta DG o realizează prin joc, prin râsul contestatar și detașarea ironică de lume și de sine în momentul în care ajunge în ipostaza **copilului** în urma celei de a doua metamorfoze nietzscheene.

Cu toate că eroul abadfaciolincean nu atinge în totalitate statura triumfătorului supraom nietzschean, în cadrul „dumnezeiescului joc creator” (*ibid.*) dongasparian „duhul” sfârșește prin a voi „propria lui vrere” (*ibid.*), iar aceasta din urmă, în virtutea avuției redobândite a aceluși „eu vreau” leonin (*idem*: 19), devine voința de a nu mai fi deloc pe lume.

În spiritul teoriei nietzscheene, septuagenarul, pentru care **autodeterminarea** devenise între timp sfântă, care trăise ca tânăr îmbătrânit, hoinărește acum prin propria carte, și apoi moare mergând pe sfoara propriei voințe ca un bătrân întinerit, ulterior înveșnicit prin artă. Pe fondul epuizării și al dezamăgirii, DG caută căldura și întinericul nimicului precum sugarul, sânul matern. În acest sens, înainte de a fi verbalizată fără rețineri, dorința de moarte apare travestită în nevoia de odihnă profundă. Moartea (*Thanatos*) acționează pe puntea elementelor arhetipale latente în inconștient și se insinuează ispititor sub chipul geamănului său (*Hypnos*). Somnul veșnic autoindus marchează, în consecință, revenirea înainte de și prin suicid la spiritul ludic, la „nevinovăția”, „uitarea” și capacitatea de „reînnoire” infantilă (*ibid.*), care leagă postulatul nietzschean al celei de a doua prefaceri ale spiritului de arhetipul *infans* jungian.

„Când starea copilărească a sufletului colectiv este refulată până la excluderea totală, conținutul inconștient pune stăpânire asupra stabilirii conștiente a scopului, inhibând, falsificând sau distrugând realizarea lui”, subliniase Jung (2014: 169). În lumina acestei afirmații, pentru hiperlucidul care își pierduse rădăcinile

prin unilateralizarea rațională ce zădărnicește orice proiect vital, suicidul – operat în finalul romanului – marchează saltul final la capătul drumului – desțelenit prin memorii – de întoarcere instinctivă la starea originară, pre-conștientă, a „copilăriei” inconștiente. Prin conexiunea restabilă cu sufletul colectiv, prin revenirea treptată a naturii la plenara inconștientă de sine, spre care își croiește drum, copilul dezgolit din don Gaspar obține în sfârșit abia la finalul romanului ceea ce dorește. Realizând sinteza sinelui și fiind o încununare a individuației, ipostaza infantilizată în care regăsim personajul în contextul simbolurilor arhetipale care i se asociază încheie, prin ruptura cu lumea exterioară, evoluția arhetipală a acestuia. Exfundarea dongaspariană devine, prin urmare, ziditoare, însă nu doar datorită împăcării protagonistului cu sine, și a întregirii identitare pe care o prilejuiește suicidul. Cum potențialul renașterii este intrinsec arhetipului *infans*, forța literară și arhetipală a memorabilului deznodământ românesc devine întemeietoare pentru protagonistul a cărui moarte ca om devine nașterea sa ca scriitor.

Chipuri mitice ale dictatorului-demiurg și funcțiile imaginarului românesc abadfaciolincean

În lumina celor expuse, romanul abadfaciolincean îndeplinește toate cele trei funcții ale imaginarului stabilite de Jean-Jacques Wunenburger (2009). Cea **estetico-ludică** se realizează prin jocul de putere al omului de litere, care scoate la iveală esența personală a bătrânului altminteri neputincios. Puterea informatoare și formatoare a cuvântului atestă îndeplinirea ultimelor două funcții. Astfel, cea **cognitivă** ține de deoalarea unei perspective intra-istorice, emice, cu privire la realitatea europeană, precum și a uneia emice și etice deopotrivă, referitoare la realitatea columbiană a nativului emigrant. Spectrul cognitiv se lărgțește în măsura în care protagonistul dedublat comunică, dar se și comunică, explorarea propriului micro-cosmos de pe o poziție

auto-critică prilejuind și autocunoașterea. Dubla ipostază de personaj reflector și creator nivelează terenul pentru realizarea funcției **practic-instituante**. Relevanța socială a scriiturii dongaspariene, materializată în capacitatea imaginarului de a îi determina pe oameni „să acționeze la modul social”, este ratificată în momentul în care titanicul demers al prometeului columbian închipuit de Abad Faciolince, care se citește în lumina adevărului propriu furat din Olimpul uitării, aprinde conștiința celorlalți. Dezintegrarea cvasisacrificială a protagonistului, realizată după reconstrucția acestuia prin memorii, consfințește „rolul artei ca singură depozitară a instrumentelor de apărare împotriva dezintegrării sociale și a persoanei în lumea noastră desacralizată” (Surdulescu 1997: 37). „Numinosul” (Vickery, *apud* Surdulescu, op. cit.: 66), capacitatea de a mișca sau înduioșa cititorul – inerentă romanului columbian, care pivotează în jurul protagonistului conceput după tiparele arhetipale ale unui lampadofor –, izvorăște din calitatea mitică a moștenirii literaturii-testament pe care acesta o lasă în urmă. Reflectând angajamentul social al literaturii abadfaciolinceene, ghemul de „memorii ale răului”, descâlcit și depănat de eroul columbian, creează „ispita binelui” (Todorov 2002) nu doar în protagonist, care își rezolvă conflictul interior și se întoarce în patria sinelui, ci mai ales în generațiile sale de cititori, chemați să transforme plumbul experiențelor dongaspariene în aur. Tămâia cuvintelor arsă în fibra interioară a protagonistului, care își induce somnul de veci, trezește, dezopacizează sensul și devine, pe această cale, formatoare și regeneratoare de conștiințe.

Din călău pentru sine, protagonistul care refuzase să se întindă pe patul procustian al societății devine călăuzitor pentru ceilalți, și sfârșește prin a-și face tron în propria scriitură, prin care își face singur dreptate, prin care își face, de asemenea,

auto-critica și auto-glorificarea într-o viață în care fusese expulzat, și pe care, asemenea „omului sfârșit” papinian⁷, o acceptase până la un punct ca pe o provocare, din dorința inițială de a se simți viu, iar, mai apoi, ca gest expiator datorită faptului că era mai dureroasă ca moartea. Romanul abadfaciolincean înfățișează, așadar, întruparea, dezvoltarea, înălțarea și ratarea, acea *existence manquée* a unui spirit pentru care suicidul⁸ devine o prelungire a privilegiului demiurgic. Inactivitatea și voința nesatisfăcută a dumnezeului infirm din DG este compensată prin peripeția redactării memoriilor, unde se evidențiază deopotrivă acțiunea și acea „contemplare monarhică” la care făcea referire Gilbert Durand (1977: 165-172), în timp ce prin gestul auto-anulării se încearcă o virilizatoare recucerire a “potenței” faptice de către protagonistul auto-castrat, pentru care memoriile devin un substitut filial.

Distructivitatea născută din slăbiciune, furie și insatisfacție deschide drumul afișării tăriei și satisfacerii „**voinței de putere**”⁹. Prin suicid protagonistul romanului abadfaciolincean devine *pharmacos* pentru calamitoasa sterilitate din Teba interioară. Pentru acest Oedip columbian care își “scoate ochii” pe parcursul odiseicei perindări retrospective, auto-critica din eșafodajul memoriilor închipuie o formă de violență sacrificială, iar gestul final este unul de supremă eliberare. Dacă faimosul cavaler

⁷ V. Papini 2011.

⁸ Pentru o mai bună înțelegere a resorturilor psihice ale sinuciderii și acces la hermeneutica exhaustivă contextualizată a acestui gest final al protagonistului, recomandăm consultarea studiului nostru anterior: „Conduita suicidară sau puntea spre înrobitoria dezrobire în *Asuntos de un hidalgo disoluto* de Héctor Abad Faciolince”, în *Concordia Discors vs. Discordia Concors. International Journal of Researches into Comparative Literature, Contrastive Linguistics, Cross-Cultural and Translation Strategies*, nr. 19/2023, Suceava: Ștefan cel Mare University Press, pp. 12-105.

⁹ V. Nietzsche 1999.

spaniol însămânțase în arida Castilla-La Mancha amintirea faptelor sale de vitejie, cavalerul abadfaciolincean rămâne în peisajul literar internațional, nu atât prin faptele sale, cât prin culegerea acestora și reculegerea la care obligă autenticitatea scriiturii, precum și gestul său final. Demolator și ziditor totodată, actul suicidar anunțat prin opera ce capătă dimensiuni mitografice încununează demersul autodestructiv întreprins de protagonist, iar memoriile, deși de tip eșafod, devin singurul lucru lăsat în urma eroului, care și duce la înveșnicirea acestuia. Pe măsură ce sunt create, acestea acționează ca un giulgiu în care protagonistul îndumnezeiește prin puterea propriilor cuvinte se “înfașă”, adormind pe melodia propriilor vorbe legănat în această barcă pe care și-o construiește pentru a fugi de vârtoarea lumii și a vâsli în direcția aneantizării. După ce o evitase și fentase precum Sisif, don Gaspar invocă moartea prin propriile evocări.

În mod paradoxal, lichidarea vieții prin dezintegrarea ființei pe paginile memoriilor coincide cu integrarea în memoria colectivă. Una dintre particularitățile fundamentale ale operei dongaspariene rămâne, așadar, faptul că modul de desfășurare ales de protagonist constituie concomitent unul de înființare, întrucât, înființând opera, don Gaspar desfășurează în parte societatea, iar, desfășurându-se pe măsură ce înființează opera, acesta se reînființează ca om și artist. În acest sens, structura romanescă devine „simptom” (Durand, op. cit.: 443). În arhitectura textuală sunt decelabile detalii edificatoare pentru o **arheologie psihică** a protagonistului, modalitatea de **structurare a textului** reflectând **devenirea** acestuia, precum și diversele faze ale **individuației** prin care acesta trece.

Dominante postural-reflexologice dongaspariene și regimuri ale imaginarului abadfaciolincean

În materie de chestiuni privind morfogeneza imaginarului (*idem*: 185-207), sunt identificabile scheme arhetipale și motorii

tipice dominantelor posturale circumscrise celor trei regimuri ale imaginarului teoretizate de către antropologul de la Grenoble. În contextul crizei de adaptare dongaspariene și a thanatofiliei sale¹⁰, regimul „antitetic”, cel „euphemistic” și cel „dialectic”, care ar corespunde în mod normal celor trei tipuri de soluții adoptate de către eroi în fața spaimei de finitudine, căreia îi pot răspunde prin revoltă, retragere sau înaintare, se regăsesc combinate în eroul abadfaciolincean, definit prin caracteru-i hibrid, prin *spleen*, dar doar într-o mică măsură prin spaima de finitudine. Cum dorința de moarte devine vectorul ultimei părți a memoriilor dongaspariene, demersul scriitoricesc al protagonistului alternează cele trei dominante reflexologice conturate de Betcherev (*apud* Durand, op. cit.: 58-60), iar pe parcursul cronologiei neliniare a narațiunii dongaspariene se observă o întrepătrundere a regimului diurn durandian, structurat pe dominantă posturală, cu cel nocturn, unde prevalează dominantă digestivă și cea copulativă.

Neîntruchipând o tripartiție reflexologică strictă, traseul antropologic al protagonistului constituie o împletire a celor trei tendințe senzo-motorii primordiale, care se evidențiază ca dominante temporare, identificabile doar în anumite epoci ale parcursului eroic. De pildă, **dominantă posturală**, aceea prin care antieroul – prin inacțiune – devine erou, este asumată abia la finalul vieții prin scris și apoi prin chiar luarea propriei vieți de către protagonist. Dintr-o poziție periferică față de lume, dar centrală în raportul stabilit cu propria creatură, funcția sociologică războinică, precum și cea de suveranitate sunt satisfăcute în cadrul unui regim **diurn** al scriiturii în care, printr-o luare concretă de atitudine, literele și memoria devin principalele arme mânuite de

¹⁰ În vederea unei mai bune înțelegeri a „thanatofiliei” sau „pasiunii nihilofile” specifice tipologiei aceluși *homo apocalipticus* postmodern cu care poate fi asimilat și eroul romanului abadfaciolincean, a se vedea Vattimo & Rovatti 1998, precum și Soviany 2011.

omul de litere creat de Abad Faciolince. Verticalitatea sceptrului gnoseologic al suveranului mag¹¹, care și-a dirijat propria transformare și și-a ascuțit tăișul spadei limbajului războindu-se cu sine, se datorează, însă, coborârii **digestive**, specifice **atitudinii catabasice** (Blaga 1985 [1944])¹² a protagonistului, revelate încă din incipitul romanului. Dimensiunea solară, uraniană, de sorginte eroică, prefigurată de formația enciclopedică a protagonistului abadfaciolincean, se schimbă radical odată ce don Gaspar alege calea catabasică, *i. e.* retractilă, endocentrică, întorcând spatele marilor centre contemporane de putere socio-politică, și angajându-se, în schimb, în explorarea propriilor adâncuri și în săparea unei căi spre adevăratul centru interior. Deși scopul ultim era elucidarea esențelor, valențele **nictomorfe** ale demersului dongasparian devin pregnante prin cufundarea voită a acestuia în abisal și căutarea rădăcinilor în propriile măruntaie. DG se îndepărtează, astfel, de farul neclintit al rațiunii care îi călăuzise pașii în acele momente când viața sa fusese vâslire, nu plutire pasivă în derivă.

Dincolo de rătăcirea fizică prin lume, în memoriile dongaspariene de factură htoniană există, așadar, un du-te vino constant, multiple suișuri și coborâșuri gnoseologice pe această cale estetică-etică de sondare, recunoaștere, regăsire și reechilibrare prin umplere a fisurilor identitare ca preambul al aruncării în abisul neantului. Valorificând valențele nutritive ale retrospectivității devenită hrană și pentru mintea cititorilor, eroul nefagocitat de societate își rumegă amintirile, regurgitează aspecte identitare nedigerate, și în final se auto-devorează, înghițit fiind de valurile propriilor cuvinte. Dominanta **digestivă** premergătoare

¹¹ Nu sunt de neglijat în acest sens semnificațiile religio-alchimice desprinse din simbolistica onomastică a personajului înrudit prin prenume cu faimosul rege mag purtător de tămâie, Gaspar (ar. < *kanz* = ‘comoară’).

¹² V. Ienceanu 2018 & 2019a.

celei **posturale** funcționează, deci, ca o modalitate de reechilibrare a puterii din acel loc regent al textului care funcționează ca “habitat”, leagăn și mormânt al protagonistului romanesc. Devenite crisalidă a demiurgului¹³ și, totodată, dric și cavou pentru antierou, prin intimitatea matricială¹⁴ care marchează întoarcerea la și prefacerea de esență a protagonistului, memoriile dongaspariene, în devenirea lor, pot fi asociate cu o „intimitate funerară” (*idem*: 295). De factură maternă și alchimică, dominanta **copulativă** sau **ciclică** încheie, prin întoarcerea la repaus, romanul columbian. În acest punct, simbolismul **ciclomorf** îl dublează pe cel **endomorf**. Deshumarea trecutului și reînhumarea sa prin suicid alături de prezent și de viitor în pântecetele memoriilor-casă și -cavou vin să potențeze filonul nihilofil alături de simbolismul amniotic al vaniliei, valențele psihopompe ale ipostazei feminine angelice, ale câinelui și pantofilor, explorate pe larg în studii anterioare. Mai mult decât atât, ciclica revenire la năzuitul repaos, la lipsa grijiilor, la acel *dolce „far niente intra-uterin”* (*idem*: 304) și la „tihnă mângâietoare a pântecelui” (*idem*: 278) prin îmbrățișarea finală cu tentă erotico-nupțială, dar și maternă, a morții și a nimicului, concepute ca „abis feminizat și matern” (*ibid.*), constituie o mostră de „eufemizare” tanatică (Ricœur, *apud* Durand, op. cit.: 236).

La nivelul imaginarului abadfaciolincean, negarea vieții prin suicid devine, astfel, paradoxală din punctul din care se face, pornind de la însuși izvorul vieții, și anume „pântecetele digestiv și

¹³ Mai multe detalii privitoare la statutul de creator asumat de protagonistul romanului columbian aflat în discuție oferă studiile: Ienceanu L. 2019b & 2023.

¹⁴ Pentru detalii suplimentare referitoare la importanța arhetipului Animei în cadrul imaginarului poetic abadfaciolincean, precum și la dialectica afroditic-demetric corelată gestului suicidar în cadrul acestuia, a se consulta Ienceanu L. 2023b.

sexual” (Durand, op. cit.: 278). Reprezentând „microcosmosul eufemizat al abisului” (Baader, *apud* Durand, op. cit.: 145), pântecelul eufemizat al nimicului, în care DG se adâncește, ia de fapt forma unui macrocosmos în care acesta își dizolvă microcosmosul, și în care regăsește „acea pace prenatală a sufletului” (*idem*: 304). În acest sens, însuși procesul arhetipal de **coborâre** în „prăpastia nimicului” ce „devine pântecel” (*idem*: 250) își inversează conotațiile htoniene pe care conceptul de *descensus* le dobândise în contextul călătoriei interioare, devenind, prin urmare, înălțare. Efectuându-se spre un „centru paradiziac” din pântecelul naturii ca modalitate de „întoarcere la izvoarele originare ale fericirii” (*idem*: 278), coborârea din cadrul „călătoriei mortuare”, grăbite, prin „planificare morbidă” (*idem*: 236), de suicid, devine „o cale către absolut [...]: coborâm spre a urca din nou pe scara timpului” (*idem*: 250). Simbolismul recipientului evidențiat de Durand se susține și în romanul columbian, unde „prăpastia transformată în cavitate devine un scop, iar căderea devenită coborâre se transformă în plăcere” (*ibid.*). Cu toate că nu înveșnicirea, ci, dimpotrivă, dispariția fără urmă¹⁵ constituia preocuparea eroului măcinat de foamea de murire în locul celei de nemurire, prin curmarea suferinței și scoaterea definitivă din mizeria societății virtutofage, suicidul satisface acel *Lustprinzip* și se constituie în parte a unei scheme ascensionale bazate pe un reflex postural, cratofanic.

În termeni de motricitate și reprezentare, semantismul suicidului ca act final eroic se întinde pe cele trei regimuri durandiene structuratoare ale sintaxei scriiturii, care în *Asuntos de un hidalgo disoluto* se vădesc preponderent prin prisma sintaxei identitare a protagonistului său.

¹⁵ *Debería borrarame, desaparecer*, HAF 1994, p. 203.

În cadrul regimului **antitetic**, corespunzător cuceritorului, cu toate că acțiunile de până atunci păreau să vină în răspărul acesteia, scriitura se articulează ca una a **revoltei**, singura care dă cu adevărat măsura spiritului combativ dongasparian, cuibărit în spatele inhibițiilor tinereții, și descătușat la maturitate prin memorii și sinucidere. În mod evident, DG nu se situează în tagma hadefobilor. În consecință, suicidul, ca mijloc htonian de asumare a omnipotenței, ca „apoteoză” și, deopotrivă, „hipertrofierea patologică a eului” afirmat „ca totalitate” (Han 2018, *apud* González Serrano 2020) în virtutea asumării libertății ca libertate de a muri reliefează principala antinomie dintre om și destin. Pe drumul „progresului spre țelul biruitor” (Durand, op. cit.: 442) de dezrobire se observă desfășurarea forțelor de respingere, transgresare, stabilire și multiplicare de contraste, dezmembrare și reînnoire specifice tipologiei eroice. Transferată pe planul literar, cucerirea alimentată de revolta auto-cenzurată în primă instanță presupune dizolvarea opozițiilor externe și interne evidențiate pe parcursul romanului, operarea cu tehnici de „oprire” și chiar de „abolire a cronologiei” din mâinile sale de demiurg care ia atitudine împotriva haosului interior prin ordonarea celui exterior. Centralizarea și valorificarea virtualităților identitare periferice – în speță umbră de putere, anti- și non-euri – permit recucerirea de sine, reînstăpânirea, „desăvârșirea și dominarea” identitară (*idem*: 442).

Cum „dedublarea [antitetică] nu cedează decât în fața obsesiei repaosului” potrivit antropologului francez (*idem*: 297), odată stabilită opoziția inițială a protagonistului cu societatea columbiană, observăm că, până la atingerea repaosului total, altfel spus, până la „catabaza spre zețele originare” (Braga 2006: 226), contestatarul matur din DG – care de pe baricadele memoriilor se poziționează împotriva greșelilor din trecut ale adolescentului opus în mod pasiv corupției, violenței și venalității – optase mai întâi pentru **retragere** în locul confruntării deschise.

Suprapunându-se în parte peste atitudinea catabasică teoretizată de Lucian Blaga (1985) și amintită *supra*¹⁶, tendința de regresie dongaspariană este manifestă încă din debutul vieții sale pe cont propriu, când timorarea, dublată de dezgust, determină inițial o schimbare de decor, iar, mai apoi, o retragere în sine.

Fiind situată de către Durand în lista tiparelor clasice antieroice, *retragerea* răspunde unui reflex deopotrivă digestiv și postural. În timp ce don Quijote, spre exemplu, aspira să eradicizeze barbaria din jur pornind în întâmpinarea nelegiuirilor, iar eroul picaresc, respectiv cel candidian, avansau chiar prin ștregării sau tertipuri mai mult sau mai puțin pardonabile, cavalerul columbian cu un substrat imperialist, de conchistador în fașă, alege inițial să se dea din calea barbariei din jur și să dezrădăcineze din el orice legătură cu aceasta. Cu refuzul resemnării grefat pe un instinct defensiv, din lumea inconsistentă pe care o descoperă, DG este tentat mai degrabă să se sustragă, făcând dovada unui comportament evaziv, de ocolire a acelor aspecte sau situații incomode, care vor fi abordate și tranșate, pe calea reflexivo-poetică aleasă, abia în epoca maturității. „Vocația exilului” (Durand, op. cit.: 297) devine de netăgăduit, prin urmare, în protagonistul columbian care rătăcise prin lumea largă înainte de a hoinări prin realitatea sa interioară. Privit prin lupa regimului

¹⁶ O mai bună înțelegere a teoriei blagiene, dar și a felului în care tipologia dongaspariană vizată o ilustrează o oferă studiile în care s-a cristalizat cercetarea noastră anterioară: „Ipostaze picarești și candidiene în *Asuntos de un hidalgo disoluto*”, în *Language, Culture and Change X: Cultural Heritage in a Global Perspective*, Luminița Andrei Cocârță et al. (ed.), Iași: Editura Universității „Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2019, pp. 119-136, ISBN: 978-606-714-454-3; „El Viejo Mundo vs. el Nuevo Mundo. Avatares picarescos y candidianos en *Asuntos de un hidalgo disoluto*”, în *Concordia Discors vs. Discordia Concors. International Journal of Researches into Comparative Literature, Contrastive Linguistics, Cross-Cultural and Translation Strategies*, nr. 10/2018, Suceava: Ștefan cel Mare University Press, pp. 97-133.

eufemistic, specific personajului în retragere (*idem*: 185-207), **suicidul** ar putea fi considerat **autoexilul definitiv**, devenind simptomatic pentru „**complexul de retragere**” (*idem*: 297) sau de „**întoarcere la mamă**” (*idem*: 286) al protagonistului, care, astfel, prin retragerea finală și dispariția auto-provocată din viața biologică, pune capăt ciclic și vieții solitare, autonome, pe care personajul principal începuse să o trăiască prin întâia retragere din lume, și anume prin retragerea din viața mondenă. Eufemizarea morții prin „asimilarea acesteia cu a doua copilărie” (*idem*: 293) încheie, de asemenea, „calea vindecării” (*ibid.*), a autoregenerării, deschisă prin construirea **refugiului** temporar al textului-casă securizant în care DG poposește și locuiește după propriile reguli, pus în fruntea variilor euri defilante înainte de marea anulare.

Ca o tentativă de compensare a ostilului spațiu extern **refuzat**, chiar și după “uciderea” lumii, înfierate în memorii după retragerea protagonistului în turnul de fildeș, **imersiunea arhetipală** în pânțele textului-sălaș – ce redă intimitatea dongaspariană, restabilind legătura sa ombilicală cu inconștientul personal și colectiv – satisface necesitatea de „**asimilare, coordonare, repetiție**” (*idem*: 297; subl. n.) prin joaca de-a puterea mijlocită de jocul literar. Dublând prin „funcția histrionică”, performativă (*idem*: 188), prin acea „teatralizare a sinelui, care devenea conștient de autonomia sa prin modalitățile de poziționare dezvoltate [...] în reprezentările textuale” (Conley 1996: 2, *apud* Braga 2006: 80), fluxul memoriei involuntare care trece prin cordonul ombilical al amintirii simulează, așadar, hrănirea uterină, regresia psihică constituind un proces regenerator și creator.

După cum reiese din cele puse în lumină în cele de mai sus, prin opera sa literară don Gaspar Medina, protagonistul romanului *Asuntos de un hidalgo disoluto*, izbutește să își asaneze “mlaștina” interioară, predominantă „schemă a coborârii” din roman jucând un „rol calmant al revoltei” (Durand, op. cit.: 290).

Dincolo de auto-izbăvire, în suicid întrezărim pe această cale revolta finală a protagonistului, care netezește drumul spre repaosul total al prăbușirii în neant. Trecerea la **regimul dialectic** presupune „cucerire în curgere” și „progresul dincolo de antagonisme” (*ibid.*), iar această expurgare și **repliere** lăuntrică, pe care se fundamentează decizia finală, rezolvă hiatusul dintre uranian și htonian, dintre apolinic și dionisiac.

În concluzie, pe un traseu atât de paradoxal – în bunul stil hispano-american – pe care viața dongaspariană se dovedește a fi moarte în viață, iar moartea devine renaștere, în care înstăpânirea este intermediată de robie, autodistrugerea, anticipată de reconstrucție, demiurgicul încununează lucifericul, auto-expulzarea devine scufundare, afară devine înăuntru, coborârea este în același timp și înălțare, apusul devine răsăritul puterii, apropierea se realizează prin îndepărtare, iar *aproprierea* de sine, prin abandon, „**vicleșugul**” de inserție (*ibid.*) în comoditatea inexistenței se realizează prin artificii textuale. Dacă revenim la premisa că „dialectica este forma dramei” (*ibid.*), prin eșafodajul dialectic al romanului columbian pe care prezentul studiu a încercat să îl pună în prim-plan, drama dongaspariană se resoarbe în nimic, auto-castrarea și, ulterior, auto-încastrarea protagonistului în memoriile literare soluționând temporar neputința de integrare socială, care se va rezolva prin “dezintegrarea finală”.

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**The Visual Representations of Literature as a British
(In)Formal Institution in *To Walk Invisible* (Director Sally
Wainwright, 2016, BBC Wales Production)**

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Abstract: The (In)Formal Institution of Literature in the British Visual Narrative “To Walk Invisible” includes a short theoretical approach on (in)formal literature, the distinction among the terms literature, literariness and literary person, what the terms British and Britishness refer to, and finally the way in which all these concepts are visually represented in Sally Wainwright’s movie.

Keywords: formal/informal institution, literature, visual storytelling, visual narrative, Britishness

The present paper focuses on how the British (in)formal institution of literature is pictured in the visual story *To Walk Invisible*. This story brings under the spotlight the three Brontë sisters, who wrote and published successful literature but under male names in Victorian England. Our short research is trying to analyse the ways in which literature, as an institution, is visually depicted in Sally Wainwright’s movie.

Institutions may be defined, according to Scott and Meyer, as “cultural rules giving collective meaning and value to particular entities and activities” (3), literature may be considered an institution for which the cultural rules are the genres and the literary forms the writers, men or women, use to convey meaning collectively and value in particular to certain communities, social groups of people specific to certain periods of time. In accordance with the ideas above, in *Impure Worlds - The Institution of Literature in the Age of the Novel*, J. Arac (2011), states that

“literature is a social institution” (9) as writers make “their choices of style, subject, genre and form” (ibid.) by drawing from and differing from “other writers of the past and of their own times” (ibid.), a statement which is opposed by the same author to “the purist view of great literature as an autonomous act of creation” (ibid.) Here, the rules of literature as a social institution are the style, the subject, the genre and the form the writers must comply with as they are connected to or different from both their past and contemporary writers. Another definition of literature as an institution describes it as “a public form of communication in which, at least in principle, the community at large is addressed” (Johansen, 292-293). What the three definitions have in common is the reference to the community, the public, the society, even if the first one does not necessarily envisage literature, it mentions cultural rules, culture including, generally speaking, literature, too. Consequently, we may understand and deduce at the same time that literature can be considered an institution, as it is part of a community like any other institutions, it also complies with specific rules in accordance with or specific to the writers' own times, and it is a means of communication of meanings and values between the writers on the one hand and the audience, the readers, on the other hand or other writers, from the past or contemporary.

Literature as an institution may not be seen as a formal one, in the same way as the other formal institutions are understood and perceived, that is buildings made of brick and mortar. Still, literature has used for many ages concrete means to be represented such as the writers' manuscripts, books which themselves may represent the informal institution of literature, as they are written according to certain rules belonging to different genres or forms, fiction, drama or poetry, and also before being published and made available to the large public to be read, reviewed, criticised or even put on stage. Therefore, taking this into consideration, literature may be considered a formal, that is

public or official, institution by means of libraries, publishing houses, literary critics, writers' associations, book clubs and other official representations. In the classical sense, that is not connected to an institution, literature represents, as the online dictionary from Cambridge defines it, “written artistic works, especially those with a high and lasting artistic value”, in prose or verse, “expressing ideas of permanent or universal interest” (Merriam-Webster Dictionary), and “stands related to man as science stands to nature”, as quoted in the same dictionary. What distinguishes a written text or work as being literary from other informal texts is literariness, a “sum of special linguistic and formal properties /.../ the observable ‘devices’ by which literary texts—especially poems—foreground their own language”. (Oxford Reference) When literary is related to literature it means “suitable for or in the style of literature”, but when referred to a person, literary means “having read a lot of literature”, explanations provided by the online Cambridge Dictionary. While the terms English and British have been considered interchangeable for some time, though the first one is included in the second one, still both refer to something or somebody from England or Great Britain. Britishness refers to the quality of being British. The location of almost the entire plot of the film “To Walk Invisible” is English, Yorkshire moors and meadows, the distant Haworth village, the native place for the Brontë family and where the father was a local vicar. What makes the (in)formal institution of literature, as represented in the visual story “To Walk Invisible”, British is the relevance of the novels written by the three sisters to the public in London, the capital of England and Great Britain, therefore to the entire British public and even for an audience beyond the British Isles. Britishness, in the same film, is represented by the quality of the three sisters' novels, mentioned in the visual narrative, of making the audience almost automatically think of Great Britain by means of: setting

(Yorkshire moors, London), clothes (British typical pattern), politeness and calmness (the father, the three sisters), language (characters' British accent).

In the visual narrative *To Walk Invisible*, the genres and the literary forms are the poems and novels written by the three Brontë sisters and brother, writings which have value and meaning for the readers in the Victorian London and Britain because the themes of the poems or the plots of the novels are opportunities for those readers who may find them interesting or may identify themselves with the characters. Visual representations of the four Brontë siblings' imagination are present even from the beginning of the film. Charlotte Brontë's character's voice reciting the first lines from her poem "We wove a web in childhood" accompanies the images of the four siblings as children running through the family house. They open a box with dolls and turn them into characters giving them names. These representations of imagination ever since childhood, characters and stories, may be considered visual representations of future possible writers, of literary people familiar from an early age with what implies the process of writing fiction: characters, story, imagination. The title of Charlotte's poem which is also the first line, "We wove a web in childhood" may allude to the process of writing the four siblings passed through since infancy, then childhood, youth and adulthood which she calls "riper age". "To Walk Invisible" includes a lot of sequences with visual representations of the three sisters, as adults, writing in their study and fewer visuals with their brother writing in his room, which may all be considered informal literature as their writings are not published, not accessible to the public, readers, literary critics and society. Just before the sisters' writings were published, thus becoming a part of the formalised world of literature, they chatted about their process of writing stories. They never used to talk about their writings even though the three sisters wrote a lot, thus

keeping their endeavours at an informal level. One of the reasons they did not talk about writing was that Charlotte recognized that a woman cannot live from writing literature, therefore she gave up the pen. On the contrary, Anne admits that literature is her life although the fact that she is not allowed to publish her writings turns her life occupation into a child's play. The Brontë sisters' brother, Branwell, also wrote poetry and was published before his sisters but never enjoyed their success, therefore, it may be said that his poems were formal literature. An informal literature instance with Branwell is pictured in the film during a memorable sequence which shows him watching his own manuscript of the poem *Real Rest*, informal literature, by the fireplace of a pub while the audience can listen to his voice reciting the first lines of the poem. If there is only one instance each for Charlotte's and Branwell's poems in the visual narrative, for Emily there are at least two.

One instance is the moment when Charlotte, after she found Emily's notes and read fragments from her sisters' poems: *The Prisoner* and *High waving heather*, tried to convince Emily to publish them. But the last one totally rejected the idea of her writings becoming formal literature. Emily feared once her poems were available to the large public they might not be received well but instead be criticised. Emily's poems have a huge impact on her sister Charlotte who finds herself crying, impressed by the lines written by her sister. Charlotte states that Emily's poems are "extraordinary", "not something to be hidden" and that "no woman, no one, has ever written poetry like this", also "exceptional", "astonishing", she couldn't even breath while reading them, which may be considered informal criticism or peer review, before the poems are published and become formal literature. The second instance with Emily's poems and another peer review moment is the one when she recites loudly to Anne, while they both contemplate the Yorkshire meadows, the whole

poem *No Coward Soul Is Mine*. In fact, Emily does this to encourage Anne who blames herself for not helping their brother more while working as a governess in Halifax where he was working, too. The three sisters' books on the shelves from the study where they used to write: Charlotte's *Jane Eyre* (three volumes), Emily's *Wuthering Heights* printed together with Anne's *Agnes Grey* (three volumes) are proofs of their novels being published, thus becoming formal literature, printed in paper cover for the public to read them, but at the same time they may be considered visual representations of informal literature because it is a personal library, Brontë family's personal and private library. The volumes written by the Brontë siblings may lead us to another distinction between formal literature, represented by male names as authors, Currer Bell, Ellis Bell and Acton Bell, in order for the three novels to be published, and informal literature, represented by the actual authors of the three novels, Charlotte Brontë for "*Jane Eyre*", Emily Brontë for *Wuthering Heights* and Anne Brontë for *Agnes Grey*, who are female and not allowed officially to publish according to the contemporary Victorian rules. The confusion made by the publishers who mistook the author of *The Tenant of Wildfell Hall* as being Charlotte Brontë and not Anne Brontë led to another visual of formal literature that is the publishing house in London represented by Mr Smith and Mr Williams as publishers, according to the visual narrative "To Walk Invisible". This confusion created the opportunity for the Brontë sisters to reveal their real identity and we may say that informal literature represented by woman writers became formal literature once the two sisters, Charlotte and Anne, faced their publishers, who, not surprisingly, taking into account the huge success *Jane Eyre* enjoyed, became almost speechless when meeting the two female authors. The two publishers, Mr Smith and Mr Williams bring forward another instance of formal literature visual, the London literary society by naming

Thackeray, another contemporary and famous writer, of whom they say would certainly wish to meet the Brontë sisters, especially Charlotte, the author of *Jane Eyre*, the successful novel which was exhibited in the publishing house hall for everybody to read.

As opposed to the formal visual or material representations of literature represented by the books, the three novels published, printed lines or texts, are the three sisters' manuscripts and notebooks with their poems and novels, handwritten lines or texts, which can be seen along the entire film and may also be considered visuals but of informal literature. The peer review among the three sisters may be seen as part of informal literature as opposed to the critics' reviews published in different local newspapers as part of formal literature. The first visual of peer review among the sisters is in fact a silent one, as Charlotte, curious about Emily's poems, looks for them and reads them without her sister's consent. Emily, who wishes to keep them for herself for that moment, after finding out about her sister's intrusion in her private writings, refers to Charlotte's act as being part of her "grabby little publishing plans" of which she does not wish to be part. In opposition to Emily's rejection to publishing her poems is Anne's desire to know Charlotte's opinion about her own poems, if she considers them worth publishing. Charlotte finds Anne's poems as "not without charm", "competent" and her novel as being "beautifully written". There is also self-criticism in the visual narrative when Anne states that her novel is not "Gondal and Geraldine", that it is not about princes and princesses, but "more about how things are in the real world", about her "being a governess", about what she has "seen or heard, witnessed". While Emily thinks that by publishing her poems she would be "pored over and rubbished and ridiculed by anyone who might choose to waste their money on it", Anne is "ready to try and publish", "ready to risk failure". Therefore, the step the three

sisters must take in order to turn their informal writings, their manuscripts, into formal writings, that is books with poems and novels, is a difficult one. Charlotte, being the eldest sister and the one who is supposed to know better than the other ones, is convinced that her sister Emily's poems, her "contribution could elevate a small volume into something actually worth spending a few shillings on". The critics' reviews published in different local newspapers as part of formal literature are visualized several times during the film and as Charlotte, the eldest sister, is the one who keeps in touch with the publishers, she is the one who receives the first two official critics reviews via the traditional post, "one from The Critic and one from The Athenaeum, both anonymous, but both really good", especially about Emily's poetry as predicted by Charlotte: "refreshing, vigorous poetry, no sickly affectations, no namby-pamby, no tedious imitations of familiar strains". It is paradoxical, as Emily was the one totally against publishing, yet she is the one whose poems receive the best reviews, thus turning their sisters' unofficial writings, informal literature, into official ones, that is formal literature. If Charlotte took the initiative of publishing their poems, the moment their brother causes another painful scene for their family because of his own problems, Emily is the one who initiates her sisters in publishing their novels encouraged by the success their poems met with the literary public in London, which is another huge step in formalising the three sisters' writings. The Brontë brother, Branwell, in a discussion with his sister Charlotte, points very well the difference between publishing poems and publishing fiction at the time all the siblings were writing, the Victorian period, by stating that they could not earn money by writing poetry but by writing novels. The financial issue was not the only difference spotted by the two Brontë siblings, between the two forms of literature, but also what a writer's abilities must be in order to produce literature worth publishing, and that is to use the intellect to its full capacity for

composing a poem according to Branwell and “a good story” for a novel according to Charlotte. This discussion between Charlotte and Branwell is the first real confrontation between the Brontë siblings concerning their abilities of writing and their prospects of becoming famous writers and making money out of it.

A very important moment in the life of the literary Brontë family, the four still alive siblings writing and publishing poems and novels, is when in order to help their father and make him realise he is not alone in fighting for the wellbeing of the family, the three sisters, at Emily's initiative, let him know about their writings and published novels. They reveal their success to their father but at the same time try to protect their brother by not letting their father share with him the secret of the three sisters publishing successfully under male names. Their brother failed both in his attempts to become a successful writer and in his struggle to live a normal life without causing trouble to the whole family, partly because of his inability to make his poems worth buying and therefore turning them into famous literature. At present, the house the Brontë family lived in is a museum, Brontë Parsonage Museum, created and supported by a writers' association. In the end of the film, the audience travels by the film camera from the outside, the stone street, to the inside of the Bronte Family house, through the visitors captivated by the house in general and the books in particular. At the same time, the producer inserted information about what happened to the Bronte sisters after their brother's death: Emily and Anne get sick and die several months later, while Charlotte continues to publish two more novels and is “*hugely celebrated in her own lifetime*”. Still, as the producer finally concludes, the texts produced by the three Bronte sisters, their novels and poetry, especially the poems written by Emily, are still considered to be part of the best literature that has ever been written in English.

Sally Wainwright, the screenwriter and television producer of the visual narrative "To Walk Invisible" renders in pictures the dramatic life of the Bronte family, in an English countryside setting, the Yorkshire moors, the village of Haworth, for the British National television, BBC Wales, with glimpses from a surreal past and the help of special effects, rings of fires above the sisters' and brother's heads, the audience being able to depict literature not only as an informal institution, at least not as a brick and mortar building, but also as a formal one in which the Bronte sisters must conform to the rules of the Victorian Age, female writers under male males, walking invisible.

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Film resource

To Walk Invisible; The Bronte Sisters. (2016) Director Sally Wainwright. Perf(ormer)s. Jonathan Pryce, Finn Atkins, Chloe Pirrie, Charlie Murphy and Adam Nagaitis. BBC Wales production.

Cross-Cultural Strategies



CROSS-CULTURAL STRATEGIES
INTERKULTURALITÄT
APPROCHES INTERCULTURELLES
ESTRATEGIAS INTERCULTURALES
STRATEGIE INTERCULTURALI

Sosnowiec Bishop Grzegorz Kaszak's Pastoral Letter to His Diocese Priests, dated September 22nd, 2023. The Cooperation and Politeness Therein

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Abstract: The paper deals with the text of the letter that one of the Polish Christian religious leaders - the Catholic bishop Grzegorz Kaszak – sent to his diocese priests on Sep 22. 2023 (the Catholic church is one of the strongest churches in Poland and Bishop Kaszak was the youngest one among its bishops). In the paper the linguistic theories by H.P. Grice (introduced in his *Implicatures*) and by G.N. Leech (submitted in his *Principles of Pragmatism*) are shortly presented and used to check the text of the letter as to the cooperation (i.e. say what you know is as informative as needed, what you know is true, relevant, perspicuous) and politeness (e.g. be tactful, be modest) it shows when it is read according to their linguistic indications. Bishop Kaszak wrote the letter to his diocese priests after a homosexual sex party was organised in the flat of one of the priests in Dąbrowa Górnicza, a city in Bishop Kaszak's diocese, in August 2023. It was one of many sex scandals in this diocese Bishop Kaszak was ruling since 2009, including the Seminary Rector spending time in a gay dark room. A murder was also committed in Bishop Kaszak's parish when a mentally ill priest killed a young deacon. In the letter to the diocese priests the topic is not that some people were victims, and, as a matter of fact, this word was never used in the letter. What the author concentrated on was rather how indispensable the priests are and how important their work is.

Keywords: Bishop Kaszak, priests, the letter, cooperation, politeness

The following text concerns the Catholic Church, which is one of the major worldwide Christian Churches. It is ruled globally by the Pope from the Vatican and locally by bishops, which makes it a men-governed institution (men only can be

ordained as Catholic priests, with bishops chosen from among the priests). The Catholic Church is the strongest religious faction in Poland. The bishops traditionally send occasional pastoral letters to their diocesans to instruct them - both priests and lay people (Duchniewski 2004: 1161-1165) - to be read during religious gatherings.

Bishop Grzegorz Kaszak was the youngest bishop in Poland (aged 45 when ordained). He became a bishop in 2009, after many years he had spent working in Italy (since 1997) (PAP: 2009). He was the bishop of Sosnowiec Diocese till his resignation in 2023. Before the resignation, he had written at least three pastoral letters in 2023: one to his diocese priests and two to his diocesans, the three dated resp. 22.09.2023., 23.06.2023 and 24.09.2023 (<https://diecezja.sosnowiec.pl/aktualnosci/listy-bis-diec&page=0> [access: 28.10.2023] and <https://misyjne.pl/bp-grzegorz-kaszak-prosi-wiernych-wspierajcie-zawstydzonych-ksiezy/> [access:30.11.2023]). The first of them is the subject of this article.

Aim and Methodology of This Paper

In this paper, I intend to check what Henry P. Grice's *Implicatures* and G. N. Leech's *Principles of Pragmatism* say about how the sentences in the letter may be read.

For Grice, "[t]he basic idea was to distinguish two notions of meaning: what a sentence means in general apart from any use of it, and what a specific speaker means by using the sentence on a particular occasion. Grice sees the latter notion as entirely a matter of what the speaker intends" (Grandy, Warner 2021, <https://plato.stanford.edu/entries/grice/> [access: 30.11.2023]). He formulated a basic general rule, which was the following Cooperative Principle: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged" (Grice 1989, *Studies in the Way of Words* (SWW)),

Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press; a collection including most of the important works published during his lifetime, p. 26, [after:] Grandy and Warner, op.cit.). He next proposed four detailed indications on how to be cooperative in that way - the first of these "includes two injunctions, one to make your contribution as informative as is required, and the second to make it no more informative than is required", the second demands that what you say should be true ("Try to make your contribution one that is true); the third asserts that you should "be relevant", and the final demand is "be perspicuous" – the four called the Maxim of Quantity, Quality, Relation and Manner, respectively (*ibid.*).

Grice's theory was further developed by G. N. Leech in his 1983 book *Principles of Pragmatism*. Leech thought the two theories - Grice's and his own – to complement each other, as the former concerned cooperation and the latter, politeness. Leech studied utterances in their pragmatic interpersonal context checking whether they are rhetorically cooperative, polite or ironical. Politeness requires one to be tactful (the Tact Maxim), which means the speaker should minimise the cost of the listener and to maximise his or her benefit (Leech 1983: 124, 132). It also requires one to be modest (in the Modesty Maxim), requiring the speaker to "(a) minimise praise of self, (b) maximise dispraise of self" (Leech, 1983: 132), and to (a) Minimize antipathy between *self* and *other*, and (b) Maximize sympathy between *self* and *other*, following the Sympathy Maxim (*idem*, pp. 132, 139).

Leech also claims that the hearer's task is different from that of the speaker. While the speaker is planning to achieve his or her goals, the hearer tries to interpret the message and find out what problem the speaker is trying to solve, cf "Pragmatics involves PROBLEM-SOLVING both from *s[peaker]'s* and from *h[earer]'s* point of view. From *s[peaker]'s* point of view, the problem is one of planning: "Given that I want the mental state of the hearer to change or to remain unchanged in such and such ways, how do I

produce an utterance which will make that result most likely?" (Leech 1983:36). The hearer needs to do their own work of interpretation, cf. " 'Given that *s[peaker]* has said *U*, what is the most likely reason for *s[peaker]*'s saying *U*?' The problem-solving procedures are very different in these cases. The latter case, that of interpretation, may in fact be considered a 'meta-problem-solving' procedure, since the problem *h* has to solve is 'What was the communicative problem *s[peaker]* was trying to solve when *s[peaker]* said *U*?' " (*ibid.*).

In order to identify the communicative problems that Bishop Grzegorz Kaszak was trying to solve by writing his letter to his diocesan priests, let us look at its context first.

The Context of the Letter

Bishop's Grzegorz Kaszak's letter to his diocese priests was written after the sex party in Dąbrowa Górnicza (a city in his diocese), which had been organised in August 2023 (Onet 2023) in the flat of one of the priests (Tomasz Z.), to which a sex worker was invited. One of the men needed medical help during the party as he had lost his consciousness but nobody let the paramedics in so the police forced the door.

In the letter Bishop Kaszak informs the priests about his lack of knowledge about the details of the sex party and he informs the clergy one needs to wait for the results sent in by the lawyer and the diocese commissions. However, it was just one of many surprising and shameful events in this diocese to which the bishop had never reacted immediately. In 2010, one of the diocese priests, who was also a Seminary Rector, had engaged in a gay dark room and had revealed his identity to his partner, a Jagiellonian University scientist, on the site (PAP 2023, biskup-sosnowiecki-rezygnuje-w-tle-obyczajowe-skandale (Sosnowiec Bishop resigns, moral scandals in the background). It was as late as 2013 that the Vatican Commission dissolved the Sosnowiec

Seminary. Nine years later, in the Bishop's parish in Sosnowiec a mentally ill priest, who had stopped taking medication, killed a young deacon, Mateusz Bałut (Serafin. 2023), and then committed suicide by throwing himself in front of a train (Konopka 2023). In his last will he wrote that he wanted to have a Catholic funeral on the condition that the bishop would not take part in it (Serafin 2023).

Checking the Text for Cooperation and Politeness

From the point of view of a recipient of the letter, I will try to find "the most likely reason" for Bishop Kaszak writing what he did in the letter. I will check the text paragraph by paragraph using both theories: Grice's and Leech's, starting from the first paragraph. The reader of this paper need not interpret the bishop's letter in the same way.

The first thing that surprises me in the letter is the contradiction between the bishop's initial declaration: "Recent happenings in Dąbrowa Górnicza filled us with great pain, shame and anger caused by what had happened there!" as contrasted to the second sentence of the letter, which says "we do not know everything, [as the - *addition A.P.*] prosecutor's office is investigating the case". As reader, I would say the bishop knows indeed enough about the event to feel shame, yet he started the letter talking about how little he knows. In doing so, he broke Grice's maxim of quantity. Continuing the first paragraph, the bishop declares that some commissions (lay and ecclesiastical ones) are still investigating the case, so it is difficult to say what exactly happened - which breaks the maxim of relevance, as nobody expects the bishop to present the committees' results, due to the fact that the bishop's pastoral letters are meant to instruct.

¹ All fragments from Bishop Kaszak's Letter have been translated by the author of this article.

When I attempt to find the problems that Bishop Kaszak was trying to solve in writing that, it seems obvious that he might have both felt guilty for allowing the described situation in Dąbrowa Górnicza to continue, so he tries to diminish his knowledge, even though he should know what is going on in his diocese and react to any breaches that occur there. That would be breaking the maxim of tact, as, in doing so, he does not "minimise the cost of the listener and [...] maximise his or her benefit". It is also possible that he said so to send a message to his gay priests that he would not tell anyone about what was going on in Dąbrowa Górnicza. That would be maximising sympathy between them, but as it would be complicity in the crime, it would break the sympathy maxim when you consider the point of view of the priests that were not engaged in that crime, as well as of lay diocesans. That interpretation would fit in with what he says at the end of the first paragraph: "Pinning the patch on all Dąbrowa Górnicza priests is wrong. Any generalisation in this regard is unfair." We cannot know the facts about the crime, but I suppose the general statement "Every priest taking part voluntarily in the sex party in Dąbrowa Górnicza parish is guilty" or "Every priest sexually abusing another priest or seminar student is guilty" are general statements and would not be wrong. It would be tactful had he admitted that, instead of breaking the sympathy maxim related to his diocesans.

The second paragraph is more solemn. It begins with the following sentence. "Even after this disgraceful event we must not forget - I do remember - about your, Dear Priests, tough ministry you are doing here on Earth which in some areas is like a mission." Speaking about "some areas" in which the ministry is like a mission, the bishop breaks the maxim of quality, as everywhere the ministry is like a mission, because every Christian's life is a mission in any place. What is the "the most likely reason" for Bishop Kaszak to say that? It is to say

something positive about priests, the group to which he belongs himself. The maxim of relevance has been broken again, as the overstatement about priests is not to the point of the letter, but we may decode it as an attempt to present the author in a better light.

Next, in the second paragraph, the bishop writes about the functions of priests as far as the sacraments are concerned and sums up this fragment by saying "And there is no one that might replace you in this" - thus breaking the quality maxim in various ways. First, even if you agree to what the Catholic Church teaches, that it is men only who should and can be ordained priests and perform the holy Eucharist and the sacrament of penance, undoubtedly one particular priest is replaceable, including the bishop himself (which is already being done, as Bishop Kaszak resigned from office and Archbishop of Katowice Adrian Galbas will be directing the diocese until a new bishop is ordained (Malinowska 2023)). Second, it need not be the case that women cannot be ordained priests in the Catholic Church. Nowadays they may serve, according to 1983 code of Canon Law - just like men - as an extraordinary minister of Holy Communion, when the Catholic Canon Law Code says in its 230 §3 the following "When the need of the Church warrants it and ministers are lacking, lay persons, even if they are not lectors or acolytes, can also supply certain of their duties, namely, to exercise the ministry of the word, to preside over liturgical prayers, to confer baptism, and to distribute Holy Communion, according to the precepts of the law". (Up to now in the Polish Catholic church women have not been allowed to be permanent deacons). The reason he said that might have been to quiet his lay diocesans who think they need their parish priests. This would be breaking the modesty maxim which says: minimise praise of self and maximise dispraise of self. The sympathy maxim is broken here as well, because what was said does not minimise the antipathy between speaker and hearer.

Further in the second paragraph the bishop tells the priests how important their work is to the lay people, as at the school lessons of catechism they are conveying values which can make the world better. He admits that "[w]e are only fragile vessels that by the will of our Lord Jesus Christ carry the Treasure to people", yet he asks rhetorically "[i]f there is a shortage of vessels, how can the Treasure reach the people?" And he concludes "[y]ou are invaluable, the world needs you.". What makes him say this? Presumably, it is to make the priests who are guilty feel safe, and those who are not, as well as the other people, not feel angry with any of the priests, including the bishop. In writing this fragment of the second paragraph, he is breaking the maxim of quality, as the seminary was not conveying the said values to the young students who were invited by their teachers to "secret vespers," which consisted of organising sex parties (Pacholczyk 2023, Terlikowski 2023), so I do not believe they were conveying the values to younger children either, especially as they may be the seminary students' siblings. The maxim of quantity is broken, too, as this paragraph is the longest one and not easily understandable, either, so the maxim of manner is also not being obeyed here. The last maxim to be checked is the maxim of relevance, and the test turns out negative as well, except for its relevance for his own rhetorical game. Thus serves the last sentence of the second paragraph, in which the bishop refers to "Lord Jesus, who, after Judas had betrayed him, did not dissolve the community of apostles: on the contrary, he strengthened it even more, sending the Holy Ghost, and sent them to the people." In this sentence, Bishop Kaszak does not mention the fact that Judas killed himself soon after the betrayal (The Gospel according to Matthew Chapter 27, verse 5 and Acts of the Apostles Ch. 1, verse 18), which makes the group of apostles not have the murderer among them any more, so again the sentence breaks the maxims of quantity, quality and relevance to the main topic; however, it is relevant to the point he wants to

make in this particular letter: to hide his own guilt of doing nothing when it was his duty to help the victims, including the suicide of the mentally ill priest who had murdered the young deacon in 2022.

The third paragraph is short - it contains only 307 words, 11 of which are a quote from Saint Paul's letter to the Romans, Chapter 5, verse 20, about sin and grace. The other words urge the priests to open themselves to the Holy Spirit, assure them that Lord Jesus is with them, they are his priests and he will comfort them. Besides, they should remember to pray to "our beloved Mother". In this short text the sin is diminished, to praise the labour group Bishop Kaszak belongs to. Thus, Grice's maxims of quantity and relevance are broken in his saying too much outside the main point of the letter. The fragment, in Leech's terms, breaks the politeness principle in not being tactful, as he does not minimise the cost of the listener, nor does he maximise his or her benefit. He broke the modesty maxim as well, praising himself and all the priests, even though "their beloved Mother" had just been offended by their deeds.

The next paragraph is dedicated to the topic of the criticism of priests and the fact that the Sosnowiec basilica, "The pearl of Dąbrowa Basin", had been set on fire (it had happened one month after the sex party in the flat of the priest. Cf. FiM «2023»). The bishop continues: «We, the priests, after this terrible happening, feel beaten and even though the popular norm says "you don't kick a man lying down" many people will avail themselves of the situation just to kick the man lying down». He continues rhetorically: "Let us consider what the source is of this brutal attack". In writing that, he broke the maxim of quality in suggesting there is no visible reason for that, the maxim of quantity in wasting words of another paragraph. As for Leech's politeness maxims, the bishop is not being tactful, as he does not minimise the cost of the listener, nor does he maximise his or her

benefit. The maxim of modesty is broken, too, because instead of maximising dispraise of himself he talks about other peoples' sins. All this does not maintain the sympathy maxim, because in writing that he maximises antipathy between himself and the hearer. What is the reason he had for doing that? I think it might be to change the subject to someone else's sins.

The next paragraph is about repenting. The bishop informs the priests that "the priest is the one who should repent for his own sins and for the sins of the whole world". He encourages the priests to "fasting and even more fervent penance". He generalises these indications, though in the first paragraph he had said in this regard that all generalisations are unfair, so he is breaking the maxim of manner in contradicting himself. In limiting the obligation to the priests he is breaking the quality maxim, as many other persons do repent not only for their own sins, but also for those of other people.

The next paragraph has only 28 words. It is a thank you paragraph for those people who are kind to the priests in that "difficult time" and "May God reward you for your kindness". This paragraph seems all right as far as Grice's maxims are concerned. But if we ask ourselves what made him write this, I think he wanted to make the people reduce the tension by making them realize he would be thankful for that and, what is more, he can bless them if he wants to.

This leads us to the next paragraph, in which Bishop Kaszak states that there is no approval for "moral evil" and anybody found guilty will be punished, independently of the judgment of a civil court. In Gricean terms, this suggests his lack of knowledge, and so it seems to me to break the quality maxim. In Leech's terms, tact and sympathy maxims are broken again. Bishop Kaszak also wrote: "I apologize to everybody who were affected and saddened or even raptured with the situation that took place in Dąbrowa Górnicza". This does not mean he apologizes to the sex worker

left alone after he had lost his consciousness, or to the parishioners who were taught homosexual sex was a sin, or to other priests who had not been breaking the 10 commandments which include "You shall not kill". This is the first time apology words are used in the letter, which contains 645 words. The Polish word for "I am sorry" is "*przepraszam*" and it is the word no 507. In the next paragraph, the bishop says that if he "did something wrong, made a mistake, or failed to do something", then he is "very sorry". The maxim of relevance is broken here, since the place where the subject of guilt should be developed is somewhere else: it is where you may seek and find the victims and say sorry to them. Talking about the victims of the Dąbrowa Górnicza event in 2023 we have to mention the sex worker, who would not have received medical help if it were not for the police, and the lay people who are instructed not to do that sort of thing that was done by their teachers. The bishop behaved like the Pharisees from the Matthew gospel, who "tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people's shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them" (the Gospel of Matthew, chapter 23, line 4).

Instead of saying "I am sorry" to them, he changes the subject - a method known as "the red herring" - to avoid talking openly about his own and other priests' guilt. Instead of that, he says these words to those people, who were "affected and very saddened, or even scorned" by the situation in Dąbrowa Górnicza. The word "victim" does not appear in the text in any of the paragraphs.

The next paragraph is the last but one and it contains apology number two. This "*przepraszam*" is addressed to the readers, that is, mainly to the priests of his diocese, and it is weakened, as it is a part of the following conditional sentence: "If I did something wrong, made a mistake, or neglected something, I am very sorry". Since it is difficult to find things he had not neglected being a

bishop, this conditional breaks the quality maxim. Leech's maxim of sympathy is broken as well, for he does not minimise the cost of the listener except for the listeners who are the wrongdoers, and it is for them he might have written this. Next, the bishop Kaszak declares he is ready to accept all the consequences that this entails and asks the hearers to pray for him.

In the last paragraph, the sorry-word is in the plural: "*przepraszamy*". This time the addressed person is Lord Jesus, and the wrongdoer is "a priest", who has hurt the Church. Both sides are anonymous - the text says only that some priest hurt some other Catholic. He wrote this to have no parish inhabitant to say "I am sorry" to and to be polite to the guilty one(s) among the priests. In doing so, he broke the sympathy maxim and the quality one. Fortunately, a priest from elsewhere, Rev. Marcin Stopka, has written his "*przepraszam*" to the victims (Stopka, M. 2023).

Conclusions

The letter was written on September 22nd, 2023, the next day after the fire had been set under the side door of Dąbrowa Górnicza basilica. It was also one month after a homosexual party had been organised in the flat of one of the Dąbrowa priests. The diocese had experienced similar scandals before and the bishop had never reacted properly. The letter consists of 645 words and it does not concentrate on how to apologise to the victims. In the text, both Grice's maxims of cooperation and Leech's maxims of modesty, tact and sympathy are broken many times, as there is hardly one paragraph out of nine that would not contain a case of maxim violation. Generally, the bishop behaves as an offender who interacts with other offenders in his diocese.

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Sensemaking as the Basic Essence of Culture (Based on the Example of Cultures of Different Language Families)

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Abstract: The article examines the issues of the formation of cultural meanings as a dynamic process, the formation of the semantic core of culture and its role in the process of “expansion” of meanings. Attention is focused on the general features of culture: duality, cyclicity and the ability of culture to create an “ideal” meaning, which are directly or indirectly related to the main essential function of culture - sensemaking. The basis of sensemaking is the semantic core of a culture, which is formed by its DNA and “ideal” meanings. The DNA of a culture is understood as the “ideal” meaning. The “expansion” of meanings occurs through the dynamic connection of “ideal” meanings and “wandering” meanings. The relationship between sensemaking and the vitality of culture is indicated. Three fundamental elements of sensemaking are identified and explained – meaning-images, meaning-constructs and meaning-terms.

Keywords: semantic core of culture, sensemaking, “ideal” meanings, DNA of culture, basic meanings of culture.

1. Introduction

“Civilization is the last stage of development of any culture” (K. Leontyev 2005: 212)¹, the core of which is language, traditions and worldview values. All together (and separately) they become exponents of the meanings of human existence, both ideal and physically objectified (see Pelipenko 2007). Meaning-making has been a continuous process since the beginning of culture; with

¹hereinafter translation by the author – O.L., M.T.

its help, culture creates and maintains its fundamentality and integrity. The process of sensemaking is associated with the constant “expansion” of meanings. When the process of semantic “expansion” in a culture is disrupted, a mechanism of destruction is triggered. According to K. Leontyev, this happens with secondary mixing simplification, “when it (culture), having exhausted its impulse, gradually degrades and dies. Having created a semantic core, culture builds its own system of “abstract” ideas-religious, political, legal, philosophical, everyday, artistic and economic. Every nation with a great culture has such a system of ideas; the same peoples who live on borrowed baggage and are not able to give birth to world-class ideas have culture only nominally” (Leontyev 2005: 213).

The purpose of the study is to highlight and describe the essential components of the semantic field of culture as fundamental elements of sensemaking, as well as to show their interrelation and influence on the vector of development of society.

2. Culture as a Model of Human Existence

Culture originates in a certain space-time continuum and develops in its specific historical reality. It is a model of human existence, which is why cultures differ from each other. Despite the differences in models, all cultures have common features. These features include: 1) the duality of the nature of culture; 2) the cyclical nature of its development; 3) the ability to create “ideal” meaning as the highest value of culture. All of them directly or indirectly influence the continuity of the process of sensemaking as the essence of culture.

2.1.1. Duality of the nature of culture

Duality is inherent in the entire living world. The nature of

everything that is within the space-time continuum and outside its limits, be it a phenomenon, substance or action, is dual. Culture is part of human nature, created by man. The idea of the dualistic nature of cultural manifestations was considered by K. Lévi-Strauss, Y. Lotman, A. Pyatigorsky and others. Culture is multifaceted in its manifestation. For example, from the point of view of the actions performed, culture is both meaning-generating and meaning-preserving. From the point of view of origin, culture arose as a result of the merger of two processes - biological and mental or psychic (see Lotman 1992). From the point of view of construction, culture is simultaneously both a form and a system, etc. All processes occurring in culture should be viewed through the prism of its duality. The same applies to sensemaking, since it involves two criteria - imagination and inference, which are inseparable from each other, on the one hand. On the other hand, we are dealing with a language that organizes “objectified” meanings, that is, it works with the meanings of words (a word is, according to S. Perevolochanskaya, a code designation of a semantic field), and with the mental (psychic) sphere, where meanings “swarm” like endless ideas. The world around us is a world of endless meanings. The world within us is built on semantic images and semantic symbols. Culture transforms the world of endless meanings into the world of semantic images and semantic symbols and indirectly expresses them through language, while materializing meanings (in a word, phrase, text) (see Perevolochanskaya 2009).

2.2 The cyclical nature of culture in nature, everything is cyclical

Following the laws of nature, culture has its own development cycles and thus becomes cyclical. The cyclical nature of culture is associated with the expansion of knowledge

(empirical or theoretical) and, accordingly, with the “expansion” of meanings. In each cycle of cultural development, meanings gradually “grow.” The ideal form for describing natural phenomena and one of the most harmonizing laws of the universe, which organizes the structure of the surrounding world and directs life towards development, is the Fibonacci series, on which the logarithmic spiral is built (see Vorobiev 1983). Using the Fibonacci spiral, one can explain the cyclical nature of the development of any culture. One turn of the spiral corresponds to one cycle of cultural development. In order for the cyclicity not to be interrupted, the culture must move the primary “ideal” meaning-value at each new turn of the spiral. If, at any turn of the spiral, the culture was unable to move this meaning, then the cycle breaks off and the culture goes into oblivion. A culture whose ability to move values built on “ideal” (essential) meanings along the development spiral weakens, gradually declines and acquires a state of peace (immobility). In another case, the meanings-values of this culture do not disappear, but are gradually “replaced” by the meanings-values of another culture. Usually we are talking about spiritual values. Thus, although a culture is absorbed by another over time, it reflects into a culture that “builds on top” of it, “replaces” its meanings and values, but also absorbs them into itself. This is similar to the law of conservation of energy. The energy does not go anywhere, it takes on a different form. And now the culture that has “built up” operates with its meanings, but not as images, much rather as symbols. The meanings and images of the donor culture become the meanings and symbols of the culture that absorbed it. Consider, for example, the decline and disappearance of the ancient Greek civilization, Assyrian-Babylonian, Sumerian-Babylonian and other civilizations, which gave reflection to the modern cultures of Europe and the Middle East, and which partially retained their “ideal” meanings in their

philosophical and religious concepts.

2.3 Creating meanings

Everything that exists depends on meaning; at the basis of everything that exists, there is a semantic principle that bears and supports it; every becoming as being is at the same time the realization of meaning. “Every meaning in the world is correlated with (this or that) value, and every value gives meaning. This provision formulates the essential law” (Hartman 2019: 290). Meaning accompanies knowledge about all things and the understanding of this knowledge. Culture as an integral universe of sensemaking has the ability to unfold meanings, which, as “a quantum of cultural space, a cell of a cultural organism” (Pelipenko 2007: 69), become its innermost spiritual principle.

2.3.1 The meaning of culture as a form and as a system

From the point of view of modern research, culture is considered as a form and as a system. Both as a form and as a system, culture has meaning. As a form, culture has internal content (a system of meanings) and is an essence (contains knowledge about existence). As a system, culture operates with signs and symbols that have their own semantic content.

According to S. Averintsev, by studying form, rather than facts and content, we move into the space of greater meanings. Form is a representative of the absolute world, it shows the absolute background and argues with the content (see Averintsev 1971). Cultural form is directly related to the objective world (see Yachin 2010) and can be defined as a set of distinctive features of an object. The object itself is “a private artifact of the use and interpretation of a given cultural form. Cultural form concerns both material products and products of spiritual (symbolic)

activity” (Flier 2020: 1-2).

The cultural form is dual. “On the inside, the form contains semantic (teleological) formations of consciousness, on the outside, the form provides a constructive connection with the world of things, and is itself a material construction. There are no phenomena in the human world that do not have both sign and symbolic functions. The word both denotes objects and symbolically expresses the meaning (concept)” (Yachin, 2010: 19). According to Flier, the most accurate “reading” of any cultural form is possible only in its natural cultural context (see 2020, Flier).

The form of culture is also associated with cultural meanings that make up its content and can be considered in the system. According to A. Sheikin, cultural meanings are “ideational constructs associated with cultural objects as signs, that is, they are their informational, emotional, expressive content. Information content is associated with the mechanisms of comprehension of the information-cognitive field of cultural meaning. Emotional reflects the specifics of human thinking. Expressive content is an expressive level of meaning, determined by a complex of expressive means and the properties of sign systems, through which the existence of meaning is realized. Thus, cultural meanings are polysemantic” (Sheikin 1998: 214). These ideational constructs create a space of meaning within a culture and are determined by a priori intentions that form a certain grid of coordinates for further sensemaking (see Pelipenko 2007).

2.3.2 Cultural meanings and inferences: the connection

The language a person speaks influences what thoughts come to his mind, what type of culture he lives in, what type of

thinking he uses, and what meanings are produced. For example, cultures with hieroglyphic writing use hieroglyphic thinking. It became possible to talk about this on the basis of research and conclusions of neurophysiologists “about the asymmetry and separation of functions of the left and right hemispheres of the brain” (Ivanov, 1999: 412). The amount of information per one Chinese or Japanese character is approximately five hundred times greater than the amount of information, per one English letter (see Galan 1992). “Hieroglyphic thinking is associated primarily with the holistic perception of information. At the same time, the meaning of words is stored in a form independent of the sound envelope, this is confirmed by the results of damage to the left hemisphere in the Japanese, when syllabic writing suffers, but not hieroglyphics” (Ivanov 1999: 448). On the contrary, modern cultures of the Indo-European language family were transformed into alphabetic writing. “Such writing is a universal model of the constructive power of the conscious activity of a person, capable of creating his own artificial (technical) world from the material of nature (here from voice and sound). Hence the development of the constructive ability of imagination, so characteristic of the European mentality, the development of the technical power of civilization, but at the same time the birth of the illusion that language was created in the image and likeness of the world of things” (Yachin 2010: 17). “In languages with alphabetic writing, the use of symbols can also be traced (for example, in the English and French writing there is no complete correspondence between letters and phonemes, and words just need to be memorized)” (Sanzhiev 2002: 181-182). Consequently, in different languages the concept of “meaning” is also different and often there is no correspondence between languages in the understanding of this term-phenomenon.

In the languages of any family there is a “layer of meaning”.

Meanings, first of all, are formed in thoughts, and then materialized in words. The need for a word arises only when a person faces something hidden – something that cannot directly appear to our senses. The word is an organ of speculation. As such, it is a phenomenon of appearance, not designation. Revealing – expressing (saying) – and designating are not the same thing (see Yachin 2010). According to M. Bakhtin, language embodies the general meaning and significance in a specific sign form accepted in a given community, cf “But it comes to life in communication, acquiring a personal meaning and a unique tone in the word. Whatever the meanings, in order to enter our experience (and social experience at that), they must take on some kind of temporal-spatial expression, that is, take on a sign form” (Bakhtin 1975: 407).

The system of cultural meanings is impossible “by itself”; it exists thanks to social and communicative processes (see Duvanova 2021). D. Leontyev believes that the transmission of cultural meanings occurs in three main ways: 1) through images of actions and behavior patterns; 2) through “other-oriented” (the theory of M. Weber); 3) through complex processes that cannot be reduced only to understanding. The latter method involves getting used to, growing into the fabric of the cultural world, the meaning of which it is (see D. Leontyev 2007). Consider also: “Meaning requires existential, vital participation in it, participation, naturalization, then it acts in the fullness of its content and functions as the bearer of unique secrets cultural process” (Kozlovsky 1998: 34-35).

In a symbolic form, cultural meanings can be transmitted from generation to generation, from one social group to another in the form of “quanta” of information, fragments of its social experience. Such “quanta” form cultural memory, which J. Assman defined as “a form of transmission and modernization of

cultural meanings specific to each culture” (Assman 2004:36). Toporov also spoke about culture as a “sphere of memory” (Toporov 1975: 159). The phenomenon of cultural memory is a certain mechanism, a continuous process in which culture consolidates, identifies, broadcasts its identity and values, reconstructs its own past, connecting it with the present and future (see Mykytynets 2021).

2.3.3 Primary forms of expression of meanings

An interesting fact is that at the origins of culture there were meanings and their outlines. Initially, an action arose, which over time materialized in a word. Initially, meanings are energy clots that are formed by the energy of action. The first meanings were drawn. The first letter that depicted speech was also descriptive. An example of this is rock painting, ornamentation and other types of descriptive art. Culture was born from meaning and itself became meaning, for in it a person learns the meaning of the world and himself. Language can also be classified as a descriptive art (for example, *shekaste* in Iran, the art of writing in China), has made “progress” in the descriptive art. If rock painting and ornamentation repeated and recorded the world seen by man, then writing was supposed to repeat in outline the elements of speech, and subsequently speech itself, and put meaning into them. Over thousands of years of existence and change of different cultures, the basis of any form of writing has remained either inscription (hieroglyphs, letters) or ornamentation (Arabic writing, Georgian writing, etc.). Thus, with the emergence of language, culture had the opportunity to record its presence in the world, create its own unique core of meanings and “launch” the process of sensemaking and semantic “expansion”; culture began to build on top of natural language (see Lotman 1992) and in all its aspects represents a language (see Barth 2003). In language as

the quintessence of culture, “all the laws of the existence of culture are presented in the most concentrated and “pure” form” (Yachin 2010: 14-15).

2.3.3.1 “Unfolding” of meanings

According to P. Sorokin, the development of culture is associated with an increase in the complexity of its semantic system – the core, the elements of which can “unfold” independent mini-cultural systems, but linked in a single semantic field. These mini-cultural systems or cultural systems (cognitive, religious, ethical, aesthetic, legal, etc.) are united by one fundamental principle and express the main value of culture (see Sorokin 1992). All these systems are elements of a single supersystem of culture. Despite their stability, the elements of the supersystem have internal mobility, which allows them to “adapt” to significant historical reality and carry out the necessary functions. Their mobility is explained by the fact that they are able to change their “environment” and thus create many cultural meanings necessary for the stability of culture. It is assumed that the supersystem itself is motionless, since the main value created by it remains unchanged throughout all stages of the historical development of culture. Despite the fact that elements of the supersystem may be open to external influences, the value created by the culture and the internal semantic reflections built on it make it possible to maintain balance and make the culture stable and unique.

2.3.4 DNA of culture or its “ideal” meaning

Like all living things, each culture has its own DNA or “ideal” meaning that makes it unique. But unlike the DNA of living nature, which is a physical structure - a molecule, the DNA of

culture or its “ideal” meaning is an energetic substance capable of combining “ideal” meanings in a way that is understandable only to it in order to create the highest spiritual value. This value lies at the very core of culture and was formed at the beginning of its development. It is the DNA of a culture, or its “ideal” meaning, that distinguishes one culture from another. The DNA of a culture is stored in a field of “ideal” values. Stability in culture is ensured by the field of “ideal” meanings formed by it, which, together with the DNA of the culture, constitutes its semantic core. Each “ideal” meaning covers all levels of human existence and contains four component symbols - physical (biological), psychic (mental), emotional (sensitive/sensual) and spiritual. One contains the whole. By “ideal” meanings we mean primary meanings materialized through words or parts of words. “Ideal” meanings are constant and contain the fixed energy of meaning as “materialized” meaning. “Meaningful energy is not a monolithic mass: it represents different quanta of meaning-proto-verbal, potential, forming the periphery of meaning, and verbal” (Perevolochanskaya 2009: 267). The “ideal” meaning is closed in a certain “shell”, inside which the “ideal meaning” “unfolds”, while new semantic connections are created, each time structured in a new way, which in the materialized world of language is reflected in the word. “The slightest changes in the meaning of a word make it a different word” (Potebnya 1999: 15). “Meaning only accumulates its potential energy as a hidden, probabilistic component on the periphery, in the implication of linguistic meaning. The meaning becomes verbally expressed only in speech due to the chain of implications generated by the speech utterance” (Perevolochanskaya 2009: 269). Despite the change of generations that carry culture (now every 15-20 years), the field of its “ideal” meanings does not change.

2.3.5 "Ideal" values field

The process of sensemaking begins in the field of “ideal” meanings. The laws of sensemaking and design, consolidation and translation of meanings are the primary basis of all countless phenomena that collectively form the cultural universe. The essence of a phenomenon, which justifies its existence, determines its meaning. Meanings outside of culture do not exist, just as culture does not exist outside of space and time, therefore, there is nothing in culture that is not contained in human mentality (see Pelipenko 2007). “Constructed by the activity of human consciousness, meanings carry as their core the holistic world and self-reflection of a person” (Maslyanka 2012: 216). Consider also: “Culture becomes a way of understanding the world. The emergence of culture and meaning is the emergence of the same mechanism for regulating the human in man” (Cheslova 2007: 8).

On the basis of the “ideal” meaning, not only new meanings of culture are created, but also its artifacts; it is simultaneously reproducible. Different languages have created different fields of "ideal" values. We assume that “ideal” values can be materialized as follows:

1. Simple hieroglyphs or simple ideograms in languages with hieroglyphic writing, for example, Chinese, Japanese, etc.
2. Roots of words in ancient root languages, for example, Proto-Indo-European, ancient Semitic languages (Akkadian, ancient Arabic BC, etc.)
3. Short, monosyllabic words in the ancient Sumerian language. For example, the word "two" in the Sumerian language is pronounced as "mana" or "mina", where "ma" and "mi" denote feminine, "na" - masculine. Therefore, two has the meaning of the integrity of the feminine and masculine, as it exists in all systems of living and nonliving things. The Sumerian language used

cuneiform writing. Words written in cuneiform characters can always be read in two ways. It can be read phonetically according to standard writing rules. Or you can use each sign separately as an ideogram. Then each character turns into an independent word, and a whole sentence emerges from the original word.

Meanings were materialized through “ideal” meanings, on which each culture created its own meaning-images.

With the development of cultures, “ideal” meanings either remained the same, while “expanding” their meaning, as exemplified by:

1. Simple hieroglyphs and simple ideograms remained in Chinese culture, they continue to store “ideal” meanings.

2. Simple characters and simple ideograms, once borrowed from the Chinese culture, and similarly created simple Japanese characters are used together and constitute the “ideal” meanings of Japanese culture.

“Ideal” meanings became the first non-descriptive, but speculative symbols (at the same time, some complementation occurred from various borrowed or previous cultures), as in:

1. The languages of the Indo-European family (root languages), for example, ancient Greek, whose culture was built on philosophical knowledge of the world, used the word both as an “ideal” meaning and as a speculative symbol that named several different concepts. Ancient Greek is a typical example of the "expansion" of meaning when Proto-Indo-European. *leg- “to collect” “grew” to logos, which united “thought”, “word”, “reason”, “law”, “meaning”, “concept”, “reason”, “number”, that is everything that constituted being or eternal and universal necessity. This can be interpreted in any way you like: “meaning follows from thought, meaning is contained in the word, the mind has thought, word and their meaning”; and how “everything has meaning - thought, word, reason and law”; and as “the meaning of

thought in the word, the meaning of reason in the law, the meaning of the law in reason, the meaning of the word in thought,” etc. Later in modern languages, with the “expansion” of meanings, this “ideal” meaning/symbol formed several separate words, endowing them with separate meanings. The “expansion” of meanings has become multi-vector. All these words are included in one synonymous series.

2. The languages of the Semitic family (root languages), for example, began to create single-root words from the roots of words, but the primary meaning did not change. The “expansion” of meaning in this group of languages occurred linearly through the creation of a number of single-root words with slight fluctuations in meaning. For example, Arabic culture and the Arabic language. In the pre-Islamic period, short one-line *qasidas* were built on “ideal” meanings, in which the “ideal” meaning of culture was embedded. In the Islamic period, the *suryas* of the Quran are built on the “ideal” meaning of the *qasidas* and at the same time serve as “ideal” meanings to “expand” the meaning. The “ideal” meaning created new “ideal” meanings in the form of words, the meanings of which are “unfolded” in the Quran. Thus, these words-“ideal” meanings become symbols, because new ideas unfold linearly from them.

The interweaving of different meanings of “ideal” meanings and their connections create the foundation for the vitality of culture. In this case, the meaning is conceptually significant. A conceptually meaningful meaning can be represented as a semantic gene, an embryo. “Historically, it is formed in the mental sphere, initially defined as a proto-verbal meaning, characterized by “non-manifestation”, living outside the form, outside the word: it is in search of its signifier. The forms of presentation of such meaning can be different: a word, a synonymous series, even a text. In language, meaning comes to

the fore: it is a system of semantic features with a nuclear seme” (Perevolochanskaya 2009: 269).

Reproducible “ideal” meanings can also be considered as basic archaic forms of culture, which, according to Skrzypek, are “universal in nature and since human nature is the same, then the development of cultures occurs uniformly” (Skrzypek 1989: 369).

2.3.5.1 Fixed and “wandering” meanings of culture

The semantic content of culture is supported by a constant process of sensemaking, the mechanism of which is based on sensations and inferences. Nature is one. Its homeostasis is maintained by an infinite number of connections. Atoms, molecules, the ocean, rain, animal migration, etc. are an example of the integrity and unity of its connections. It is obvious that everything visible and invisible exists thanks to these invisible energies-connections. They permeate the whole world. The world is saturated with them and cannot exist without them. And this world is presented as an ideal infinite world of meanings, which Plato called the world of ideas – *eidos*, pressing over the world with established rules. To designate the incomprehensible-unknowable, there are terminologically similar concepts: *eidos* (Plato), *noema* (E. Husserl), eidetic meaning (A. Losev), foggy something, embryos of mental operations (S. Askoldov), mental images (modern linguistics). Meaning connects the invisible and the visible, the felt and the intangible, the felt and the unfelt; any phenomenon, event, fact, result, object, etc. acquires meaning only thanks to these connecting energies (connection energies). They, having become tangible and passed through inferences, acquire an “ideal” meaning that can generate value. “Meaning “manifests” itself in three spheres – linguistic as abstract, speech as concrete and mental as abstract. As a phenomenon, meaning appears as a single

entity in different forms of its manifestation, in different conditions of existence - at the mental, speech and linguistic levels. The paradoxical nature of the phenomenon of meaning is due to the transformation of different essences of meaning, their semantic metaphor - from mentality to their linguistic systematicity, from language to speech reality (and vice versa). Meaning connects the conceptual system, language and speech (Perevolochanskaya 2009: 1587-1588). "Language will never be what we think, but what thought is done in", as Eco claims" (Eco 2007: 31). According to A. Losev, natural language is not able to convey the full depth of meaning related to the essence of things and their meaning, since it is loaded with human aspects (see Losev 1982). For this reason, ideal meaning cannot be expressed directly, but can only be mediated through natural language. The meaning of a mental representation is embodied in linguistic meaning.

The meaning contains the potential functionality of meanings and is consolidated as a result of the repeated action of objectifying the results of the connection between sensations and conclusions. There are quite a lot of such actions happening at once, but only what appears as a "flash" and is instantly recorded in memory acquires the actual sense.

In addition to the fixed meanings of "ideal" meanings, there are many "wandering" meanings, that is, repeating "non-valuable" events that are not fixed in consciousness and memory, which turn into a semantic "reservoir" with "potential ideal" meanings. These "wandering" meanings remain unclaimed, unsemantized, unfixed by semantic content, and are hidden in the potential area of linguistic meaning. "Linguistic meaning, loaded with matter (phoneme, word), enters a different linguistic space. At the same time, there always remains a feeling of incompleteness of meaning generation" (Perevolochanskaya 2009: 1590), since

“wandering” meanings remain only unrealized potential.

Culture in every new era turns to this “reservoir” of potentials. The semantic field of a culture consists of relatively stable or manifested meanings and “wandering” or unmanifested, but potentially existing, meanings, therefore the semantic field of each culture is unique and individual. “As a complex phenomenon, meaning is not static. It is mobile and in different states” (Abakumova 2016: 227). Humanity exists in a world not of static, but of dynamic and constantly transforming cultural meanings, changing and enriching... (see Duvanova 2021).

It is important to note that meanings do not disappear, but penetrate to the periphery of the meaning of a word with a rich stochastic structure. It is clear that the nature of this meaning is indirect. At the same time, the meaning does not have precise forms of expression. “It is a wandering, moving energy. Meaning is always moving. The value is static, fixed. A peculiar metamorphosing complex is not a planar semantic pattern, but a volumetric semantic composition that exists in the form of fields vibrating in both horizontal and vertical planes” (Perevolochanskaya 2009: 1594).

3 Meanings of Culture

3.1 Meanings built on "ideal" values

3.1.1 Meanings-images

Language as a meaning holder preserves all the meanings fixed by it. In these we include meaning-images, meaning-symbols and meaning-constructs, the first of which is basic, the next two arising as a result of the “expansion” of meanings. All these meanings are formed on the substratum of “ideal” meanings of the semantic field and create the uniqueness of a culture, therefore

such meanings will be “read” differently by different cultures. A classic example is the famous legend told by Herodotus. To the Persian king Darius, a messenger brought a message from the Scythians – a bird, a mouse, a frog and arrows, which Darius, as a conqueror, interpreted as follows: the Scythians surrendered themselves to his power and, as a sign of submission, brought him earth, water and sky, for a mouse means earth, a frog means water, the bird is the sky, and the arrows mean that the Scythians are giving up resistance. The Scythians, on the other hand, had put the following meaning into the message: if you, Persians, do not fly into the sky like birds, or burrow into the ground like mice, or jump into a swamp like frogs, then you will not return back, struck by these arrows.

Meanings-images on the substratum of “ideal” meanings create the first semantic layer of culture. They connect sensations and imagination, therefore they tend to be stored in memory for thousands of years. This is an unshakable layer of culture, its inexhaustible source, which is not subject to the influence of either time or any other culture. All types of human consciousness are manifested through meaning-images, including mythological consciousness, which is reflected not only in fairy tales, but also in mysteries that arose on the basis of a cult personifying the elements of nature or ancient deities. Imitating nature, man recreated its image through meaning. Through repeated actions, the meaning materialized and the image acquired meaning, while the meaning itself was felt. The sense felt and materialized in the image became a value. It is on felt and materialized meanings that all philosophical and religious systems are built. Each culture has its own meaning-images, which differ from the meaning-images of other cultures. They constitute the first layer of the semantic core of any culture. They are the most ancient and unchanging. These are non-vanishing meanings, since they are at the level of

both the unconscious and the superconscious. Meanings and images are characteristic of any culture – both tribal and highly developed - and form the basis of any myths, legends, tales and epics, in which the very primary essence of human nature and the nature of the world is laid out in an image and acquires meaning.

Meaning-images are represented in different ways in the semantic field of culture. In the process of “expansion” of meanings, the meaning-image is constantly replicated. It becomes both imaginary and conceivable at the same time, while the “representation” of the image through imagination and “thinking” is indivisible. The image is materialized in language and “thought” according to the type of thinking. Therefore, to understand a culture, it is important to know and understand not only its language, but also its inherent type of thinking. For example, the Romano-Germanic languages (European cultures), which adopted the Latin alphabet as an alphabetic script, are characterized by a predictable logical form and a verbally logical type of thinking. The semantic field is built on logical connections (sequential and unidirectional). For the Russian language (Russian culture as well), predictability of logical form is not typical, although the Russian language also uses alphabetic letters. The Latin alphabet was originally created with alphabetic letters that do not contain meaning, while the Cyrillic alphabet’s letters contain meaning, therefore the semantic field of Russian culture is three-dimensional (there is a past and a future, the present is momentary). M. Bakhtin believed that in the Russian culture ideas are combined on the basis of Christian personalism with features characteristic of Russian philosophy: ethical orientation, the desire for integrity in understanding the human world, with a special interest in its aesthetic side (see Bakhtin 1975). The Chinese language (Chinese culture as well) is idiomal and linked to the hieroglyphic type of thinking (conceptual thinking). Hieroglyphs

have always been sacred (sacred signs), therefore the semantic field of culture is filled with hieroglyphic images. Semantic connections are associative and can unfold in any order, since each hieroglyph is capable of reproducing the entire complex of symbolic associations, which creates depth and a huge variety of subtexts.

Let us consider the image of “labor” as a cultural phenomenon using the example of Russian, Arab, Chinese, Japanese and European cultures. By European culture we mean the peoples and their cultures that were part of the Ancient Roman Empire and for whom the Latin language was the basis of their communication, as well as the reflection of the Roman Empire in the Great Roman Empire of the German people.

The image of “labor” in the semantic field of Russian culture is associated with spirituality, conciliarity, collectivism and represents a special way of life of the Russian person, his striving for perfection, which is expressed and embodied in various artifacts, products of labor. Ancient languages contained in a word (or hieroglyph) a whole conceptual complex that united the objective and the abstract. We consider such integrity as an “ideal” meaning on which meaning-images are formed. So the word “labor”, which originated from two roots *ter/tbr* “to rub” and **dh(e)* “to do”, in the semantic field of Russian culture created several meanings-images: 1) combined the earthly world and the spiritual world, cf “investment of the strength of the spirit into matter for the return of dust to dust and the cleansing of the soul from dust - to eternal life” (“Verb” Dictionary, s. web); 2) concerned the emotional and psychological sphere of life as a heavy burden, annoyance, sadness (Common Slavic), care, anxiety, zeal, suffering, grief, illness (Old Russian); 3) directly related to physical work. Meaningful connections within culture affected creativity and asceticism, since “purification of the soul

and the desire for eternal life” became the dominant meaning-image. Labor is associated with creativity (Indo-European creativity – create, grow, grow). When embroidering a towel, the craftswoman added her own patterns, cutting out the platband, the carpenter put his ideas into the creations. Many meanings associated with the image of “labor” were laid down in pre-Christian times. Work is associated with reasonable self-restraint, aimed at peacefulness, self-sufficiency, non-acquisitiveness, hard work, conscientiousness, honesty, diligence, mutual assistance, worldly wisdom, and the ability to foresee the end result. Asceticism of work is an internal effort, care; it is an opportunity to hear the voice of consciousness and clarify for oneself the image of God. The original Russian principles of labor as a type of activity are boundless hospitality, philanthropy, mutual assistance, justice, artfulness, unhurriedness and regularity. Hard work, order, conscientiousness and frugality are the main qualities on which the content of Russian labor activity is based. “Russian labor is a special spiritual culture of the Russian person, a certain “stereotype of behavior” (Shabatura 2014: 156-157). The meanings of the “ideal” meaning of the word “labor” are asceticism, creativity, striving for perfection. Meanings and images – work as asceticism, work as creativity, work as perfection.

In the Arab culture of the pre-Islamic period, human values occupied an important place. All meanings were built around human values, among which the main ones were generosity and sincerity. All human deeds were associated with these two foundations. “Work” was an integral part of sincerity. They were considered as one single whole. Work was valued as a human virtue. Work was done only for pleasure, sincerely, and not for any other purpose. Work is an act implicated in sincerity. Any person, even a poor one, who sincerely does his work, could become richer. Work is an act of sincerity, one of the ways of

expressing sincerity.

In the semantic field of Chinese culture, great importance is attached to work. Early Chinese characters already had the symbol for “labor”: “𠂔” (depicting three farmers working side by side), “置” (bird and animal catcher, the character denoting a net). Initially they were associated with farming and fishing. “Labor” was the meaning-image of an occupation. The word "labor" is also used to refer to artisans. During spring and autumn and the Warring-States periods, there was already a word for "worker" and it is not very different from the meaning of "worker" in modern Chinese. The meaning-image of “labor” was formed as a “professional worker” and was associated only with the sphere of human activity. During the Warring States period, "labor" also meant "toil" or hardship. “Work” (*lao*) was also written in the shape of a “heart,” meaning “those who govern the country work hard with their hearts and minds.” “Work” in the Zhuangzi Rang Wang chapter was understood as “move your body.” A similar expression appears in *The Book of Later Han: Biography of Fangshu*. Hua Tuo said: “The human body wants to work, but it should not be used to extremes.” Thus, the meaning-image of the word “labor” (*lao*) had a functional meaning and was associated with the type of activity, burden and movement of the body. Work was praised and received approval. The upper part of the hieroglyph indicates the area of application of force, the lower part of the hieroglyph is conventionally divided into three categories - clothing, heart, strength. Its meaning is effort and hard work, fatigue, exhaustion, merit, reward, comfort. The hieroglyph “labor” contains a whole semantic sequence, a cause-and-effect chain. A good human life comes from work, as well as survival and development. The meaning of “work” was how to overcome heaviness and pain and finally find hope and joy. Wealth comes from work.

The image of “labor” (*goto*) in the semantic field of Japanese culture is represented as “a body in motion,” since it originally meant “the sudden movement of something that is at the top, and then move the body from there.” Semantic connections are built on this “ideal” meaning. Let us consider several semantic connections. The word “work” consists of two hieroglyphs, where both have the same meaning, but different origins and is explained as “I can do my best, hard work, work until exhaustion, work and get results, decent work, must – is work, for life”. A body in motion is an associative meaning-image, which is typical for hieroglyphic languages. The body in motion can be associated with Kamina Miti - “the path of the gods” (there are about 8 million). The human body must go along the path of the gods through moral purification and miraculous healing. One of the stages of this path is cleanliness and ideal order (work is associated with cleanliness and ideal order). “Body in motion” makes you feel what you are doing, that is, working - the feeling of work. The whole world is permeated with mysterious principles and understanding these principles is difficult. Labor and talent are indistinguishable in the semantic field of culture and create one meaning-image. It follows that work as hard work, and talent as ability and effort will lead to success. Success is viewed as a connection with the highest (the mountain is revered). Work is associated with collectivism, efforts for the benefit of the group and is *kama* - “the path of the gods”, which ensures holistic harmony of the body. Collectivism, genuine hard work and its outward appearance are a virtue. This is the realization of a certain deep and strong feeling that is part of the general attitude of the Japanese. The “Way of the Gods” is a special way of life. The meaning of the “ideal meaning of the word “labor” is a collective path, abilities, diligence as a “divine”, a virtuous quality of a person. Meanings-images – labor as a collective path, labor as

diligence, labor as a talent for diligence. The talent for diligence is the best human ability.

The image of “labor” in the semantic field of European culture is borrowed from the Latin language and was initially presented as burden, tension, pain and fatigue, desire, suffering, effort, which is recorded in the Latin language. Meaningful connections are formed at the level of the biological and mental, and concern only the essence of a person, which connects meaning-images with obtaining food and the structure of life. The Latin *labor*, having replaced the original English swink, “pulled over” its meaning of hard, exhausting work. Thus, the meaning-images in the Latin language are associated with the division of society in the Ancient Roman Empire into class and estate, where slavery was part of the structure of society, therefore, each class had its own meaning-image of labor. The Latin language was sign-logical, therefore the meanings-images were “constructed” in classes and in relation to classes and did not receive a single semantic integrity. The meaning-image of “labor” as hardship, suffering, pain and fatigue belonged to the lower classes and represented a way of physical survival (slaves, plebeians). The upper classes associated “work” with the desire to organize life. Semantic connections are unidirectional, consistent and logical, therefore the meaning-image of “work” has several representations as the structure of life, as getting food, as hard work, pain and fatigue. The meaning of the “ideal” meaning of the word “labor” is constructed from several meanings-images and is not holistic in essence. Despite the fact that the archaic layer (etymological meanings) on which the images are supposedly created is almost the same for the cultures examined in the study, each of them created a meaning-image unique to it.

3.1.2 Meanings-symbols

The images that arise on the basis of “ideal” meanings in the semantic field of culture become a kind of substratum for the emergence of a new semantic layer. Substrata of meaning-images are united according to some characteristic incomprehensible to us into conglomerates that are symbolized, that is, are in a relationship that is significant only in certain relationships and concentrates in a generalized form the significance of their specific properties as “super-important” or “super-real”. Consider also: “Symbolization is the process of creating concepts-symbols at an abstract-generalized level, which are not just an analogue sign that replaces a specific object or phenomenon, but concentrate in a generalized form the significance of their specific properties as super-important. The symbol is self-sufficient, it has intrinsic value. It fits organically into mental and spiritual life... A symbol is an internal semantic core, a storehouse of meanings” (Abakumova 2016: 231). According to S. Averintsev, “The object image and the deep meaning appear in the structure of the symbol, as two poles, inconceivable one without the other (for meaning loses its manifestation outside the image, and the image without meaning falls apart into its components), but also separated from each other, so that it is revealed in the tension between them. Transitioning into a symbol, the image becomes “transparent”; the meaning “shines through” it, being given precisely as semantic depth, semantic perspective” (Averintsev 1971: 155). The meaning-symbol within a culture is controlled by emerging meanings - meaning-images and “wandering” meanings, which also influence the creation of the meaning-symbol. The initial functional base of the symbol was associated with the object-shaped component of psychosemantic existence, where the dominant was the empirical generalization, which consisted of

eneration (in a totem) and the performance of ritual actions - rituals with various objects, images removed from them, carried out in the corresponding specific conditions of use (see Abakumova 2016).

The essential meaning of culture appears as a result of the interaction of two layers of the semantic field - meaning-images and meaning-symbols, due to which culture becomes self-sufficient. The meanings-symbols generated by the meanings-images differ slightly from them. Meanings and images can only appear within culture; outside culture they lose the ability to interact with each other, while remaining indifferent. Outside of culture, only meanings-symbols appear. The symbols of one culture can be “read” by another culture, so cultures can be in “dialogue” with each other at the level of symbols. The symbol becomes an image of cultural identity and conveys the relationship between external objects and the images that arise in the psyche as a result of this influence (see Whitehead 1990). Meanings-symbols arise in two ways: 1) on the substratum of meanings-images of one’s own culture; 2) with the “attraction” of meanings and images of the culture that is being absorbed. Moreover, the percentage of meaning-images of the “absorbed” culture can be very high if this culture was already highly developed. Meanings and symbols appear as a result of the mutual activity of imagination and inference. “The meaning of a symbol in the process of increasing alienation from the original meaning of the word is not at all connected with the semantics of the word itself”, claims Kolesov (2002: 53). “Meanings-symbols have a well-defined contour and a certain depth – the promise of meaning” (Perevolochanskaya 2009: 267).

The meaning-symbol expresses the integrity of the world of cultural images and is presented as a certain value. “It is thanks to value-symbolic intuition that a sensually perceived image turns

into a means for adequate and convincing transmission of ideal meaning” (Alefirenko 2010: 8-9). Philosophical concepts of cultures are built on meaning-symbols, and on the interaction of similar meaning-symbols of different cultures, religious systems are finally created and their ethical component is formalized. There is no such thing as “culture without religion or religion without culture, and the only creature with a religious need in the natural world is man” (Jezewsky 2015: 57). “Religious-philosophical systems direct culture towards transcendence, which, on the one hand, is its true object, and on the other, constitutes the goal and eschatological realization, the implementation of which begins in cultural reality” (Rusecki 1989: 143)

The meaning-symbol is subject to stereotyping, which ensures its conditional staticity in order to prevent the influence of unmanifested “wandering” meanings located in the semantic field of culture: it becomes resistant to their potential influence. A stereotype fixes the semantic unambiguity of the boundaries of the meaning-symbol. Acquiring a certain conditional staticity, the meaning-symbol materializes the ideas of culture. The symbol, according to Cassirer, is “the synthesis of the world and the spirit” (Cassirer 2001: 87). A. Bely believed that a symbol is a manifestation of the eternal and truthful in time (see Bely 1994). Being static, the meaning-symbol affects the sphere of supra-situationalism and, as a construct, “constructs” the symbolic picture of the cultural world. It is nationally specific and is motivated by the semantic connection that exists between the objective and abstract elements of its content (see Fedoseeva 2015). “Constructs are applicable not only to external events, but also to the inner life of people” (Weber 1990: 624). And they strive to replace the “subjective” meanings of the actual participants in the situation (see Zolyan 2018).

Let us consider the creation of the meaning-symbol of the

word “labor” in the semantic field of Russian culture. The meaning-symbol of the word “labor” is connected, according to T. Vendina, with hidden ethical meanings. According to them, in the Old Church Slavonic language, “labor” had a religious and moral motivation and implied efforts that significantly exceeded human capabilities. “Labor was viewed as a martyrdom or as an integral part of asceticism and was perceived as a moral imperative of human life, regulating all aspects of human existence. For man “labors” himself in the name of the Lord. In the Old Church Slavonic work was a test of fortitude, one of the forms of asceticism and moral action that leads to the salvation of the soul, and therefore a godly deed. Labor was considered not in the system of human relations, but in the system of relations between man and God. Hence the idea of the value of labor: suffering and torment of labor were perceived as self-affirmation of the individual, who, overcoming them, strengthened his spirit and sought to become like Christ in his actions” (Vendina 2022: 161-163). “Labor” becomes a symbol of spiritual perfection and a way of spiritual rebirth (the rebirth of man in the spirit, the created in the divine), therefore questions of existentiality were not relevant for Russian culture, because the meaning-symbol of culture became “life in God”, as the highest ideal of human existence, its spiritual value. The meaning-symbol of “work” is also the freedom of man from the corruptible worldly things.

In the semantic field of Arab culture of the Islamic period, work was directly related to God. The Muslim became attached to a merciful God, who was pleased with good morals and was angry at any meanness that led a person astray from his true purpose on earth. Generosity and sincerity were the main values that Islam emphasized. Generosity is one of the names of the Almighty – the Most Generous. Generosity is the path to salvation. God is generous, loves generosity, loves excellent morals and hates

immoral ones. The Islamic approach added etiquette, restrictions and controls to generosity, increasing its purity, sublimity and brilliance. Excellent morals also included the work that a person performed for the sake of his true purpose. “Labor” was read as the sincerity and generosity of a person in the eyes of God and as the purpose of man on earth. The meaning-symbol of “work” is sincerity, generosity and purpose. Sincerity refers to doing work for the pleasure of God alone and not for any other purpose such as praise or worldly gain, and God has established this as the basic condition for accepting good work. He who hopes to meet his Lord, let him do good work and not associate anyone with the Lord in worship (see Quran Surah Al Kahf: 110).

In the semantic field of Chinese culture, a syncretic meaning of “labor” appears within the framework of the “labor boundary”. In *The Three Kingdoms of Wei Zhi*, Zhong Hui Zhuan wrote: “work on our borders and invade our borders with Di and Qiang,” which meant “do something unpleasant” (see www.chinawriter.com.cn). On the other hand, “labor” is associated with hard work and human self-improvement. The meaning-symbol of “work” is self-improvement. Enduring adversity, but through perseverance achieving human resilience and determination. Work makes a person with a capital letter. Self-improvement combines perseverance, resilience and determination. The meaning-symbol of “work” is self-improvement through hard work, perseverance and determination.

In the semantic field of Japanese culture, the meaning-symbol “labor” has become a combination of two hieroglyphs with almost the same meaning – Chinese and native Japanese –, thus strengthening the associative connection within the semantic field of culture. “Labor” became a symbol of success. Unlike success in European culture, which is built on a person's ability to achieve it, success in Japanese culture is built on diligence, where diligence

is a more significant virtue than ability. Only through diligence is a person able to follow the path of the gods and reach the top of the mountain of success, so revered in ancient Japanese culture. Man gains the freedom of eternity in the diligence of earthly life. The meaning-symbol “work” implies “zeal for the good of eternity” and is correlated with harmony within any social group (eternally existing harmony between the gods). The result of success in Japanese society is unquestioning respect, and that is eternal. Thus, “labor” is a symbol of diligence for the benefit of eternity. Japanese culture is filled with a lot of symbols. These can be not only things or animals, but also people who carry symbolism within them.

In the semantic field of European culture, the meaning-symbol of the word “labor” was directly formed on the Protestant work ethics, which was described by M. Weber. Work was implied as a virtue, so it was necessary to work conscientiously and diligently. Material wealth, and not hoarding and luxury, was supposed to be the result of conscientious work and monastic asceticism in everything. The meaning-symbol of “work” is an ascetic lifestyle built on diligence and conscientiousness in fulfilling one’s duty (we see this today in the example of German culture.) Wealth was seen as a well-fulfilled duty to God. If God shows you this path, following which you can, without damage to your soul and without harming other, legal ways, earn more than on any other path, and you reject this and choose a less profitable path, then if you interfere with one of the purposes of your calling, you refuse to be a steward of God and to accept his gifts in order to be able to use them for his good when he wills it. You should work and grow rich not for the pleasures of the flesh and sinful joys, but for God (see Weber 1990). From the 16th century at the apogee of the development of the Holy Roman Empire of the German people, “work” in European culture was “ennobled” and

understood inextricably in connection with the earthly and transcendental. Meaningful connections are aimed at forming the image of labor as a virtue. Labor becomes “an expression of human destiny, spiritual communication with God, human nature is unthinkable without labor and implies conscientiousness, diligence to achieve material wealth, thrift, enterprise, the increase in wealth as a net increase in being is understood as an element of creativity. This is the basis of a person’s work activity in his connection with God. Later God was replaced by the transcendental. A person dies if the foundations of labor activity collapse. But most importantly, the connection with transcendence, with the sphere of the divine, which blesses a person to transform his life, is severed. “Labor is an invariable companion of human existence. However, its role in different societies turns out to be special, depending on the axiological dimension of a particular culture. In European history, work was glorified and poeticized, but to the same extent it was belittled, denying its significance for human existence” (Spirova 2007: 52). The meaning-symbol “work” is built on the combination of the earthly and the transcendental and becomes a virtue on the path to the transcendental. The meaning of the symbol is also twofold - work as success and work as virtue.

3.1.3 Constructed meanings. Meanings-terms

Meaning-constructs divided human nature into created and divine. Duality required an explanation in terms of rationality, built on Aristotelian logic, and in terms of emotion, that is, mental, and as a result, a new layer of the semantic field of culture is created – the construction of rational and emotionally charged meanings. These meanings are based on inferences and they exist at the subconscious and conscious levels. The action of these terminated

semantic conglomerates is observed over a long period. Termination destroyed the unity of the created and spiritual in man, making the nature of the mind and the nature of emotion limitless.

Meanings-images created on “ideal” meanings are mobile and endless; meanings-symbols “stabilize” meanings-images, making the cultural picture of the world stable. Meaning-terms have their limit and their border, but do not have depth, that is, they are not able to provide perspective and “expansion” of meaning, but began to construct a “new” reality of the world of ideas in the picture of the world of culture that is devoid of meaning. Meanings were replaced by technologies, depriving culture of development. Within culture, meanings-terms began to give new forms to eternal meanings-images and meanings-symbols, and thus an attempt is made to construct a new meaning within the framework of terminology. Such meanings provide ideological needs, while different functions of culture are used. Y. Lotman and A. Piatigorsky believed that even “scientific texts can be used in society as religious or magical, performing three different cultural functions” (Lotman 1992: 243-247). In the modern world, meanings and terms have become “given” and dependent on the ideas expressed by someone. Today, humanity has gone too far in constructing new meanings, which are increasingly divorced from culture and create instability, both personal and overall civilizational. The meanings of culture do emerge, but, being in a state of disunity of mind and sensations and constructing his life in terms or stereotypes, a person loses the only meaning of his existence. The meanings of culture are not born and do not live in terms; they remain outside of terminology. Culture, being in constant meaning-forming dynamics within its semantic field, is capable of returning a person to his origins and giving value and meaning to his life.

A striking example of the implementation of the meaning-concept of “labor” in the era of Soviet power was the monument to the architect Vera Mukhina “Worker and Collective Farm Woman”, which became a manifesto of freedom of labor as the highest human value. In that era, the word “worker” appeared in the Russian language, which invariably carried the semantic load of “companion of freedom.” Morality and moral work for the sake of freedom became the ideological basis of Soviet society. Despite the persecution of the church and the prohibition of God, the religious and philosophical hidden meaning was “read” in this concept. Man aspired not to God, but to work as the highest spiritual value. In fact, we are observing a substitution of the words God-work, but not a substitution of meanings. The grammatical form of the verb “to work (labor)” requires the Instrumental case, which contains the semantic “together” and also requires certain efforts: to work on a problem, etc., that is, hidden (hidden) meanings-images and meanings-symbols are preserved in the grammatical -semantic field of culture.

In Arab culture today, meaning-constructs were formed by merging different values of Islam and further “merging” them with pre-Islamic human values. Thus, in Arab culture, meaning-constructs were formed by “merging” meaning-images and meaning-symbols. Such meaning-constructs “guide” all modern processes, including those related to work. “Labor” is understood as charity, to work voluntarily, without coercion, to work according to the rules, a human act, a human effort. Until now, “work” is a person’s destiny and also remains linear, but at the same time reveals all the ethical norms ascribed to Arab society. Work is one of the ethical norms today.

In modern Chinese, the word "labor" is cognate with the Japanese, which developed much Western political thought and vocabulary in the late 19th century, and is understood as "menial

work" (hard work), hence laborer. Labor is the physical strength to do work. "Labor" and "laborer" are fixed in this meaning in Chinese dictionaries.

In Japanese culture, "work" today means "what a person does to earn money" and "occupation." This concept includes, in addition to those already mentioned, the action of creating something, achieving a goal, the consequences of actions, productivity (zeal), action, creativity (handicraft). "Labor" and "work" today are perceived as compatible concepts, in fact, as in other cultures. The meaning-concept of "labor" is correlated with the meaning-concept of "VA", but they do not replace each other, only enter into a strong associative semantic connection. "VA" is an integral part of social life, the meaning of which is to establish harmonious relations between a person and the social group to which he belongs. There are no personal interests, because the gods are united, socially subordinate to each other, the institution of "sacred kings" (see 2014, Meshcheryakov).

In European culture, the concept of "labor" has acquired an institutional framework (the British Labor Party, various trade unions for the protection of workers' rights). Labor became an institution of power and control. On the one hand, labor became a political instrument of the social democratic movement, on the other hand, based on the Protestant work ethics, it acquired the meaning of social justice and strengthening the rights of workers. The word laborist appears, that is, a person performing unskilled work for wages (slave, plebeian in Ancient Rome). The meaning and concept of "work" implies the "right to freedom" (to be free). If previously such rights were achieved or not achieved through uprisings, then the meaning-constructs in the semantic field of European culture constructed a political (democratic) component (s. Ancient Rome).

The above examples corroborate our assumption that all

meanings have long existed in the semantic field of culture. At each new stage in the spiral of cultural development, the basic meanings remain unchanged, only the form of their linguistic expression changes. The stability of meanings in the semantic field is ensured by the original “ideal” meanings and thinking itself. This becomes an indisputable fact, no matter how hard they try to control reality and construct new meanings to suit modern ideology.

4 Conclusions

1. The semantic field created by culture as a way of understanding the world is fundamental for its existence in the civilizational space.

2. Culture creates its own semantic core, which consists of cultural DNA and “ideal” meanings. The DNA of a culture is the energetic substance through which its “ideal” meaning is expressed. Each culture has its own “ideal” meaning and it is basic.

3. “Ideal” meanings materialize differently in different cultures, as shown in the examples of European, Russian, Arab, Chinese and Japanese cultures.

4. The “expansion” of meanings occurs through dynamic connections of “ideal” meanings with “wandering” meanings.

5. Meanings-images and meanings-symbols as fundamental elements of the semantic field of culture individualize it and make it stable in the civilizational space.

6. Meaning-constructs can either be borrowed from other cultures, or arise as a result of the connection of meaning-images and meaning-symbols in the semantic field of culture. For the research corpus, we took examples of cultures from different language families.

7. It is shown by the example of the concept of “labor”, which

functions in various cultures, that culture, being in the meaning-forming dynamics within its semantic field, is capable of returning a person to his origins and giving value and meaning to his life.

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INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION

A Presentation of the Betzavta Method for Teaching: Description and Possible Adaptations for Language & Literature Classes*¹

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Abstract: Betzavta is a method for teaching democracy, based on play. It simulates situations which imply decisional processes and centers the educational experience around a dilemma which must be solved. Such an approach to education leads to a more intimate and genuine learning experience for the students, allowing them to engage with the content of the class and own the consequences of their actions. However, such a method presents a number of difficulties when trying to implement it in formal educational contexts, and as such launches the challenge of adapting it, rather than simply adopting it. In this article, I present a brief description of the method itself, as well as some studied consequences of teaching through games and simulations generally. (There is little literature on the consequences of this method itself.) Additionally, I present two options for adapting exercises from this method to the teaching of English language and literature classes at high-school level, with possible adaptation for college seminars as well.

Keywords: Betzavta; education; games; simulation-based learning; English language teaching

1. *Betzavta*: Presenting the Method

The Betzavta method for teaching democracy was developed in 1993 by dr. Uki Maroshek-Klarman of the Adam Institute for Democracy and Peace as a response to the need to teach students about democratic values and attitudes. It has since spread to

* I would like to thank Ana Maria and Daniel Rusu, the people who have introduced me to this method back when I was their student.

various parts of the world, and now it is used predominantly in non-formal educational contexts. The method is based on play, games which are specifically designed to create a space that encourages collaboration and debate. Each game has a central dilemma which touches on subjects such as freedom, individual and group responsibility, discrimination, and more. Some of the key features of this method are equality, transparency, and acceptance. As such, there is no right or wrong answer during the workshops, since all participants are encouraged to speak their minds and look for a way in which to solve a problem together.

The usual development of a session is to start with an icebreaker, in order to get the participants accustomed to debating and communicating freely, and then to introduce them to the game. The facilitators of the workshop present the game in such a way as to allow for significant freedom of choice for the participants. After the game is played out, a discussion follows it. During this discussion, facilitators ask the participants questions regarding the game, their own choices, and the results. Questions are particularly important to this method, since their role is to guide the conversation and moderate it, without imposing beliefs or creating presuppositions to lead the discussion towards a previously agreed-upon point. The conflicts and dilemmas in Betzavta games arise from the development of the game itself (the way in which moral judgements are emitted, contrasts between actions and attitudes, the behavior of participants, etc.). This stage is followed by the feedback moment, when each participant is asked to share one thing that they will remember, that surprised them, or that made them question some things, attitudes, or ideas. Although many sessions might have the same starting point, i. e., the same game, there are not two sessions that share the same development, since it all depends on the reactions and the choices of the participants.

Betzavta combines several educational methods in order to achieve its goal:

The combination of methods that are characteristic of Betzavta education consist of: [m]ethods for creating and working through conflicting values and dilemmas; [m]ethods involving group dynamics; [t]riggering and cooperative learning and teaching methods (Wolff-Jontofsohn n.d.: 13)

The goals of these methods are: to help participants internalize problems and translate them into conflicts or dilemmas, to help formulate questions regarding their own principles and values; to place the participants in a group environment so that they become aware of their own behaviors (productive and responsive), as well as the processes and reactions of others; and to help participants communicate, negotiate, and eventually compromise to reach a conclusion, based on democratic values. These processes help develop traits and skills that are essential for the 21st century, including critical thinking, problem solving, and collaboration. Furthermore, being essentially a simulation, Betzavta is very much centered around discussion, debate, and argumentation, and as such it presents an ideal setting for the teaching of languages, creating a context in which students can use their target language independently. The third part of this article will present ways in which Betzavta can be specifically implemented in English classes.

Logistically, a Betzavta session lasts for a minimum of an hour and a half, which makes it more difficult to integrate at a high school level or below, where classes occupy a span of 50 minutes. However, through identifying some key underlying aspects of the method and exploring the ways in which they can be implemented in traditional English classes, adaptation is possible. In contexts such as university or college, on the other

hand, as well as within extra-curricular activities and clubs, the traditional form of the method is a valuable teaching technique for the development of the aforementioned skills, which can take the place of more traditional methods such as debating or active learning, because it both implements and supplements them.

2. Learning through Games and Simulations

This part of the paper presents the theoretical framework for employing this method as a means of developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The literature about Betzavta and its impact on the development of students/participants is scarce, as there are few people who study the method. In Ulrike Wolff-Jontofsohn's *Learning the Language of Democracy with Betzavta*, the underlying methods and educational approaches of Betzavta are explored. As such, it becomes clear that this method was elaborated with its educational consequences in mind. However, I have not found studies which measure its impact on the participants, and for this reason I decided to look at studies on the cognitive and developmental consequences of teaching through games, play, and simulations, as an underlying argument for the impact of the method.

Games and play are intrinsic to human nature. Johan Huizinga explores this throughout his book *Homo Ludens*, where he treats play

as a special form of activity, as a 'significant form', as a social function [...]. We shall not look for the natural impulses and habits conditioning play in general, but shall consider play in its manifold concrete forms as itself a social construction [...] [and] try to understand play as a cultural factor in life (Huizinga 1949: 4).

Creating a stage onto which to exercise real life is important for younger children, but it is applicable to a more mature audience as well.

The entire idea of creating a simulation of a democratic process through the Betzavta method is akin to the effects—and attractiveness—of computer simulation games, albeit without a flashy user interface. In this simulated space, students take on different roles which allow them to shed insecurities and the fear of consequences, and experience freedom to a large degree. The space is by no means consequence-free, since participants are responsible for everything they say and do; yet, there are no “traditional” consequences that are found in formal education. They are not penalized for not knowing a word or a grammatical structure and there is no number to evaluate their competences at the end of the experience. As such, this space allows them to engage with a more intrinsic learning experience, encouraging participants to practice introspection and problem-solving. This latter skill is considered an essential skill for the 21st century, understood—as summarized in a 2019 systematic review—as “the ability to find causes of a particular problem or problems, find different solutions, weigh different options, make decisions about the best solution, implement the solution, and finally evaluate the implementation” (Kailani et al. 2019: 1129).

Kailani et al.'s (2019: 1127-1137) systematic review included studies spanning from 2009 to 2016 published in peer-reviewed journals, on the topic of problem-solving as a consequence of game-based learning in educational settings. A core finding of this review is that feedback and interactivity increased student engagement, which then correlated with a higher likelihood of the student engaging in problem-solving.

Timing of feedback and the content displayed are very crucial in the design, as some feedback may encourage the player to critically think about the problem at hand while others, for example a constant indication of right or wrong answers, can hinder gameplay and disengage the player from the game and the problem in the game. (Kailani et al. 2019: 1131)

This issue raised a discussion point around the design of the interface for games employed in educational settings. However, as Betzavta is not a computer-based game, the issue of a well-designed interface is not pertinent. Additionally, the setting of this method supports engagement, as the game is centered around an activity. Feedback in Betzavta is integral, as each round of the game ends with an open discussion about the assessment of the issue and the development of the game itself. Students are all encouraged to think back to the events of the past hour and discuss relevant aspects that had an impact on the gameplay.

Simulations differ from games as understood traditionally, where there is a competition, a set of rules, and—inevitably—winners and losers. In an essay on educational games and simulations, Margaret Gredler (1996: 521-540) explores the composition of both games and simulations, at what she calls “deep” and “surface” structures, and defines three ways in which simulations are different from games:

1. “games are competitive exercises in which the objective is to excel by winning, [while] participants in a simulation [...] are executing serious responsibilities, with the associated privileges and consequences”
2. “the event sequence of a game is typically linear, whereas a simulation sequence is nonlinear”

3. "the mechanisms that determine the consequences to be delivered for different actions taken by the students in the exercise [are different in games and simulations]." (Gredler 1996: 522-3)

To elaborate, in simulations there is no competition in which some participants win, and some lose, but rather a common goal which is achieved through teamwork or collaboration. In the same spirit, when the participant arrives at a point of decision making in simulations, there are multiple outcomes, depending on the decisions taken thus far by the player. This makes consequences more real and immediate, offering participants a chance to engage in a retrospective analysis of their actions. Finally, games are defined by the rules which govern them, which include what a participant is allowed to do and what not. Gredler (1996: 521-540) explains that "the basis for a simulation is a dynamic set of relationships among several variables that (1) change over time and (2) reflect authentic causal processes" (523). One defining aspect of a simulation is that we can predict or foresee outcomes based on the behaviors which are likely to occur.

Considering the features described above, one could claim that the Betzavta method is based not only on play, but more precisely on a simulation for social and democratic processes. Gredler (1996: 521-540) mentions that "[g]iven the recent emphasis on students' constructing knowledge during learning, this model [i.e. «experiential simulation»] or a similar one can provide information to teachers about specific student difficulties" (533). This is already a first argument for adopting an exercise such as Betzavta, at least as a way for the educators to better understand the different ways of thinking—and therefore the specific needs—of their students.

The benefits for such an approach do not end here. Studies looking at cognitive and developmental consequences of learning

through games and play show that—despite logistical difficulties—students are often more engaged and attentive while participating in such activities. "[G]ames provide opportunities for authentic, reflective, and critical thinking practices that are not only pertinent, but essential for success in the 21st century" (Cicchino 2015: n.p.). Although most such studies focus on computer games and simulations, implementing a non-virtual simulation should, in principle, present fewer downsides. Gökür Kaplan Akilli (2007: 1-20) presents a synopsis of some of the areas explored thus far, related to the impact of games and simulation on learning:

Critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Rieber, 1996), drawing meaningful conclusions (Price, 1990), some inductive discovery skills like observation, trial and error, and hypothesis testing (Gorriz & Medina, 2000; Greenfield, 1984, cited in Prensky, 2001; Price 1990), and several other strategies of exploration (Prensky 2001; Provenzo, 1992) were other positive effects of games on learning. (Akilli 2007: 5)

Another meta-analysis of 123 studies (carried out from 2010 to 2016) presents some of the consequences observed when using games and simulation for higher education. The observed consequences concern three areas: “cognitive, behavioral, and affective outcomes” (Vlachopoulos & Makri 2017: 15). Pertinent to the present article are some conclusions related to simulations, although others might also contribute to the understanding of the consequences of using such methods for teaching. In the meta-analysis, the authors point out that “some reviewed studies indicate improved learning, while others show no positive effect on knowledge and skill acquisition compared to traditional learning methods” (Vlachopoulos & Makri 2017: 15). However, from the different types of games put under analysis, simulations

prove to bring more significant value in terms of knowledge acquisition:

[t]he value of simulations can be examined from the perspective of content change [...]. Simulations are directly linked to the course content and students are given the opportunity to apply and better understand theoretical concepts. Additionally, simulations provide an environment in which students can experiment with different strategies, adopt different roles, and take charge of their own decisions by assuming responsibility. (Vlachopoulos & Makri 2017: 15-16)

From the perspective of behavioral consequences, simulations again seem to have an edge over traditional learning:

Simulation games are often seen as powerful tools in promoting teamwork and team dynamics (Stanley & Latimer, 2011; Tiwari et al., 2014; Lin, 2016; Wang, 2016), collaboration (Hanning, 2012), social and emotional skills (Ahmad et al., 2013), and other soft skills, including project management, self-reflection, and leadership skills (Siewiorek, 2012; Wang et al., 2016), which are acquired through a reality-based scenario with action-oriented activities (Geithner & Menzel, 2016). (Vlachopoulos & Makri 2017: 19)

When looking at affective outcomes, especially student attention and motivation, game-based learning appears to be more beneficial to the students; however, as I also mention in this paper, this might be a result of the novelty of such methods—a stark contrast to what students are usually exposed to in formal learning—and not necessarily of the methods themselves. As is acknowledged in the meta-analysis, “motivation is not always related to GBL [game-based learning], [as some researchers are]

emphasizing cases where students who use games in solitary or collaborative environments experience no significant difference in terms of learning motivation” (Vlachopoulos & Makri 2017: 21-22). However, in a study from 2015, Cicchino explains that the attractiveness of game-based learning needs to be considered, as it is congruent with what high-quality teaching produces as well, specifically "student engagement, student choice, and student-driven learning (Cicchino 2015: n. p.)." According to this study, these metrics provided by "constructivist-style learning environments (such as the GBL [game-based learning] intervention examined in this study) are harmonious with great teaching" (Cicchino 2015: n. p.).

As the literature shows, there are many ways in which a game can influence a student, and it is not always easy to predict how. Yet, the consensus is that properly designed games render positive effects on students. The Betzavta method is reliant on a simulation, but the behavior and the choices of the participants create the game. In this way, the game that is at the core of the method is a result of the individual choice of participants, making the experience one that is relevant for each student.

However, the problem at the center of this article is not as much with the impact of Betzavta—although this is important and additional studies are needed—but with adapting it to fit the current educational system. In his article “Learning the Language of Democracy with Betzavta”, Ulrike Wolff-Jontofsohn puts forth some ways in which Betzavta could be implemented in schools.

Betzavta is in no way a program limited to politics, community, and social studies lessons. Exercises from Betzavta can complement political, historical, philosophical, and cultural lesson topics via political and moral perspectives. Reference to actual situations can be drawn from this, correlations between personal experiences and

factual topics demonstrated, and students aided in seeing situations of conflict and the regulation of conflicts through "democratic eyes". (Wolff-Jontofsohn n.d.: 24)

Wolff-Jontofsohn explains that there are two ways in which the method can be implemented in schools: as "individual exercises" or as "exercise blocks" (24). Considering the same delimitations on curriculum and schedule, the proposal is to take units and pair them with the relevant subjects: "A history lesson on the topic of the «social contract» can be opened with an exercise on «the importance of a contract»" (Wolff-Jontofsohn n.d.: 24) and so on. Next, I explore ways in which such ideas can be integrated in language learning and literature classes.

3. Adopting Betzavta in the School System

As previously mentioned, the integration of Betzavta in the school system has been explored by Ulrike Wolff-Jontofsohn:

Learning democracy can be seen as a task that stretches across subjects for all school types. It takes place at a number of levels in the school environment

- In politics and social study lessons as knowledge
- In all other subjects as an expansion of the way in which things are viewed
- In all school situations as social learning
- As a component part of a democratic school culture (25)

However, for the people who have not experienced Betzavta, this can be difficult to grasp. Educators need to understand the principles of teaching democracy, as well as the objectives they have: to highlight conflicts and dilemmas that arise during the simulation and discuss them appropriately during the discussion phase, as well as to allow the events to unfold according to the unique group dynamic.

In what follows, I briefly present two activities used in the Betzavta method. These exemplify how this type of education can be used to promote the development of 21st century skills as noted above, as well as communication (especially assertiveness) and language skills.

3.1. Language Classes

Implementing an entire session of Betzavta in a language class can be done by choosing a topic which would subject the participants to using a certain type of construction. In an advanced class, such exercises are useful for teaching students how to create and maintain the structure of argumentation (for instance for students of a debate club, or for students practicing English for legal reasons), how to make their speech more persuasive, or how to answer questions more effectively. This method would help shift students' perspective from seeing the specific linguistic structure—the topic of the class—as an end in itself, to perceiving it as a means, something more immediately useful. As such, they will use these structures during the simulations more naturally and intentionally.

For the example presented below, there are multiple objectives. The lesson is thought out so that participants need to use the conditional mood in constructions such as “If I gathered enough votes, I would make a rule to benefit all of us”, while also learning how to use the dialogue in order to negotiate. This means listening to their peers in order to understand and reply with a relevant response, as well as creating a speech strategy that helps them convince the audience.

The game that this lesson is based on is the card game, where each participant is given a slip of paper on which they need to write their name. The goal of the game is to gather as many slips as possible; at the end, whoever has the most slips can formulate a rule which applies to the entire group, for the duration

of the session. In itself, it is a lesson on voting, compromise, and negotiation, but it can be very useful in an English class as well.

Example 1: The Card Game – Learning to collaborate to win

- Key concepts: equity, power, majority, consent
- Game objectives:
 - The students will be involved in the simulation of a decision-making process.
 - The students will discuss what makes the process a democratic one and how the nature of the process affects them.
 - The students will reflect on their own involvement in the decision-making process and the consequences of their action/inaction.
- Language-related objectives:
 - The students will exercise their knowledge of conditional clauses and irrealis verb moods.
 - The students will build their own argumentative structures and test them in a simulated negotiation.
 - The students will learn persuasive mechanisms of language.

As mentioned previously in the paper, by making language a secondary part of the game, the students will shift their focus on the objective of the simulation and have a genuine and more natural interaction with language.

3.2. Literature Classes

Literature classes are crucial for the early development of critical thinking. Although these are usually more engaging for students than language classes, there is still a tangible distance between students and the material. When tackling stories that concern themselves with political and social problems, exercises

derived from the Betzavta method are optimal for creating a simulation in which the students can better understand the central issue, themes, and goals of socio-political stories. The following example of a Betzavta game tackles the issue of discrimination. Each participant is marked with a sticker or a stamp, and they are asked to form groups. The discussion that follows is based on what strategies the participants use to form groups.

Example 2: Stamp/Sticker Game

- Key concepts: majority, minority, prejudice, discrimination
- Game objectives:
 - The students will explore the way in which groups are formed in society, based on more or less artificial reasons.
 - The students will explore the way in which prejudices are formed and discrimination ensues.
 - The students will explore the way in which prejudice blocks communication.

Opening a literature unit with this type of lesson allows the students to better internalize some values which bring nuance to the development of a story, especially on social or political topics. They can understand the situations which arise out of group dilemmas and disagreement, as well as follow along the path to resolution. They will also be able to identify mistakes that were made during the decision-making process which can lead to unfortunate developments within a story.

3.3. The Difficulties of Integrating Betzavta in the School System

Adopting Betzavta in the school system presents some logistical difficulties, including the time limit of traditional high school classes. For this reason, blocks of exercises work better at

this level. However, a full Betzavta session fits well within the time limit of college seminars and practical courses. Another issue which results from the potential integration of Betzavta as a subject in schools is grading. Because there is a high degree of transparency in the simulation and because the consequences are felt within the space of the simulation as well, grades do not fit the Betzavta method. This is why it is more feasible to use this method as an adjuvant to teaching, and not necessarily as a class in itself (at least initially).

However, the advantages of using such a method encourage the search for solutions. There are teachers who are already using Betzavta in their lessons, albeit in a different system than the Romanian one. As I have already mentioned, the literature on the subject is too scarce to back up any claim made throughout the article, and therefore it falls onto future studies to experiment and measure the impact of Betzavta—or at least partially-integrated exercises—in schools. To supplement the lack of literature, I reached out to a person who is teaching Betzavta at university level: Tali Padan, director of Mellem Education. She first became familiar with the method in 2013 and has been organizing workshops ever since. I interviewed her for an expert opinion on this matter.

The first question relates to the feedback Padan receives after a Betzavta workshop. “These days, I teach Betzavta as a course at a university, and it usually receives very good feedback,” Padan said. “The setting is different, as they are mostly university students who comment on how different the course is, compared to their other courses. When I was involved more in trainings, the feedback was mixed. Many people loved it and found it a unique learning method, while some seemed a bit skeptical.” The different nature of Betzavta stimulates the participants, yet indeed the risk when presenting it as a separate

method is that the fascination of its novelty will take away from the main goals of a class. By incorporating the attitudes and the features of Betzavta and using them as methods in various courses, it can help students more easily navigate their own mental processes and internalize what they are being taught, whether that be English, history, or politics.

When asked about the different skills that participants develop, Padan mentioned "the art of being in a group. This means dealing with and sometimes struggling with the dilemma between differing perspectives and personalities. One skill that I see people developing is letting go of their own assumptions in order to accept other perspectives into their world. This is a way that people can open up and become willing to cooperate and empathize with others."

In discussing the feasibility of Betzavta as a method implemented in school, Padan mentions with certainty that this is a practical and possible endeavor. "I definitely think it is possible to implement [it] in schools, and I am doing it at a university right now. These are a bit different, but they share similar limitations, for example the idea that the teacher is the ultimate authority or expert. In Betzavta, every participant is responsible for their own learning process, and I think this would be very valuable at a school where students often are guided only by what the teacher says." This novel aspect that appears when implementing Betzavta in schools is likely to help with student engagement and motivation, as a different dynamic appears that students need to navigate and assume more responsibility than for a traditional class. "Of course, it is important to keep some kind of structure, but there is also room for creativity in schools," Padan continued. "There may be some practical challenges, as some activities require more time. Another practical challenge is the grading issue, as Betzavta is not really meant to be graded, especially not

by someone other than the learner. I am dealing with this right now in the university, and it is possible to integrate this conversation into an activity and talk about an ideal way to assess the learning. The good thing about Betzavta is that all these issues can be integrated into the learning!”

When discussing recommendations that Padan has for educators wishing to adopt exercises or blocks of exercises from the Betzavta method in their regular teaching, she mentioned that “[t]here are already teachers doing this, so my recommendation is to talk to them! From my experience, it is also a learning process for the teacher, and they will also be confronted by uncertainties and dilemmas that students present. So, I would say to be open to learning from these, learning from the students, and consider everything a part of the Betzavta experience.”

Betzavta is overall a positive experience that can stimulate participants to be more critical and to make value judgements on their own actions and reactions in certain scenarios. As a simulation, it provides a stage for students to experience something they might not have often been a part of—a decision-making process. Within it, they can understand individual and group responsibility and evaluate their own relation with democratic values and principles. Whether its implementation in traditional school systems is possible has been answered: it is possible, but we still need to understand its impact on the development of students.

4. Conclusions and Suggestions for Further Research

As a method—or a means—Betzavta is a fruitful tool for the teachers willing to embrace creativity and to try on a different approach to learning. It better frames the goal of a lesson, it allows for freedom of speech, and it creates a space in which the students see the immediate consequences of their decisions, contextualizing their individual responsibility. When it comes to

the implementation of Betzavta itself, there are logistical difficulties, as presented in the article, among which time management and grading. However, we can steer clear of these by choosing to only add exercises and prompts from the method to enrich our teaching.

The most important issue to be tackled by future research is to check how this method impacts the students, especially at a younger age and in high school. A possibility of this is A/B testing, with a control group; however, the final grade in a class or the results on certain exams are perhaps not the best indicators of the results of the method, but they can act as a starting point. A clearer methodology for testing should be elaborated.

Finally, I believe it is the duty of an educator to understand the needs of their students, adapt their teaching style, and adjust the contents to fit these needs. Personally, I find that Betzavta is one of the most stimulating methods for encouraging and developing critical thinking and encouraging students to collaborate and resolve dilemmas in groups. As the field advances, the goal should be to find the balance between systematic and creative learning, in order to account for the equal development of these skills, and to provide a better fit for the diverse ways of learning for each student.

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Literature Written by Women in the Romanian Curriculum

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Abstract: This paper dwells on the rather outdated Romanian curriculum in the study of Romanian language and literature and its purpose is to raise awareness of the names of salient female writers that are missing from the curriculum. We consider that feminism is a dual process which operates both on a social and educational level of society. The structure of society is reflecting on the structure of education where sexism is currently being perpetuated through the absence of female writers in the literary canon. Our research is didactic because we want to improve the curriculum and it is also a longitudinal research, since we propose to highlight the theoretical framework of the research during a year. The fields of research are education, philology and sociology. The methods chosen are: the survey method, the psychopedagogical experimental method, the sociometric methods, as well as the examination of curriculum documents and of other school documents.

Keywords: feminism, gender equality, feminine literature, literary canon, sexism

1. Introduction

The Romanian curriculum serves as the study's first reference point. We found out that the Romanian Baccalaureate exam does not require any texts published by female authors. Furthermore, since feminism and the emancipation of women are now more important than ever, literature written by women is also a highly debated subject everywhere in the world. Literature, as a tool used in educating the next generation of adults, is one the

domains that require radical changes: “Education looked upon as an investment must represent a key point in promoting human values” (Eşi 2010: 140). If the pupils continue to follow a school curriculum that is built upon a patriarchal mentality, no change will be possible in the near future.

2. Theoretical Framework: Feminist Criticism

Feminism is a movement that seeks to “reconstruct society in a way that patriarchy is eliminated and a culture created that is fully inclusive of women’s desires and purposes” (Edgar, Sedgwick 2008: 124). As previously mentioned, feminism has been a highly debated topic in the last years and it has slowly made its way in every aspect of society. However, Romanian literature has rejected major changes in this respect. The purpose of this study is the familiarization of the high school students with the literature written by women within the Romanian literature class. By using study domains such as education, philology and sociology we want to demonstrate that the prejudice and stereotypes perpetuated by the school program can be stopped by acknowledging literature written by women in a new curriculum. Gender equality is another key concept that becomes relevant when discussing this topic. As one of the main goals of feminism, gender equality refers to the ability to have access to rights and opportunities regardless of one’s gender. In opposition to gender equality, sexism is a form of discrimination that generally targets women. Sexism can manifest itself in every aspect of society, even in the literary canon which consists of a list of carefully selected authors that have enriched literature with their originality and influence. The problem with the literary canon, as Harold Bloom put it, is that it belongs to the “dead great white male Europeans” (Bloom 2018).

We started our research from a macro level, analyzing the feminist critical perspective that is gaining momentum in the European space, but also at the global level. This is not only manifested in the social, economic and cultural field, but also in the educational and institutional fields, with a view to implementing gender equality policies in organizations and school institutions (gymnasium, high school and university). Such policies are meant to challenge the traditionally marginal role women have and to bring them to a position of equality with men in a society that is mostly dominated by white and *civilized* men (Lykes, Moane 2009: 284).

When it comes to the image of women in today's society, it is still perceived as otherness, and in social structures men relate to women from a phallo-centric perspective, with women only having the quality of OTHER (Shefer, Munt 2019: 146). A striking perspective is that of the article *We've Come a Long Way, Guys! Rhetorics of Resistance to the Feminist Critique of Sexist Language* in which the authors emphasise the fact that society is structured around the dominant discourse, and mentalities are formed by a discourse centered on the male vision. (Kleinman, Copp, Wilson 2021: 62). According to the same authors, the patriarchal society is a continuous entity, and most realities are likened to the idea of masculinity, therefore patriarchy will perpetuate itself if the change does not begin by developing a new discourse. From the social level, where the movement for the emancipation of women is most poignant, we slide towards the micro level of literature, where there is a tendency to acknowledge women's role in literature, after centuries in which they were overshadowed by male writers.

3. Feminism in Romania

Romania is placed between the West European countries and the Oriental ones when it comes to the applications of feminist principles. We are stating this because there are a lot of inequalities in the present day Romania, because there is a polarization between the rich zones and the poor ones and because women play an important part in the development of the society as a whole. It's an inevitable truth that the macro level is influencing the micro level and the lack of the feminist movement in the inner structure of Romanian society is reflected in the educational system with all its components.

The article written by Anca Elena Puha Alecse named *Ipostaze ale feminismului și literatura feminină în spațiul românesc* (Hypostases of Feminism in Feminine Romanian literature), published in *Meridian Critic*, gives us details about the unfavorable situation of the female writers in Romania at the beginning of the 18th century, when gender difference represented a disadvantage and a constraint. Mircea Cărtărescu analyzes the difference between Romanian culture and the Western one, where attention is turned towards the marginal groups of society, including women. Monica Dana Căndea, in her article *Etică și comunicare. Scriitura feminină și jurnalul intim* (Ethics and Communication. Women's Writing and The Private Diary) published in *Buletin Științific* continues to develop the idea of literature written by women as a case of literary marginalization. Although it is not radically different from the literature written by men, it is considered inferior. Nina Corcinschi in her article *Literatura nu are sex* (Literature has no Gender) published in *Metaliteratură* reinforces the same idea, because literature written by women has always been subject to misogynistic prejudices.

When it comes to the image that women have in Romanian literature we can affirm that is a biased one because women

always occupied a marginal position and they were considered as being the other in Todorov's terms. This has been valid until now, when Romanian curriculum promotes only male writers. It's true that in the past years the curriculum has been changed and some texts written by women were introduced for study, but it is the teacher's choice whether they will be studied in class. Thus, in our paper we want to demonstrate that women's writings are valuable and are a must in a healthy educational system.

4. The Romanian curriculum

Gender inequalities in the Romanian Curriculum are even more obvious when one analyses it against other school curricula in Europe. We compared the school curriculum in England with the one in Romania, because the social mentality manifests itself most strongly in schools. In England, women writers have a privileged status, their number is equal to that of male writers. For example, the *Cambridge Assessment International Education* offers for study an equal number of women writers and men writers. In contrast, in the Romanian curriculum for the 11th grade, female writers are completely absent, we can not even speak of representation, let alone equality.

5. Literature written by women

Literary criticism has it that literature written by women is strikingly different when it is compared to literature written by men because women are more sensitive, emotional and their literary themes are mainly based on love and affections. In fact, the stereotypes are derived from the history of women when they were considered incapable of creating art or it was considered that they are not worthy of superior forms of thinking. (Wigginton, Lafrance 2019)

For instance, the Goldberg study from 1968 demonstrates that a group of students (180 girls and 180 boys) evaluated papers which they were told that had been written by men and women and the papers that had allegedly been written by men were better evaluated than those which were written by women. (Paludi, Bauer 1983). Another study showed that male editors are inclined to select books written by male writers and that male researchers are keen to cite only books written by men: “Male science writers might also seem more credible than female science writers do” (e.g., Marchant 2011; Vivienne 2011). Female science writers have said that many women do write on popular science, but are not well-represented in top-tier magazines or as candidates for awards. According to Marchant (2011), of 144 books shortlisted for the United Kingdom’s Royal Society Winton Prize for Science Books over 24 years, only 11 books (7.6 %) had a woman author, of which only one won the prize (Oggins 2014: 185).

6. Investigation

In order to back up our hypothesis we conducted an investigation under the form of a questionnaire that was filled in by 28 freshmen, pupils in the 9th grade, with the ages between 14-15, from a highschool with an economic profile. 71,4% of the students are females and 28,6 males; 63,3% grew up in the countryside and 35,7% in the city; 64,3% of the students have parents that only graduated highschool, 10,7% graduated only middle school and 21,4% have higher education; 67,9% identify as orthodox, 28,6% as protestants and 3,6% as catholics.

Sunteți de părere că modul în care societatea tratează astăzi femeile este corect?

28 de răspunsuri

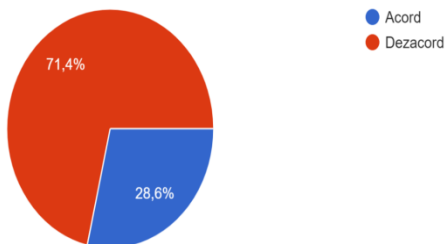


Chart 1

When asked if they consider whether the way in which society treats women is right, 71,4 % of students answered in the negative and 28,6 % in the affirmative.

Cunoașteți o scriitoare/autoare sau mai multe din literatura universală?

28 de răspunsuri

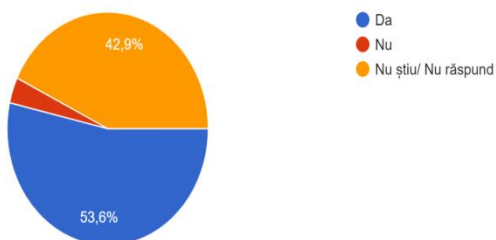


Chart 2

To the question “Can you name one or more female writers from world literature?” 53,6% of the students answered in the affirmative while 42,9 % answered in the negative.

Considerați că bărbații sunt superiori femeilor?
28 de răspunsuri

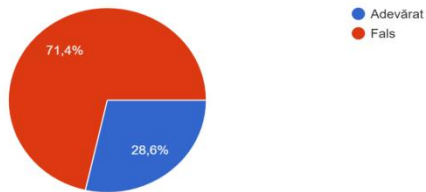


Chart 3

71,4% of students said they don't believe that men are superior to women while 28,6% of the students said that they do.

Considerați că există diferențe între literatura scrisă de bărbați și cea scrisă de femei?
28 de răspunsuri

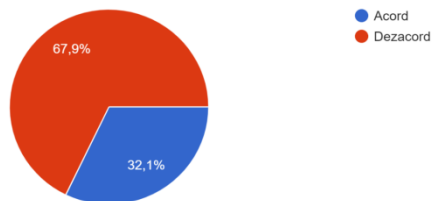


Chart 4

When asked if there are any differences between the literature written by men and that written by women, 67,9% of students answered in the negative and 32,1% in the affirmative.

Sunteți de părere că programa școlară de limba și literatura română se situează la standardele societății actuale?

28 de răspunsuri

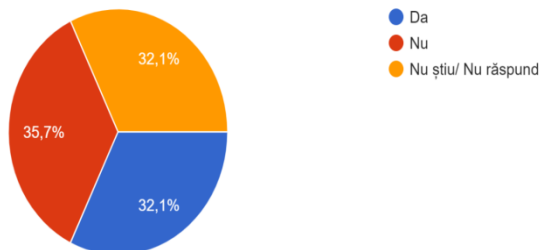


Chart 5

When asked if they believe that the Romanian curriculum fits the standards of contemporary society, the percentages were almost equal: 35,7% answered in the negative, 32,1% of the students in the affirmative and the same number of respondents did not answer at all.

7. Conclusion and possible solutions

This article was written to draw attention to a problem that represents a real obstacle to the healthy development of Romanian society and is related to the fact that there is a complete lack of female writers in the Romanian curriculum. We have shown that school is the place where people are formed as future citizens and that the things they learn there often define both their worldview and the way they treat others.

In order to see the consequences of this fact, to understand how Romanian students perceive the position of women in society and what they think about the value of literature written by

women, we applied the questionnaire presented above. As you can see, it shows that about two thirds of the respondents feel that their society is still patriarchal. About 70% believe that the way women are treated today is not right. The same percentage also think that men are not superior to women, therefore neither can literature written by males be considered better or more valuable than that written by females. But we must also take into account the 30% of others who do not see things the same way, thus denying or ignoring the existence of a problem.

As far as the Romanian school curriculum is concerned, only one third of students consider that it meets the standards of today's society. Due to the fact that literature written by women is neither required for the Romanian Baccalaureate exam nor studied in class, half of those questioned admitted that they are not familiar with works by any female authors of world literature. This situation becomes quite concerning when compared to that in other European countries, where half of the authors included in the school curriculum are women.

Consequently, we have to admit that there is indeed a great need for change. In order to eliminate ignorance, gender inequality, sexism and misogyny from our society, first of all school activities must be reformed. The solution we propose is to gradually expose and familiarize students to more literary works written by women. We have selected several authors according to several different criteria. We took into account these women's origins, nationality, religious beliefs, the historical period they lived in, the culture they lived in, the way they were treated by the community they were part of etc. We also thought about the themes that are discussed in their literary works, about the position and image of female characters that are placed at different times at different corners of the world.

We first decided to suggest two Romanian women writers, since they come from a background well known to the students. These are Sofia Nădejde, who was a novelist, translator, playwright, journalist and women's rights activist, nowadays we even have a Literary Award named by her, which is given annually to the Romanian female authors, and Nina Cassian, a poet, essayist, translator and composer of Jewish origin.

Then we would like to introduce two great classics of English literature, which are already studied in many European countries. The first one is Jane Austen, who was a 19-th century novelist, extremely famous nowadays for she explored in her plots the social position of women at that time, and Virginia Woolf, who was one of the most important modernist English writers that also supported the women's rights movement and the reforms which had to do with women's education.

We have also included two American women writers who have won Pulitzer Prizes and Presidential Medals of Freedom for the topics they have approached in their novels, depicting the life and condition of black people in 20th century America. These are Harper Lee and Tony Morrison.

And the last two names we would like to add to this short list are Malala Yousafzai and Isabel Allende. We thought it would be great for the students to also get to know some women writers who belong to totally different backgrounds and cultures. Malala Yousafzai, the world's youngest Nobel Prize laureate, is a Pakistani female education activist known for dealing with this issue in the Islamic society and Isabel Allende is a Chilean-American author who writes in the style of magical realism and is considered to be one of the first successful female writers in Latin America.

We believe that these works will give students a new perspective, a female perspective on the world and life. With their complexity and diversity, they will demonstrate that the value of a literary text is defined by talent, work and skill and not by the writer's gender.


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Contrastive Linguistics



Contrastive Linguistics
Vergleichende Sprachwissenschaft
Linguistique contrastive
Lingüística contrastiva
Linguistica contrastiva

Proverbele românești, de la tradiție la digitalizare (I) (Romanian Proverbs, from Tradition to Digitalization I)

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Abstract: The present paper analyzes how the mechanism of construction and operation of the traditional proverb, which calls for operations of structuring, metaphorization, transfer and extension of meaning in other communication situations, finds its applicability when subjected to modeling by AI. The comparison of the particularities of the traditional Romanian proverbs with those generated by AI, by analyzing the way of updating the structural features, highlighted the fact that the traditional paremiological thesaurus is characterized by well-defined particularities at the level of construction elements. The specificity of the class resulting from the combination of features relates to aspects such as brevity, the frequently solemn nature, daily life, traditions and customs, particularities partially respected in the process of generating new proverbs by training models of artificial intelligence.

Keywords: proverb, AI, structural analysis, metaphorization, extension of meaning

1. Preliminarii. Paremiologie

Domeniu autonom de cercetare începând cu secolul al XIX-lea, paremiologia românească a fost supusă de-a lungul timpului unor perspective diferite de investigare, orientate spre domenii prioritare precum antropologia culturală, etnografia, folclorul, sociologia, lingvistica, semiotica, retorica. Contribuțiile au vizat interogarea unor aspecte teoretice legate de definirea obiectului de studiu, geneza proverbului, criteriile de tipologizare, trăsăturile

clasei în raport cu alte specii înrudite (zicătoare, aforism, maximă, dicton, ghicitoare, expresie, expresie idiomatică)¹.

Investigarea paremiologică de tip lingvistic cunoaște și ea rezultate notabile, care s-au concretizat, pe de o parte, într-un inventar terminologic variat, descrieri ale proverbului din diferite perspective (lexicologică, semantică lexicală ori cognitivă, poetică, stilistică) și, pe de altă parte, prin lucrări lexicografice de teaurizare, de clasare a acestor fapte de limbă în funcție de criterii diferite (alfabetic, onomasiologic, tematic).

2. Ipoteza de cercetare

Pornind de la actualizările teoriei și practicii proverbului și de la distincțiile formulate la nivelul acestei clase terminologice, demersul nostru ia în considerare, în această primă parte, două tipuri de excursuri: unul, care presupune o scurtă evaluare a teoriei proverbului în lucrările românești de profil prin inventarierea trăsăturilor speciei ce rezultă din configurările definiționale exprimate, iar celălalt, de confruntare și, implicit, de validare/invalidare a acestor particularități funcționale în lexicalizările generate de inteligența artificială (AI). Precizăm faptul că în această primă parte a cercetării noastre vom urmări modul în care aceste mărci specifice se constituie în trăsături caracteristice pentru tipurile de structuri generate de AI, urmând ca într-un demers ulterior să analizăm influența pe care tehnologia a imprimat-o în timp unor lexicalizări diferite ale proverbului.

¹ Pentru o evaluare actuală a teoriei referitoare la proverb într-un demers comparat (lexical, semantic, pragmatic), prin valorificarea literaturii de specialitate din diferite spații lingvistice (englez, francez, finlandez ș.a.), a se vedea Oana Aurelia Gencărau, *Proverbul de la paremiologic la retoric*, Editura Universității din Oradea, 2008.

2.1. Definiții și trăsături ale proverbului tradițional în literatura de profil

O privire retrospectivă asupra opțiunilor exprimate de specialiști pentru acest concept pune în evidență ideea existenței unei specii complexe, cu particularități distincte, greu de cuprins într-o singură definiție. Expunerile teoretice converg spre recunoașterea proverbelor ca structuri recognoscibile prin actualizări speciale ale sistemului lingvistic, cu disponibilități de utilizare multiple, în directă legătură cu codul cultural în care acestea sunt invocate. Redăm, pentru început, câteva definiții:

I. A. Zanne (1885: XX): “Proverbele sunt expresiunea caracterului și moravurilor unui popor, modul său de a cugeta, de a vedea și de a simți.”;

I. C. Chițimia (1960: 464): “Proverbul este formularea scurtă a unei constatări cu valoare larg omenească, exprimată direct sau figurat.”;

G. Muntean (1967: XVII): “proverbul este o frază scurtă, de obicei ritmică și uneori rimată, prin care poporul, exprimând (cel mai adesea metaforic, concis și sugestiv) rezultatul unei lungi experiențe de viață pronunță și o concluzie, un îndemn, o învățătură, o constatare asupra lumii, constatare ce are regulă o accentuată nuanță morală”;

Pavel Ruxăndoiu (1966: 97): “Proverbul reprezintă unități sintactice integrale, la nivelul propoziției sau al frazei”; „o formulă concisă, cu o organizare lingvistică relativ stabilă, repartizată în contexte diferite, care exprimă concentrat, un adevăr sau o opinie generală”;

Elena Slave (1967: 172): “O combinare sintactică al cărei nivel simplu e propoziția și ale cărei elemente sunt folosite într-o accepție specială, cu valoare de ansamblu simbolică.”

Ovidiu Papadima (1968: 598): “Proverbele sunt, ca toate celelalte forme de artă populară, *forme de viață*. [...] Proverbele

distilează, ca să zic așa, viața. Însă o distilează astfel încât să nu-și piardă din savoare. [...] Proverbul e o formă de artă concentrată. Sunt tot atâtea forme de proverb câte forme de artă a cuvântului avem”;

Iorgu Iordan (1975: 209): structuri sintactice “[...] la baza cărora se află o imagine (în sens larg), indiferent de orice element pur gramatical, regulat sau neregulat. Acestea sunt mult mai numeroase decât cele din prima categorie provenite din nerespectarea normelor și joacă în limba vorbită un rol asemănător figurilor de stil din limbajul poetic, căci satisfac nevoile de ordin afectiv și dau vorbirii plasticitate, culoare, adică expresivitate”;

Cezar Tabarcea (1982: 84): “Proverbul este un enunț lingvistic cu o structură logico-semantică fixă, care întrerupe discursul în care este înglobat pentru a se referi metaforic la o situație care determină enunțarea acestuia sau la un segment al discursului.”;

Constantin Negreanu (1983: 48): “proverbele se remarcă prin capacitatea de esențializare, prin precizia, economia și caracterul estetic al expresiei”;

Gabriel Gheorghe (1986: 12): “proverbele reprezintă manifestări ale capacității de vehiculare a ideilor și conceptelor de către limbaj, sunt forme de limbaj, modalități de expresie apelând la constatări și experiențe acumulate în timp, șlefuite și condensate în grai, transmise din tată în fiu, făcând, așadar, parte din fondul ancestral de cunoaștere și exprimare al grupurilor umane constituite. [...] proverbul constituie unul din elementele caracteristice ale etniei și, prin forța lucrurilor, dovezi ale continuității colectivităților la definirea cărora contribuie”.

Gencărau (2008: 253): “orice proverb construiește un sens cu privire la și numai la [uman] și convertește orice aserțiune în aserțiune despre om”.

Specificitatea clasei, așa cum rezultă din inventarierea trăsăturilor cuprinse în definițiile de mai sus rezultă din actualizarea mai multor particularități ce vizează structura sintagmatică a enunțului, conținutul și aspectul (stilistic) al mesajului: *fixitatea*, pusă în legătură cu *expresivitatea* sau cu natura expresivă a proverbului, reperabilă prin procedee specifice, în care sunt incluse și ritmul, rima, simetria etc; *generalizarea* (Elena Slave 1967: 182), înțeleasă atât ca rezultat al *metaforizării*, cât și o consecință a ridicării la stat de bun comun al unei națiuni; *durabilitatea* (I. Coteanu 1973: 99): “datorită structurii lor ritmice, rimei, când este cazul, structurii lor semantice, foarte adesea simetrică, ele se memorează ușor și trec din gură în gură”. În directă legătură cu modul de organizare a expresiei, reținem și *repetabilitatea* și *concizia*², aceasta din urmă fiind numită de Cezar Tabarcea (1982: 202) *scurtimea*, care este “măsurabilă prin numărul simbolurilor care intră în tiparul proverbului simplu și care nu coincide întotdeauna cu numărul lexemelor cuprinse în enunțul proverbial”.

Aceste particularități fac din proverb un enunț greu de cuprins într-o definiție, dar cu o ridicată putere de performare și cu tradiție în ceea ce privește preluarea acestuia în calitate de formă a “discursului repetat” (Coșeriu 2000: 258)³ în diferite tipuri de texte, atât în formă canonică, cât și modificată, prin

² Pentru observații legate de dimensiunile proverbului, a se vedea studiul Elenei Slave, *Organizarea sintagmatică și semantică a proverbelor*, în *Probleme de lingvistică generală*, V, 1967, p. 189. Autoarea identifică, pe un corpus de 135 de proverbe, o limită de variabilitate a cuvintelor cuprinsă între trei și paisprezece unități lexicale.

³ Definit ca “tot ceea ce în vorbirea unei comunități se repetă într-o formă mai mult sau mai puțin identică ca discurs deja făcut sau combinare mai mult sau mai puțin fixă, ca fragment lung sau scurt, a «ceea ce s-a spus deja»”.

destructurare și restructurare⁴. De altfel, referindu-se la utilizarea “jocurilor de proverbe” ca “tehnici ludice”, Cezar Tabarcea (1982: 55) atrăgea atenția asupra vechimii acestei tradiții, care se regăsește în evul mediu timpuriu și în scrierile scolasticilor.

Fără a insista asupra distincțiilor dintre proverb și alte specii înrudite⁵, ne vom opri în continuare la câteva observații formulate de Cezar Tabarcea în urma analizei critice a opiniilor exprimate în legătură cu diferite perspective de interogare a proverbelor. După evaluarea mai multor proverbe din șase limbi (romanice sau germanice), autorul a conchis că “se poate vorbi de un specific al proverbului românesc în ciuda conținutului similar celorlalte” și de existența unui corpus *deschis*, în condițiile unui “stil închis”. Mai mult, autorul propune, într-un capitol aparte, un model semiotic⁶, care prezintă, la nivel teoretic, un mecanism generator de proverbe, a cărui aplicabilitatea este însă greu de probat. Acesta implică interacțiunea mai multor elemente, care au la bază un “principiu deductiv” de funcționare, dintre care un rol important îl dețin: a) , “o formulă generalizatoare care surprinde esența evenimentului”; b) tiparele existente în limbă; c) trăsăturile obținute la nivel *semantic*, “posibilitățile de lexicalizare” la nivelul *expresiei* și “posibilitățile de nuanțare a acestei expresii care să corespundă și intențiilor emițătorului”, reperabile la nivel stilistic.

⁴ Pentru a urmări variația și varietatea acestora în textul jurnalistic, a se vedea Stelian Dumistrăcel, *Discursul repetat în textul jurnalistic. Tentația instituirii comunității fatice prin mass-media*, Editura “Alexandru Ioan Cuza”, 2006.

⁵ Pentru care trimitem la observațiile formulate de Dana-Luminița Teleoacă (Dobre), *The Proverb – Theoretical and Practical Boundaries*, în Iulian Boldea, Cornel Sigmirean, Dumitru Duda (Ed), *Paths of Communication in Postmodernity*, 2020, pp. 298-306.

⁶ Propus de Cezar Tabarcea, *op. cit.*, pp. 172-174, ca argument în favoarea *corpusului deschis* al proverbelor.

2.1.2. Trăsături ale proverbului generat de AI

“Generarea proverbelor printr-un proces subtil care poate fi explicat pe baza analizei mecanismelor semiotice și semantice care organizează enunțurile-proverb” la care făcea referire Cezar Tabarcea (1982: 58) îmbracă, în contemporaneitate, forma unui algoritm, în cazul replicilor digitale ale înțelepciunii populare generate de softuri specializate folosite de inteligența artificială. Acestea evidențiază o abordare complexă, prin luarea în considerare a mai multor dimensiuni specifice, dintre care, cea mai importantă se dovedește a fi forma lingvistică, respectiv organizarea propozițională, susceptibilă de a fi analizată fonetic, morfo-sintactic, semantic sau pragma-retoric.

Pe lângă aceasta, aplicația CHAT GPT 3.5., pe care am folosit-o în demersul nostru, recunoaște valorificarea, în generarea de “proverbe noi” și a altor caracteristici: *concizia, universalitatea* (“*teme universale și valori umane comune*”), *relevanța* (“*aspecte relevante ale societății și vieții moderne*”), *înțelepciunea* („*să ofere inspirație sau reflectare asupra vieții*”), *sonoritate* (“*ritm plăcut atunci când sunt citite sau rostite*”), *structuri bipartite* (“*prima parte stabilește o situație sau o premisă, iar a doua oferă o concluzie sau un sfat*”), *utilizarea construcțiilor comparative și a figurilor de stil* (“*pentru a accentua mesajul sau pentru a-l face mai expresiv și mai memorabil*”), *ritm și rimă*.

Redăm, în continuare, o exemplificare minimală, oferită ca răspuns la solicitarea noastră de a furniza câteva exemple de “proverbe noi” pe teme diferite: *Echilibru în tot, armonie în viață.; Curaj în inimă, drum către victorie.; Încrederea în sine, succes garantat.; Prietenie adevărată, aliat în orice luptă.; Înțelepciunea este lumina ce îndrumă pașii în întunericul incertitudinii.; Fericirea nu constă în a avea totul, ci în a aprecia tot ceea ce avem.; În mijlocul dificultăților se ascunde*

oportunitatea.; Gândurile sunt sămânța din care crește realitatea noastră.; Fiecare obstacol ascunde o oportunitate.; Răbdarea este arta de a aștepta fructele dulci ale muncii tale.; Minte fără inimă este ca o fântână uscată în deșert.; Tăcerea este răspunsul care vorbește cel mai tare.; Răbdarea învață omul să guste dulceața fiecărui moment.; Prietenia este legătura invizibilă care unește inimile la distanță.

Pentru compararea la nivelul performanței în materie de rezultat, am reiterat solicitarea de ilustrare a unor proverbe și altei aplicații generatoare de conținuturi în limba română cu ajutorul inteligenței artificiale (*creai.ro*), care utilizează, după cum se precizează în prezentarea competențelor pe care le deține aplicația, un algoritm de învățare automată, pe baza unor seturi de date de antrenament și “a unui set mare de date de exemple”. Iată câteva dintre exemplele primite: *Internetul grăbește zvonul, dar adevărul are pasul lin.; Butonul de partajare e ca semințele vântului, împrăștie idei bune și rele deopotrivă.; Prietenii din online sunt ca stelele pe cer – mulți strălucesc, dar puțini te ghidează.; Unde cuvintele sunt puține, gândurile cântăresc dublu.; Soarta este harta, iar pașii sunt ai tăi.; Casa inimii nu se clădește cu ziduri de îndoială.; O poveste bună e ca sămânța: dă roade în inimi fertile.; Unde cuvintele sunt puține, gândurile cântăresc mult.*

Conform trăsăturilor centralizate mai sus, o primă observație se impune, și anume că cele două tipuri de specii paremiologice, cele tradiționale și cele generate de AI prezintă o serie de similitudini: + concizie, + generalizare, + metaforizare, + sonoritate (cu funcție mnemotehnică), mai numeroase față de diferențele care vizează alte două particularități ale proverbelor

tradiționale: + repetabilitatea, + durabilitatea. Acestora li se poate adăuga și caracteristica + sapiențial, cu actualizare opțională⁷.

2.1.3. *Proverbul tradițional versus proverbul generat de AI*

Pentru identificarea altor distincții legate de modul de manifestare a acestora în proverbul tradițional și în structurile generate de AI, ne vom sprijini, în cele ce urmează, de descrierile teoretice ale proverbelor românești din perspectiva criteriilor logico-semantic și structural realizate de Cezar Tabarcea și de Constantin Negreanu.

Potrivit lui Cezar Tabarcea (1982: 110), investigarea posibilităților combinatorii ale termenilor și a structurii logico-semantică a proverbelor românești a avut ca rezultat identificarea următoarelor trăsături: “a) numele, în poziția unuia din cei doi termeni ai relației logice, nu are mai mult de doi determinanți, chiar și în cazul acesta având o frecvență destul de redusă; b) verbul, de partea oricăruia din termenii relației logice, nu are determinanți circumstanțiali sau are cel mult unul; c) grupul nominal subordonat verbului cuprinde un nume cu cel puțin un determinant.”.

Dintre tiparele identificate de autor (1982: 183-203), supuse de noi replicării prin AI și oferite ca exemple în solicitarea noastră de generare a unor “proverbe noi” după aceste modele, reținem următoarele categorii:

Tipul I: Proverbe implicative-calități (*Hoțul nedovedit este negustor cinstit.*), numite astfel “deoarece enunțurile proverbiale

⁷ Aspect remarcat de Gabriel Gheorghe, în studiul introductiv din lucrarea *Proverbele românești și proverbele lumii romanice. Studiu comparativ*, Editura Albatros, București, 1986, p. 14: „Proverbul nu constituie o formă de enunțare a unei încărcături exclusiv sau dominant sapiențiale, ci o modalitate de expresie artistică, figurată, prezentă în toate limbile”.

pleacă de la o implicație logică în structura lor profundă [...] ușor identificabile deoarece cuprind în expresie o copulă”; acesta cunoaște două subtipuri:

a) Subtipul 1, în care “termenii aparțin unor domenii semantice diferite, iar aceste domenii au cel puțin un sem comun [...] structura semantică este aceea a unei judecăți logice propriu-zise”:

Proverb tradițional: *Boală lungă moarte sigură.*

Proverb AI: *Cuvinte goale, relații fragile./ Râuri tulburi, pești puțini.*

b) Subtipul 2 este reprezentat de „tautologii logice” (S. Galopenția-Eretescu):

Proverb tradițional: *Omul este om.*

Proverb AI: *Timpul este timp./Viața e viață.*

c) Subtipul 3 cuprinde „proverbe paradoxale” (S. Galopenția-Eretescu), iar “semnificațiile termenilor din stânga și din dreapta copulei nu au o trăsătură comună”:

Proverb tradițional: *Omul prea bun este nebun.*

Proverb AI: *Copacul e liniște./ Luna e cântec.*

Tipul II: Proverbe implicative-obiecte, asemănătoare cu primul tip în ceea ce privește funcționalitatea:

Proverb tradițional: *Orice naș își are nașul.*

Proverb AI: *Fiecare lider are un rival în umbră./ Orice munte își are râul său care îl roade.*

Tipul III: Proverbe actanțiale prezintă “grad mai mare de generalizare”, iar termenii “denumesc clase de obiecte care se

prezintă o anumită trăsătură implicată de expresia lingvistică a lui X și x”:

Proverb tradițional: *Buturuga mică răstoarnă carul mare.*

Proverb AI: *O sămânță poate transforma un pustiu în pădure.*

Tipul IV: Proverbe circumstanțiale, cu structura logico-semantică X pred m, unde m “marchează circumstanțele spațio-temporale, instrumentul, modalitatea – cu orice valori în afara aceleia de «obiect al acțiunii»” (p. 191):

Proverb tradițional: *Mâța blândă zgârie rău.*

Proverb AI: *Cucul cântă doar la răsăritul soarelui./Umbra se ascunde la baza copacilor.*

Tipul V: Proverbe comparative:

Proverb tradițional: *Mai bine cap de pisică decât coadă de leu.*

Proverb AI: *Mai bine să fii o stea singuratică decât o umbră într-o mulțime.*

Alte aspecte structurale specifice tradiției proverbului românesc identificate de Constantin Negreanu (1983: 58-152) și supuse de noi procesului de producere a unor “proverbe noi” cu ajutorul algoritmilor de procesare a limbajului natural, fac referire la caracteristicile de mai jos. Facem precizarea că în cererea adresată AI, am folosit explicațiile și exemplificările propuse de autor⁸.

⁸ Acesta identifica (1983: 48-49), în urma a 5994 proverbe analizate, următoarea repartizare în etnocâmpuri, în ordine descrescătoare: *înțelepciune, ironie, muncă, prudență, inteligență, dreptate, educație, demnitate, bunătate,*

- antonimia la nivelul microcontextului; cupletul antonimic este legat prin conjuncția *și*, cu valoare adversativă⁹ (p. 68):
 Proverb tradițional: *Nebunii și înțelepții dau mese și mănâncă.*
 Proverb AI: *Visătorii și realiștii visează și acționează.*
- utilizarea, pentru mărirea impactului, a unei opoziții la nivelul numeralului (p. 60):
 Proverb tradițional: *Un nebun aruncă o piatră și zece înțelepți nu o pot scoate.*
 Proverb AI: *Un călător singur face un pas și zece prieteni îi întind o mână de ajutor.*
- valorificarea relațiilor de sinonimie în cazul unor substantive concrete din diferite etnocâmpuri (p. 82):
 Proverb tradițional: *Răbdarea e temelia înțelepciunii.*
 Proverb AI: *Speranța e lumina în întuneric, ce ghidează pașii noștri./Dragostea e izvorul bucuriei, care hrănește sufletul.*
- frecvența singularului în raport cu pluralul și a formelor articulate comparativ cu cele lipsite de articol (p. 108):
 Proverb tradițional: *Casa fără perdele/ Ca femeia fără sprâncene.*

cunoaștere, noroc, adevăr, cinste, cumpătate, prietenie, voinicie, omenie, frumusețe, resemnare, respect, economie, soartă).

⁹ Pentru o analiză a proverbelor românești în care se actualizează relația de antonimie, a se vedea și Doina Macarie, *Relații de antonimie în proverbul românesc*, Editura Carminis, 2021.

Proverb AI: *Un fluture colorat poate fi simbolul transformării și mărturia schimbării./Un viscol puternic poate fi lecția despre rezistență și mărturia puterii adaptabilității.*

- absența verbului predicativ sau copulativ este totală sau parțială, “în sensul că poate lipsi din ambele părți ale proverbului sau numai din partea a doua.” (p. 113)
Proverb tradițional: *Nici în car, nici în căruță, nici în teleguță./Cine e mare/E și tare/Cine e mic/Tot nimic.*
Proverb AI: *Zâmbetul prietenului, lacrima străinului, două exprimări ale vieții trecătoare./ Silueta muntelui, conturul văii, două sculpturi ale naturii veșnice.*
- prezența corelativelor *cum/așa*. (p. 67)
Proverb tradițional: *Cum ți-e lucrul, așa ți-e plata.*
Proverb AI: *Cum îți ascuți inima, așa vei găsi calea spre fericire./Cum îți exprimi recunoștința, așa vei întâlni bucuria în fiecare zi.*
- proverbe enunțuri de timpul A este B (p. 68):
Proverb tradițional: *Muirea bărbată, avuția casei.*
Proverb AI: *Soarele strălucitor, bucuria zilei./Inima deschisă, izvorul prieteniei.*
- folosirea repetiției, cu valoare mnemotehnică (p. 69);
Proverb tradițional: *Rău cu rău, dar mai rău fără rău.*
Proverb AI: *Zâmbet după zâmbet, fericirea devine obicei.*
- modurile specifice proverbului sunt indicativul, conjunctivul, imperativul și, foarte rar, infinitivul (p. 113):

Proverb tradițional: *Nu-ți băga lingura unde nu-ți fierbe oala.*

Proverb AI: *Nu împrăștia semințele acolo unde nu-i bun pământul.*

- “aproape toate unitățile paremiologice din această categorie conțin o singură atributivă [...] majoritatea proverbelor atributiva este intercalată” (p. 133).

Proverb tradițional: *Câinele care latră, nu mușcă.*

Proverb AI: *Râul care curge, nu se întoarce niciodată înapoi./Floarea care înflorește, nu se teme de vânt./Prietenul care ascultă, nu judecă.*

Din punct de vedere lingvistic, este cunoscut faptul că semnificantul proverbului tradițional poate cuprinde elementele segmentale din categoria arhaismelor, regionalismelor, neologismelor, care pot evidenția detalii legate de momentul când se produce și se stabilizează în limbă astfel de structuri, spre deosebire de structurile (cu aspect paremiologic) generate de AI, în care termenii selectați variază în funcție de modelul lingvistic pe care îl folosește aplicația.

În privința semnificatului, acesta trimite, pentru ambele tipuri de enunțuri (tradiționale și generate de AI) la o situație reală, dar care numai în cazul proverbului tradițional a dobândit, prin utilizare îndelungată, un statut privilegiat, găsindu-și multiple posibilități de aplicare în alte situații de comunicare. În cazul enunțurilor generate de AI, obținerea autorității prin invocarea unor astfel de enunțuri prin care receptorul să fie orientat și influențat în opțiunile discursive ulterioare presupune parcurgerea unui proces de durată, în urma căruia i se va testa durabilitatea.

Relativ la posibilitățile creative, remarcăm în cazul fizionomiei “proverbelor noi” generate de AI că operațiile de

proiectare angajează respectarea unor scheme specifice vorbirii proverbiale și mai multe modalități lexicale, care, împreună, vor genera un mesaj ce va fi asociat cu imagini aflate mai mult sau mai puțin sub semnul expresivității. Din punct de vedere lexicosemantic, în optica inteligenței artificiale, astfel de enunțuri pot ilustra creativitatea metaforică, dar, de multe ori, intră în conflict cu spiritul limbii române, atingând rizibilul:

Curajul e combustibilul transformării, ce alimentează schimbarea.

Curajul neîngenuncheat înalță, frica învinsă.

O lacrimă poate schimba o inundație.

Cel mai mare neajuns se dovedește a fi, din perspectiva normei lexicale, substituirea unor termeni cu sinonime inadecvate din punct de vedere contextual sau utilizarea unor termeni cu alte conotații decât cele cu care vorbitorii sunt obișnuiți. La fel se întâmplă și în cazul valorificării relațiilor de antonimie prin derivare cu prefixe negative (Negreanu, 1983: 82-88), procedeu greu de replicat de AI:

Proverb tradițional: *Hoțul neprins, negustor cinstit.*

Proverb AI: *Curajul neîngenuncheat înalță, frica învinsă.*

Totuși, chiar dacă se respectă, în sinergia dintre tradiție și AI, tiparul specific enunțului proverbial, prin păstrarea unor termeni cu valoare de simbol, în stabilirea relațiilor diferite dintre lexemul centru și celelalte lexeme se ignoră memoria culturală, care asigură, de fapt, imortalitatea unor astfel de enunțuri. Este cazul tipurilor de proverbe care conțin “nume proprii, care exprimă generalizarea unor cazuri particulare” (Negreanu, 1983: 91):

Proverb tradițional: *A dat ca Eremia cu oiștea de gard.*

Proverb AI: *Asemenea lui Ana, fiecare călătorește pe drumul propriului său destin.*

Chiar dacă numărul particularităților specifice acestor structuri sunt limitate, ocurențele în care sunt convocați mulți dintre termeni în enunțurile generate de AI pot evidenția și extensii ale sensurilor cunoscute, resurecția unor termeni mai vechi, utilizarea cu sensuri noi a unor termeni monosemantici, manifestarea polisemantismului de transfer în cazul termenilor din sfera câmpului lexical aparținând domeniul tehnic, aspecte care pot face obiectul unor cercetări ulterioare.

3. Concluzii

Încercarea de modelare a elementelor moștenirii culturale care au orientat generații întregi prin filtru inteligenței artificiale a probat versatilitatea și deschiderea acestor structuri (tradiționale), care pot deveni, prin actualizări multiple, purtătoare de semnificații noi. Din perspectiva relației dintre mesajul proverbelor și contextul cultural, apreciem că existența unui model general de funcționare, care își va găsi un corespondent mai apropiat sau mai îndepărtat din punct de vedere formal în alte limbi, precum și posibilitățile de (re)actualizarea, prin discurs repetat sau remodelarea creativă a AI a tradiției culturale vor facilita, pe termen lung, descrierea profilului psiholingvistic al românilor și urmărirea modului în care se schimbă modelele culturale specifice unor perioade delimitate istoric.

Ezitățile pe care le-am întâmpinat pe parcursul lucrării în ceea ce privește numirea structurilor cu aspect proverbial generate de AI și opinarea adesea divergentă din literatura de specialitate românească în legătură cu statutul și denumirile propuse pentru proverb și pentru alte denominări pentru subclasele înrudite (aforismul, maxima, sentința, zicala etc.) ne-au determinat să luăm în considerare posibilitatea includerii în inventarul terminologic a unei subcategorii de graniță care s-ar putea numi, la sugestiile AI: *neoproverb*, definibil ca “enunț scurt și memorabil generat de o

inteligentă artificială, care încearcă să exprime un adevăr general sau o învățătură, fără să respecte întotdeauna rigorile și tradițiile folclorice clasice ale proverbelor”; *proverboid* “sugerează că enunțul are caracteristici asemănătoare cu ale unui proverb, dar poate să nu se alinieze complet cu criteriile tradiționale”; *proverb digital* “indică originea digitală a proverbelor și sugerează că acestea sunt generate în mediul digital, de către algoritmi și modele lingvistice”. Apreciem, de asemenea, că celor două surse specifice corpusului tradițional de proverbe menționate de Iuliu Zanne, populară și cultă, i s-ar putea adăuga, ca strategie generatoare de posibile proverbe algoritmizarea cu ajutorul AI.

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Linguistic Areas of Transfer: the European Diffusion Area and the Balkan Sprachbund

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Abstract: This article focuses on the concept of linguistic area as it is reflected in research concerned with the Balkan and the European Sprachbunds. Both these diffusion areas have been identified or understood as Other in relation with the West and in the world-wide context, respectively. Several distinctive features that characterise the areas under scrutiny and identify them as Sprachbunds are dealt with in this paper. Our research briefly touches upon the way in which several historical circumstances have affected the cultural contact that lead to language change in these two linguistic areas.

Keywords: diffusion area, Balkan Sprachbund, Standard Average European, areal classification, typological similarities

Social changes are contingent upon two phenomena: the discovery of something new and the spread of culture through social contact (Miller, 2017: 347). While the two are obviously interconnected, as newly discovered objects or new ideas are prone to travel to other cultural spaces, the spreading of culture or cultural diffusion can take place in at least three ways: through mutual borrowing, as transfer from a dominant culture to a less powerful one or as transfer from an oppressed, or less powerful culture, to the dominant one. Such changes can occur by force, sometimes leading to the annihilation or engulfment of one culture, usually the minor one, which is completely assimilated or deculturated, or they can happen more subtly, through educational or economic processes that pave the way for the gradual assimilation of new ideas or practices. As Miller observes, “These

processes parallel degrees of language change resulting from contact with dominating cultures and languages” (348). There are many ways of investigating convergence areas in terms of features affected by linguistic change. In the present article we focus on the European convergence area (dwelling on Johan van der Auwera’s concept of Standard Average European) and the Balkan Sprachbund.

Linguistic diffusion has more frequently been researched across geographically identifiable regions, it is generally the result of language contact and is the object of study of areal linguistics. More conventionally, the geographical regions where languages come to share structural features, due to language contact and borrowing, are called “linguistic areas”, but other terms, such as “diffusion area”, “adstratum relationship”, “convergence area”, and “Sprachbund” may also be used for the same concept. Some researchers, who argue against the use of such terms as Sprachbund, suggest the employment of the term “language union” instead. According to B. Heine, linguistic areas have in common several characteristics: the languages that are spoken in the same area share a set of common linguistic features that cannot be accounted for by genetic relationship, drift, universal constraints on language structure or language development, or by chance (Brown & Ogilvie 2009: 4). Tomić refines the conditions, reducing them to two: “a typological language feature has been assumed to be areal if (a) shared by at least three languages of the area, at least two of which belong to different genetic families, but (b) not present in all the languages of the genetic family to which the language of the area belongs (if it belongs to a language family, at all) (Tomić 2006: 2).

Johan van der Auwera (2011: 291-300) analyses the concept of Standard Average European (henceforth, SAE), used by Benjamin Lee Whorf to underline the stark difference between

the bulk of European languages and the native American ones, that came to refer to a convergence area seen as an example of Sprachbund. According to Hapelmath (1998: 271), “Whorf was writing at a time when the radical otherness of ‘exotic’ languages was being emphasized by many linguists and attempts were being made to understand each language ‘from within’, without recourse to comparison with other languages”. However, modern linguistic research benefited from various studies that had under scrutiny various such convergence areas around the world, allowing for a more insightful contrastive perspective. The term SAE gained prominence in the early 1990s, when a group of linguists working on EUROTYP, a project founded by The European Science Foundation, fueled an interest in areal typology. Auwera demonstrates that the entire Europe is a convergence area by simply analysing the adverbial expressions of the phases of states, the ones for which English uses *not yet*, *already*, *still* and *no longer*. Bernd Kortmann, focusing on adverbial subordination in modern European languages, identifies a linguistic core containing West and Central European languages (Romance, including Romanian, West Germanic, North Germanic/mainland Scandinavian, Slavic, Hungarian, Albanian and Greek) and a linguistic periphery, containing languages located at the geographical margins of Europe (Basque, Celtic, North Germanic/insular Scandinavian, Baltic, Uralic (except for Hungarian), Altaic, Caucasian, Indo-Iranian, Armenian, Semitic) (Kortmann 1998: 507). Kortmann’s map (508) shows continuity of contact among the languages inside each of the said groups that are separated, on the map, by a clear demarcation line.

“As with other linguistic areas, the boundaries of this Sprachbund are not clear-cut, and there are more or less central members of the Sprachbund. But its extension and its defining

features are clear enough to use "Standard Average European" (abbreviated "SAE") as a technical term for the idealized language type that is manifested in the individual languages of the Sprachbund" (Haspelmath and Buchholz: 282)

The identification of structural similarities that confer the European linguistic area an unexpected unifying thread was possible only after linguists were able to analyze European languages from the perspective of an outsider, in the global context. Haspelmath notes that Western comparative linguists, mainly focused on the peculiarity of non-European languages, overlooked the similarities of languages they all spoke and were very familiar with. Towards the end of the 20th century, when these grammatical aspects were considered in comparison with properties of languages around the world, they were able to identify the peculiarity of the core European languages (Haspelmath 2001).

The acknowledgement of SAE as a linguistic unit with specific shared features happened long after languages of nation states played their distinctive roles in the creation of national identities, in a time when national boundaries ceased to act as political and geographical limits, despite the fact that the cultural contact that enabled the creation of a European Sprachbund probably dates back in the migration period. Another example of a smaller linguistic diffusion area is the Balkan Sprachbund, which is also the result of age-old political unrest and cultural transfer.

In the preamble of the volume *Balkan as Metaphor*, Michael Herzfeld underlines the stereotypical representation of the Balkan area results in its perception as a continuum, despite of its obvious cultural fragmentariness: "a persistent paradox infuses most of the negative stereotypes entertained in the self styled West: the Other is hopelessly diverse, fragmented, and internally divided—so much so that in the end all such peoples seem

radically alike. Who can make sense of so much difference? It is easier to dismiss it as all the same” (Dušan I. Bjelić 2002: 8). The need to be understood as separate countries was further intensified by the politicising of language that began in the nineteenth century, in close connection with the process of building national identity for which language was an important marker of distinction. Ironically, this very concern with demonstrating that they are different from one another is understood as a common element of typology, especially by the outside observer who, as Fleming remarks, consider that “Balkan countries are more or less interchangeable with and indistinguishable from one another, that there is a readily identifiable typology of politics and history common throughout the Balkans, that there is such a thing as a Balkan ethnic or racial "type" (Fleming 2000: 1218).

According to Eric Hobsbawm, in large territorial nation-states people cannot pretend to share a common ethnicity because they are too heterogeneous. He gives the example of southeastern states, with a special reference to the Romanian space: “the precise mixture of pre-Roman Illyrians, Romans, Greeks, immigrant Slavs of various kinds and various waves of central Asian invaders from the Avars to the Ottoman Turks, which make up the ethnicity of any people of southeastern Europe, is an eternal matter of debate especially in Romania” (Hobsbawm, 1997: 64). The situation is even more confusing when it comes to larger territories such as the Balkanic area, that is a region marked, at least historically, by disunity and conflict. In a volume focusing on various (mis)representations of the region in Western countries, entitled *In The Wake of the Balkan Myth*, Davis Norris considers the term Balkan has become a reference for the more extreme sense of Otherness to the West, that “the myth of 'Balkanization' is a product of the West's fears of the cultural

Other”. This is mirrored, linguistically, in the adoption of the forms ‘Balkanize’ and ‘Balkanization’:

‘Balkanize’, according to The Oxford English Dictionary, is a verb which means ‘to divide (a region) into a number of smaller and often mutually hostile units, as was done in the Balkan Peninsula in the late 19th and early 20th centuries’. The first recorded use of the term was after the First World War in 1920, but it has remained in British political vocabulary ever since. So pervasive has the level of connotation of political instability, fragmentation and aggression become that The Oxford English Dictionary now defines Balkan geographic space with a specific metaphoric addition as ‘pertaining to the peninsula bounded by the Adriatic, Aegean, and Black Seas or to the countries or peoples of this region; spec, with allusion to the relations (often characterized by threatening hostilities) of the Balkan states to each other or to the rest of Europe’ (Norris 1999: 10-11)

Norris reads “the Balkan myth” in the key offered by Edward Said’s work on Orientalism, finding similarities in the constructed identity of the Balkans and that of the Orient. He considers that many of Said’s formulations about Orientalism and the Orient can function identically for the Balkanic area, which was also created as a cultural sign meaning hostility and also contributed to the shaping of the West as progressive, modern and rational. While the Balkanic area is characterised by lack and ambiguity, “the West is a full signifier, replete with positive meaning which has created and requires its cultural other, the Balkans” (12-13).

Inside the region, irrespective of the external perception and representations, social and cultural transfers resulted in a linguistic network of sameness patterns that have caught once again the attention of researchers in the past decades. The historical data concerning the languages spoken in the region and

the amount of research conducted over the past century places contemporary scientists in an advantageous position, giving them comparative evidence related to what languages were like even before “the intense contact leading to the Sprachbund” (Krapova and Joseph, 20-21).

The Balkan Sprachbund, one of the most widely recognised linguistic areas, that, according to Campbell (q. in Brown & Ogilvie, 2009: 62), covers shared characteristics of Greek, Albanian, Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Romanian. Some scholars also add to this list Romani and Turkish, while others include other Romanian dialects, such as Aromanian and Megleno-Romanian. Following the same core-periphery pattern that made the distinction between core and peripheral European languages, Bernd Kortmann, citing Solta, divides the areal group constituted by the Balkan languages “into a core consisting of Albanian, Bulgarian, Macedonian, Rumanian and Greek, and a periphery including Serbian/Croatian, Turkish and Hungarian (Solta 1980: 7)” (Kortmann 1998: 497). The typological similarities shared by the languages spoken in this area were first pointed out in 1829, by Jernej Kopitar, who underlined the fact that “the languages spoken south of the Danube have analogous forms expressed through ‘different language material’”(Tomić 2011: 306). Even if different studies point out different linguistic features of the Balkan *Sprachbund* or Union, researchers seem to agree on seven defining traits of the researched area, one phonological feature, the presence of schwa (the central vowel /ə/), and the following six grammatical features: 1. the syncretism of genitive and dative forms, 2. enclitic definite articles, 3. periphrastic future, 4. periphrastic perfect, 5. the loss of the infinitive, replaced by the subjunctive and 6. the pronominal doubling of objects (Cf. Tomić 2006, 2011; Campbell 2009).

Such features are not displayed evenly in all the languages of the European or Balkan Sprachbunds, as differences in areal contact result in differences in language structure but also in the divergent representation of a particular feature. The attempts to scientifically identify the common thread that keeps the European or the Balkanic region together seem to be oblivious of former images promoted by travellers and writers at the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the 20th century. For instance, in 1921, in a book entitled *Balkanized Europe. A Study in political Analysis and Reconstruction*, Paul Scott Mowrer gives the following definition to the term *balkanization*: “the creation, in a region of hopelessly mixed races, of a medley of small states, with more or less backward populations, economically and financially weak, covetous, intriguing, afraid, a continual prey to the machinations of the great powers and to the violent prompting of their own passions”(cited in Leersen 2007: 105-106). It appears it is precisely this medley of small states and the permanent region mobility and insecurity of borders that kept the process of diffusion alive and allowed for linguistic (and cultural) (ex)change. The stability of borders will have the opposite effect, as Tomic argues, citing Simeonov and Asenova:

The creation of nation states with standard languages has put an end to active Balkan multilingualism and marked the start of divergent developments, which also explains nationalist hostilities (cf. Simeonov (1977: 53-54). As a result of “linguistic patriotism”, some common features, developed in mutual contact, were abolished, and strong de-balkanizing normative tendencies showed up (cf. Asenova 1977: 29-30; 1989: 14) (Tomić 2006: 3)

In the case of SAE, it is precisely the European multilingualism, integrative policies and constant cultural exchange in the past

decades that allowed for the acknowledgement of the shared grammatical features. For the wrong or for the right reasons, that also made the object of study of a large body of research, both Sprachbund are part of a narrative that builds the Balkan and the European areas as unified entities.

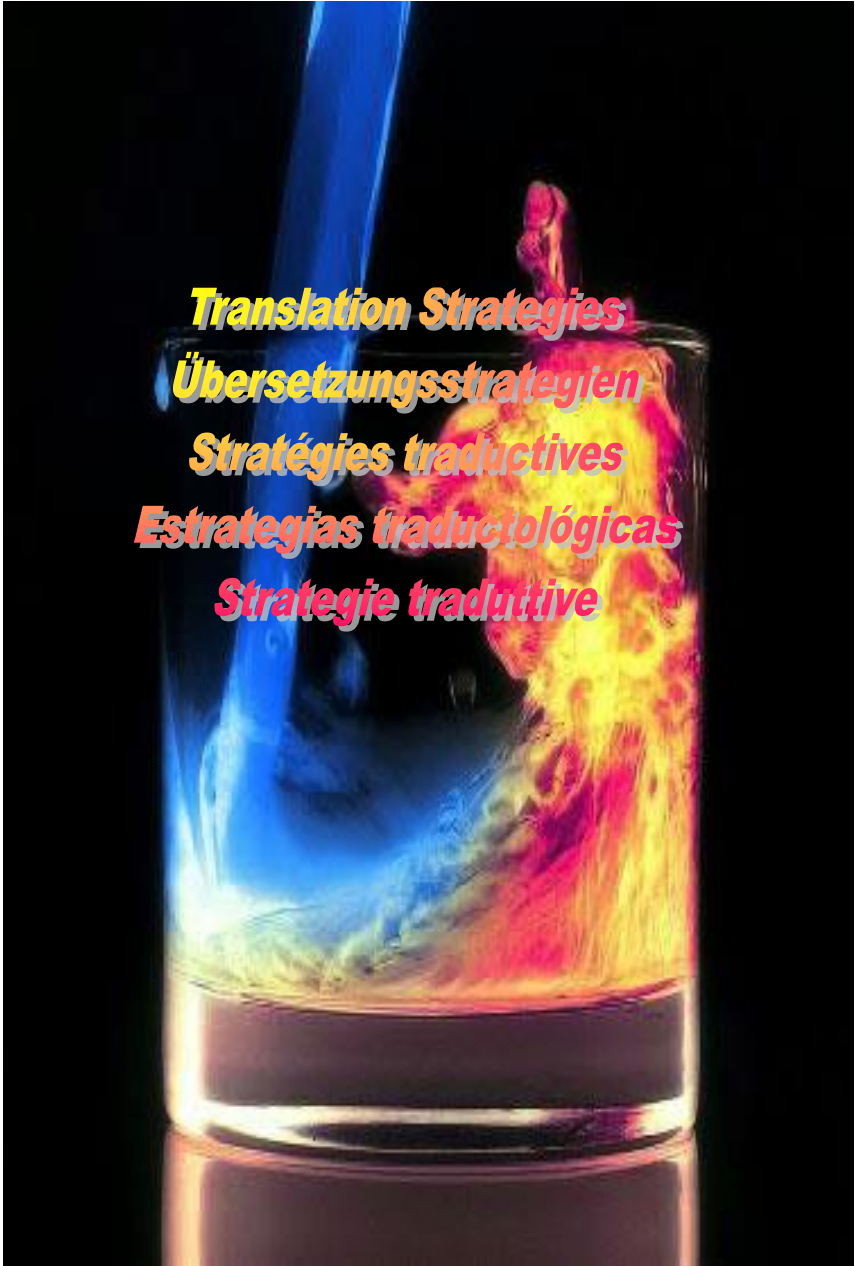
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Translation Strategies



**Explication et explicitation :
les marqueurs discursifs dans les ouvrages de
linguistique traduits en roumain**

**(Explanation and Explicitation:
on Some Uses of Discourse Markers in Linguistics
Texts Translated into Romanian)**

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Abstract: Introducing new terms, approaches and study methods in linguistics requires a very well elaborated explanatory discourse. Explanations and explicitations are part of an argumentative architecture in which discourse markers play an important part. The aim of our paper is to discuss and assess the importance of explanatory and enunciative discourse markers used in French linguistics reference books and their Romanian translation (e.g. *en d'autres termes, plus précisément, cela dit*), on the basis of a study corpus comprised of examples and excerpts from Moeschler and Reboul's *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de pragmatique*.

Keywords: discourse markers, explanation, linguistics, pragmatics, translation

0. En guise d'introduction

Les sciences du langage ont connu un essor spectaculaire pendant la deuxième moitié du XX^e siècle et le début du XXI^e, quand surgissent de nouvelles disciplines, et des approches à caractère notamment interdisciplinaire, à l'intérieur de la famille des sciences humaines et bien au-delà. La dénomination même de

sciences du langage, qui est de date relativement récente¹, rend compte, par la forme du pluriel, de cet aspect.

Décrire les systèmes linguistiques, fournir des modèles pertinents pour le fonctionnement de la langue en contexte, rendre compte de la diversité des usages langagiers tout comme de l'éventail de plus en plus large de types et genres de discours, sont des objectifs qui ne sauraient être atteints en dehors d'un permanent rapport aux domaines du savoir connexes; ceci suppose fournir, de manière régulière, des précisions et explications quant à la portée, acception et même origine des termes et des concepts employés. Comme nous l'avions suggéré dans notre ouvrage portant sur les problèmes spécifiques à la traduction des sciences humaines (Balaçchi, 2015), les exemples les plus révélateurs dans ce sens sont, selon nous, l'analyse du discours et la pragmatique, domaines qui ont établi, dans leur description de la langue en contexte et des réseaux discursifs, de forts liens avec la rhétorique, la sociologie, la psychologie, en renouvelant également la perspective sur la littérature.

Le rôle de la traduction/ transfert terminologique dans ce tableau est immense, puisque nombre de concepts circulent entre les différentes écoles et spécialistes: que ce soit au niveau des livres originaux ou de leurs traductions, des remarques sur les

¹ Nous pouvons envoyer, pour ce virage terminologique, au célèbre *Dictionnaire encyclopédique des sciences du langage* d'Oswald Ducrot et de Tsvetan Todorov (1972), et à sa réédition remaniée de 1995: dans la préface, les auteurs justifient cette dénomination par la nécessité de lier l'étude de la langue à celle de ses productions, tout comme du fonctionnement du langage et des séquences discursives qui en résultent. Dans la terminologie roumaine, initialement dénommées *sciences de la langue* (avec un dictionnaire de spécialité paru en 1997), les nouvelles disciplines linguistiques sont réunies, peu à peu, sous l'étiquette de *sciences du langage*, largement utilisée après les années 2000.

formes/sens des termes empruntés à différents auteurs sont considérées comme absolument nécessaires, des emprunts/calques ou reports fonctionnant comme procédés privilégiés de reprise et de constitution d'une terminologie de spécialité.

1. Langue, discours, traduction

Dans ce qui suit, nous présentons et discutons l'impact de la publication et de la traduction roumaine de l'un des ouvrages fondateurs pour la pragmatique de souche francophone, le *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de pragmatique* de Jacques Moeschler et Anne Reboul, qui, de par le statut qu'il occupe dans la bibliographie de référence du domaine, tout comme par le rapport de la pragmatique au développement du savoir, peut être considéré comme emblématique pour le domaine des sciences humaines en général. Car une étude pragmatique de la langue est en fait un regard jeté sur le rôle de son usage, du discours et de son contexte, ce qui entraîne évidemment un éventail bien large de perspectives; or, si nous rapportons à l'opinion d'une autre grande figure des études sur la langue et notamment sur la traduction, Henri Meschonnic, le déplacement d'intérêt de la langue vers le discours serait l'une des deux transformations majeures au XX^e siècle dans le domaine des sciences du langage.

D'autre part, une attention beaucoup plus importante se justifierait à être prêtée à la manière dont la traduction est responsable dans la construction de ce savoir, puisque, toujours selon lui, « la théorie du langage est la pensée du continu et de l'interaction » entre des activités aussi différentes que langage, poésie, littérature, art, éthique, politique.

Paru en 1994 aux éditions du Seuil et fonctionnant comme pendant au *Dictionnaire encyclopédique des sciences du langage* d'Oswald Ducrot et de Tzvetan Todorov, le *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de pragmatique* de Jacques Moeschler et Anne

Reboul devient très rapidement la principale référence pour la pragmatique de souche francophone. Mais il s'agit d'une pragmatique fondée principalement sur des théories anglo-saxonnes, notamment la théorie des actes de langage et la théorie de la pertinence, d'où une très forte interdisciplinarité avec la psychologie cognitive. Ce qui influence significativement le réseau terminologique, et donne une certaine direction à l'appareil explicatif.

Les versions en langues étrangères ne tardent pas de paraître; parmi celle-ci, la traduction roumaine, qui est publiée à une distance de cinq ans, en 1999². C'est une équipe d'éminents linguistes, dont des pragmaticiens avec une importante oeuvre d'auteur qui assume la traduction de ce dictionnaire (Elena Dragoș, Ligia Florea, Stefan Oltean, Liana Pop, Dorina Roman et Carmen Vlad); tâche difficile autant au vu du volume de ce travail, le dictionnaire dépassant les cinq cents pages, que de la nouveauté du domaine, les traducteurs devant faire équivaloir, et par ceci introduire dans la langue roumaine, par différents procédés, une terminologie soit inexistante, soit bien floue³. Ce sont des aspects du processus traductif que les auteurs de cette version n'ont pas hésité à expliquer dans un texte liminaire très bien fourni, qui présente, à côté de l'opportunité de cette traduction, les principaux problèmes rencontrés et les solutions

² C'est un délai relativement court pour le paysage éditorial roumain, où l'on enregistre souvent des retards significatifs, voire irrécupérables, des traductions par rapport aux originaux.

³ C'est un aspect qui justifie les remarques du traductologue Salah Mejri, lui-même traducteur de textes linguistiques du français vers l'arabe, quant aux raisons des discrédances terminologiques : une distance dans le développement de la recherche en langue cible, ou bien une catégorisation différente, ou encore un équilibre structurel de la terminologie différent.

proposées; le lecteur est ainsi averti dès le début sur la variété des choix traductifs surtout dans la situation des vides terminologiques: les équivalences sont préférées au calque, même si celui-ci n'est pas exclu; on mentionne les doublets, là où les deux termes circulent, comme c'est le cas pour le nom de la théorie qui est à la base de l'approche des deux auteurs suisses, la théorie de la pertinence: *teoria pertinenței/ relevanței* (sans doute pour que le lecteur roumain fasse plus facilement la liaison avec l'original de Sperber et Wilson écrit en anglais: *Relevance*).

2. Les marqueurs discursifs/ énonciatifs et leur rôle dans le processus explicatif

Comme dans tout texte théorique, qui essaie de cerner et définir un domaine nouveau⁴ mais qui se veut également accessible, les explications représentent une partie importante du corpus textuel. Au fil du livre, chaque problématique, considérée comme pertinente pour le domaine, est abondamment présentée, débattue, illustrée et expliquée par de permanentes mises en rapport avec les autres, des autres chapitres tout comme avec les théories existantes dans d'autres champs de savoirs connexes/ dans d'autres approches. En plus, tout un système de *nota bene* introduisent des compléments d'explication, qui viennent éclaircir certains aspects particuliers.

Il s'agit d'un mouvement explicatif bien ample, qui apparaît *explicitement* comme un processus en train de se construire, y compris à travers des interrogations comme celles des exemples 1 et 2, des assertions qui affirment son rôle pour la discipline même

⁴ Ainsi, dans leur *Avant-propos*, Moeschler et Reboul affirment que, lors de la prise de la décision de rédiger le dictionnaire, « la moitié des têtes de chapitre n'avaient pas encore fait l'objet de recherches approfondies » (1994 : 9).

(exemple 3) ou des structures hypothétiques (exemple 4). Les interventions des traducteurs, aussi minimales qu'elles puissent être (utilisation du conditionnel dans le premier exemple: *quelle serait l'explication*), accentuent l'idée d'explication en train d'être élaborée.

1. **Comment expliquer** ces phénomènes? (p. 25)/
Care **se explică** acestor fenomene?

2. Si l'on admet que le sens d'un énoncé est l'indication des différents actes de langage réalisés à travers l'énonciation de la phrase [...], **comment expliquer** que le locuteur puisse à la fois s'engager sur le sens littéral de son énoncé et sous-entendre d'autres actes de langage? (p. 219)/
[...] care **ar fi explicația** faptului că [...]

3. Une des tâches de la pragmatique est d'**expliquer** comment un auditeur peut arriver à comprendre une énonciation de manière non littérale et pourquoi le locuteur a choisi un mode d'expression non littérale plutôt qu'un mode d'expression littérale. (p. 22).
Una dintre sarcinile pragmaticii este de a **explica** [...]

4. Mais si l'on devait expliquer par quel postulat de sens on obtient (53) à partir de (52) on serait bien embarrassé: [...] (p. 217)
Dar am fi într-o adevărată încurcătură dacă ar trebui să explicăm prin ce postulat de sens se obține (53) din (52).

Les explications sont, ainsi, annoncées, introduites et définies en tant que telles, une riche série du champ sémantique de l'explication (*vouloir dire, revenir à dire*) étant utilisée dans des structures souvent modales, qui dévoilent la dynamique complexe de ce processus, les réponses n'étant pas toujours présentées comme solution unique: d'ici la fréquence des semi-modaux qui accompagnent les verbes d'explications, comme dans: *cela peut vouloir dire, cela peut revenir à dire*; dans tous ces cas le

traducteur module le dire et opte pour l'équivalent roumain du verbe *signifîer* [*poate însemna*].

Dans ce tableau, les marqueurs discursifs occupent une place bien importante et contribuent à la construction de l'échafaudage argumentatif et énonciatif. La catégorie des marqueurs discursifs s'inscrit dans l'actualité de la recherche linguistique, une préoccupation constante pour ces mots et syntagmes présents dans toute langue existant dans les différentes communautés de chercheurs en linguistique. Rappelons très vite, avant d'énumérer la liste des marqueurs qui nous intéressent ici, quelles sont les caractéristiques de cette classe particulière de mots/syntagmes dont on s'occupe avec un intérêt toujours croissant depuis déjà plus de deux décennies en linguistique⁵: comme le précise Dostie (2007), formellement, ils sont invariables, provenant en général des classes mineures, et font partie de la macro-syntaxe de la phrase. On apprécie qu'ils ne contribuent pas au contenu propositionnel des énoncés, leur rôle se jouant au-delà de la phrase. Quoique des consensus n'existent pas encore sur la catégorie bien hétérogène des marqueurs, leur analyse par sous-classe donne des résultats remarquables ; ainsi, des projets d'un établissement d'une *grammaire discursive* ont récemment vu le jour, à l'instar de Denis Paillard qui dresse, dans son livre de 2021, *Grammaire discursive du français*, une étude systématique des propriétés syntaxiques et sémantiques d'une trentaine de marqueurs provenant d'adverbes en *-ment*.

Les caractéristiques générales des marqueurs discursifs doivent évidemment être jugées aussi à l'aune du corpus dans lequel ils fonctionnent; comme nous allons le préciser, dans le cas

⁵ Même si, paradoxalement, l'on « se retrouve, toujours, en quelque sorte, en terrain de découverte » (Dostie 2007)

des marqueurs explicatifs utilisé dans un texte linguistique, leur rôle est important dans l'avancement d'une hypothèse, d'une relation cause-effet, etc. Très fréquemment utilisés dans le livre qui nous préoccupe ici, ils créent un lien essentiel entre les séquences mises en contact, que ce soit pour reformuler, préciser, expliciter, illustrer davantage, particulariser. Ceux qui reviennent à la charge sont, selon nos observations, *en d'autres termes, autrement dit; c'est-à-dire*. Leur taux important de fréquence est à mettre en relation avec l'importance du mouvement explicatif notamment aux points où l'on se concentre sur la nouveauté absolue d'un terme/ concept ou d'une approche. Les deux premiers nous semblent particulièrement intéressants car ils interviennent surtout là où les auteurs commentent l'opinion d'un tiers; ils fonctionnent ainsi comme introducteur d'une explication personnelle, plutôt qu'une reformulation. Ils s'imposent par une fréquence remarquable parfois au niveau d'une seule page même, plusieurs paragraphes de la même page étant ouverts par l'un ou l'autre des deux.

A cette liste s'ajoute une série de marqueurs provenant d'adverbes en *-ment* au comparatif: *plus précisément; plus exactement*, qui se remarquent eux aussi, par un taux de fréquence important; à la différence de ceux qui servent à reformuler, déjà mentionnés, ces structures sont l'introduction nécessaire au développement de la théorisation, et c'est donc le contexte de droite qui aura le plus de poids, dans leur cas. Nous avancerions donc l'idée qu'ils constitueraient une sous-classe de marqueurs explicatifs dont le rôle est d'assurer le prolongement de l'explication, qui se développe vers une explicitation.

La thèse de leur optionnalité est difficile à accepter pour un corpus comme celui que nous avons choisi: l'absence des marqueurs d'explicitation serait inévitablement une perte quant à l'obtention de l'effet préconisé: expliquer, faire passer une idée

censée nouvelle, difficile à comprendre dès la première approche par d'autres mots; c'est pour cela, sans doute, que les traducteurs préservent très attentivement la place et le nombre de ces marqueurs en choisissant à chaque fois les équivalents directs en langue cible; ils sont aussi une occasion qui justifie parfois, dans le texte cible, de prolonger le mouvement explicatif, avec des structures explicitantes, au-delà de ce qui était proposé dans l'original. De ce point de vue, on peut comparer leur rôle et caractère facultatif aux marqueurs strictement énonciatifs, du type *cela dit*, qui ont à voir notamment avec la mise en discours des idées, sans influencer sur la manière dont le contenu expliqué sera compris; dans leur cas, les traducteurs se réservent la liberté de les supprimer et le texte final n'en est nullement affecté. Ces deux catégories et stratégies de traduction sont synthétisées dans le tableau ci-dessous:

Marqueur	Traduction
<i>autrement dit</i> <i>en d'autres termes</i> <i>c'est-à-dire</i> <i>plus précisément</i> <i>plus exactement</i> <i>plus concrètement</i>	<i>altfel spus/ cu alte cuvinte</i> <i>altfel spus/in alți termeni</i> <i>adică/e vorba de</i> <i>mai precis/ mai clar</i> <i>mai exact</i> <i>mai concret</i>
<i>cela dit</i>	∅

Pour conclure et aller plus loin

Inhérentes à tout texte des sciences du langage, l'explication et l'explicitation deviennent d'autant plus importantes dans le cas des ouvrages à forte empreinte interdisciplinaire qui caractérisent de nos jours les sciences humaines en général. Nous avons donné l'exemple d'un livre de référence pour la pragmatique, le *Dictionnaire encyclopédique de pragmatique* de Jacques Moeschler et d'Anne Reboul: comme science du langage qui a la

prétention d'intégrer la plupart des disciplines linguistiques, la pragmatique a également l'ambition d'élargir l'horizon du discours vers des domaines du savoir comme la psychologie ou sociologie. La présentation des problématiques typiques à la pragmatique ne peut se faire, dans une telle perspective, qu'à travers un ample mouvement explicatif, à l'élaboration duquel les marqueurs discursifs occupent une place de choix; *autrement dit, en d'autres termes*, à côté des structures en *-ment* (*plus précisément, plus exactement, plus concrètement*) sillonnent en permanence le texte et sont fidèlement rendus en traduction, et engendrant même des ajouts explicatifs, servant de support ou cadre du très riche appareil de commentaires, éclaircissements et précisions construit par les auteurs dans ce qui a été, au moment de la parution du livre, un véritable « programme de recherche en pragmatique ».

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**La traduction
de la préposition à
en finnois et en roumain
(The Translation of the Preposition à into Finnish
and Romanian)**

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Abstract: In the present paper, the author analyses the translation of the French preposition *à* into Finnish and Romanian. In a multifaceted approach, translating a preposition involves understanding its various meanings and nuances across different languages and cultural contexts. The analysis of the translation of the preposition *à* into these languages allows finding equivalences that take into account cultural differences and avoiding literal translations that might seem strange or inappropriate. The preposition *à* can have several meanings and uses in French, such as indicating direction, time, place, etc. Understanding how these nuances are rendered into Finnish and Romanian helps to avoid translation errors and convey the precise meaning of the source text. The author gives examples from the books *Courrier de Finlande* written by Philippe Guicheteau and *Le Village de l'Allemand ou Le Journal des frères Schiller* written by Boualem Sansal.

Keywords: translation, adaptation, preposition *à*, French, Finnish, Romanian

Introduction

Dans cet article, nous nous proposons d'analyser comment a été traduite la préposition *à* en finnois et en roumain.

Traduire du français vers le finnois et vers le roumain peut être plus ou moins difficile en fonction de plusieurs aspects : la similarité linguistique entre les langues, la disponibilité de

ressources de traduction, les différences culturelles, les particularités linguistiques propres à chaque langue, etc. Les trois langues appartiennent à des familles linguistiques différentes. Le français est une langue romane, le finnois est une langue finno-ougrienne et le roumain est également une langue romane. En raison de ces différences, la traduction entre ces langues peut poser des problèmes même au traducteur expérimenté. Il est à souligner que :

« ...au moment de traduire, le traducteur rapproche deux systèmes linguistiques, dont l'un est exprimé et figé, l'autre est encore potentiel et adaptable. Le traducteur a devant ses yeux un point de départ et élabore dans son esprit un point d'arrivée. » (Vinay ; Darbelnet 1958 : 46)

Pour que le message soit clair en langue cible, le traducteur doit donc maîtriser chacune des deux langues, comprendre les subtilités linguistiques, les idiomes, les expressions et les connotations. En plus, le traducteur doit être capable de reformuler le message d'une manière naturelle dans la langue cible, même si cela implique une réorganisation syntaxique. Le choix des procédés techniques de la traduction - l'emprunt, le calque, la traduction littérale, la transposition, la modulation, l'équivalence et l'adaptation (*ibid.* : 47-54) dépend de divers facteurs, tels que la nature du texte, le contexte culturel, etc. Quelquefois, lorsque le traducteur constate dans la langue cible des « trous ou "lacunes" [...] il faudra combler par des moyens équivalents » (*ibid.* : 46) afin que l'intention de l'auteur soit préservée, « l'impression globale devant être la même pour les deux textes ». (*ibid.* : 46)

Certains mots, expressions ou concepts dans le texte source peuvent ne pas avoir d'équivalent direct dans la langue

cible. Cela peut être dû à des différences culturelles, linguistiques ou contextuelles. Les lacunes dans la langue cible peuvent rendre la lecture difficile et créer des interruptions dans la fluidité du texte, mais en utilisant des moyens équivalents, le traducteur peut maintenir une certaine fluence linguistique.

Les prépositions en français

La **préposition** (du latin *praepositio*, de *prae* – en avant, *positio* - position) (Jeanrenaud 1969 : 252) est un « morphème grammatical invariable qui se place devant un constituant de la phrase pour le relier à un autre constituant ou à la phrase tout entière. » (*Larousse*) ; « une partie du discours invariable qui appartient à la catégorie générale des mots de relation » (Riegel et collab., 2009 : 639) qui « sert à relier des termes pour les intégrer dans une construction plus vaste. » (*ibid.*) ; « mot invariable qui a pour rôle de relier un constituant de la phrase à un autre constituant ou à la phrase tout entière, en indiquant éventuellement un rapport spatiotemporel, un rapport de possession, de dépendance, etc. » (Dubois et collab. 2002 : 377) Nous citons également la définition du livre *Langue française contemporaine. Morphologie et syntaxe* :

« une partie du discours invariable qui sert à exprimer les rapports syntaxiques existant entre les éléments de nature différente de la proposition : entre un nom et son complément, entre le verbe et son complément, entre l'adjectif, le pronom, l'adverbe et leur complément ». (Jeanrenaud, 1969 : 252)

Il existe des **prépositions simples** (*à, de, avec, pour, dans, sans, vers, outre,* etc.) et des **locutions prépositives** (*ibid.*) ou **prépositionnelles** (Riegel et collab. 2009 : 639) (*à cause de, auprès de, à côté de, vis-à-vis de,* etc.), selon leur forme et des

prépositions héritées du latin [*à* (du latin *ab* ou *ad*), *de* (du latin *de*), *pour* (du latin *pro*), *entre* (du latin *inter*), etc.] et des **prépositions de formation française** [*depuis* (*de* + *puis*), *voici* (*vois ci*), *parmi* (*par* + *mi*), etc.], selon leur origine. (Jeanrenaud 1969 : 252-253)

Les prépositions expriment des relations diverses entre les éléments d'une phrase : **le lieu** (*en*, *dans*, *chez*, *vers*, etc.), **le temps** (*à*, *avant*, *après*, *pendant*), **la cause** (*vu*, *attendu*, *à cause de*), **le but** (*pour*), **la manière** (*à*, *de*, *avec*, *sans*), **l'agent** (*de*, *par*), **l'opposition** (*contre*), **l'exception** (*sans*, *sauf*, *excepté*). (*ibid.* : 253)

La préposition à – cadre théorique

La préposition *à* est donc une préposition simple, héritée du latin *ab* ou *ad*. C'est l'un des mots les plus fréquents de la langue écrite française (XIX^e et XX^e siècles), se situant sur la sixième position (293083 occurrences), après le déterminant *le* (1050561 occurrences), la préposition *de* (862100 occurrences), le déterminant *un* (419564 occurrences), le verbe *être* (351960 occurrences) et la conjonction *et* (362093 occurrences), conformément à Éduscol¹.

La préposition *à* marque : **l'origine** (« *emprunter de l'argent à quelqu'un* »), **la direction** (*J'irai à Paris.*), **l'attribution** (« *Je donne ce livre à mon élève.* »), **la possession** (*Ce cahier est à mon ami.*), **le but, la destination** (« *aiguille à coudre* »), **le résultat, la conséquence** (« *courir à perdre haleine* »), **le temps** (*on y va à sept heures et demie*), **la situation dans un lieu** (*Je suis à l'école*), **le prix** (*tee-shirt à cinquante lei*),

¹ <https://eduscol.education.fr/document/15655/download>, page consultée le 19 août 2023.

L'évaluation approximative entre deux nombres (« *Il y avait quinze à vingt personnes.* »), **la manière** (« *agir à la française* »). (Jeanrenaud 1969 : 254-255) En plus, la préposition *à* sert à former des locutions prépositives (*quant à, grâce à, etc.*) (*ibid.* : 255) et des expressions (*à bon marché, à terre, avoir affaire à quelqu'un, etc.*). (*ibid.* : 255-256) *À* s'emploie aussi avec l'article dans le repérage des noms propres géographiques, devant les noms propres masculins à initiale consonantique et pluriels (au Brésil, aux États Unis, aux Bermudes). (Riegel et collab. 2009 : 644)

En ce qui suit, nous analyserons les deux livres, *Courrier de Finlande* et *Le village de l'Allemand ou Le journal des frères Schiller* et leurs traductions, *Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* et *Satul neamțului sau Jurnalul fraților Schiller* pour observer comment a été traduite cette préposition en finnois et en roumain.

La préposition *à* en traduction finnoise

Nous analyserons l'édition de 2008 (la sixième) du livre *Courrier de Finlande / Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta*, écrit par Philippe Guicheteau et traduit en finnois par Jouni Kuurne. Ce livre a été publié par les Éditions Tammi à Helsinki. Il s'agit d'une édition bilingue français-finnois, avec le texte original en français figurant sur la page de gauche et la traduction finnoise sur la page de droite.

Selon les dires de Jean-Michel Kalmbach, « En finnois, une partie des sens exprimés par les prépositions en français sont généralement exprimés par les cas de la déclinaison : *donner à qqn - antaa jollekulle.* »² Donc, dans l'exemple *antaa jollekulle* (*donner à quelqu'un*), le cas allatif *jollekulle* joue le rôle de la

² <http://research.jyu.fi/grfle/prepositions.html>, page consultée le 17 août 2023.

préposition *à* en français, indiquant le destinataire ou le bénéficiaire de l'action. Cependant, les six cas (l'inessif, l'elatif, l'illatif, l'adessif, l'ablatif et l'allatif), appelés « *cas locaux* » (*paikallissijat*) en finnois, ne couvrent pas suffisamment toutes les valeurs sémantiques possibles des relations entre les éléments de la phrase. Pour cette raison, la langue finnoise utilise également des mots équivalents aux prépositions du français. Ces équivalents peuvent être positionnés avant le groupe nominal (GN), de manière similaire au français, mais plus fréquemment, ils sont positionnés après le GN, et ils sont désignés sous le terme de « postpositions ». De manière générique, ces mots - les prépositions et les postpositions - sont collectivement appelées « adpositions ».

³ Kalmbach donne aussi des exemples d'adpositions : *avant* le repas (*ennen ateriaan*), lutter *contre* la pauvreté (*taistella köyhyyttä vastaan*).⁴ Nous énumérons également quelques exemples extraits de la grammaire finnoise : *ympäri* (*autour de*), *keskellä* (*au milieu de*), *alla* (*au-dessous de, sous*), *kanssa* (*avec*), *kautta* (*à travers*), etc. (VISK 2005 : § 689)

Dans le *Dictionnaire de poche finnois-français-finnois* (*Suomi-ranska-suomi taskusanakirja*) (2010), Jean-Michel Kalmbach et Seppo Sundelin énumèrent 11 contextes dans lesquels la préposition *à* est employée et leurs traductions :

« **1 à Paris** Pariisissa **2 à Rome** Roomaan **3 donner qc à qn** antaa jtk jkille **4 ce livre est à Jean** tämä kirja on Jeanin **5 une femme aux cheveux blonds** vaaleatukkainen nainen ; **une glace au chocolat** suklaajäätelö **6 jouer au ballon** pelata pallolla ; **aller à bicyclette** ajaa pyörällä **7 à dix euros** kymmenellä

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*

eurolla **8 à grande vitesse** kovaa vauhtia ; **à la française** ranskalaiseen tapaan ; **à credit** luotolla **9 il n'est bon à rien** hän ei kelpaa mihinkään **10 cinquante kilomètres à l'heure** viisikymmentä kilometriä tunnissa **11 à une heure** kello yksi ; **à cette époque** tuohon aikaan ». (Kalmbach ; Sundelin 2010 : 475)

Quelques-uns de ces sens et aussi d'autres se retrouvent même dans le livre que nous analysons, *Courrier de Finlande - Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta*. Ci-dessous, nous avons choisi quelques exemples qui illustrent la diversité des usages de cette préposition.

La préposition *à* a été traduite en finnois par **le cas adessif** :

- (1) ...vivait à la campagne... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 52)
#...asui maalla... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 53)
- (2) ...à la terrasse d'un café... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 74)
#...kahvilan terassilla... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 75)

Par **le cas allatif** :

- (3) ...de n'avoir pu accompagner à la campagne... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 26)
#...ettei ollut päässyt lähtemään maalle... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 27)
- (4) Fidèles à la tradition... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 44)
#Uskollisina perinteelle... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 45)

Par **le cas ablatif** :

- (5) À neuf heures... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 16)
#Yhdeksältä... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 17)
- (6) Si tu demandes à un Finlandais... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 44)
#...jos kysyy suomalaiselta... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 45)

Par **le cas illatif** :

- (7) Je suis rentré à Mulhouse... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 6)
#Saavuini kotiin Mulhouseen... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 7)
- (8) ...la petite à l'auriculaire, la grande à l'annulaire... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 52)

#...pienen pikkusormeen ja ison nimettömään...
(*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 53)

Par **le cas inessif** :

(9) ...le retenait à Espoo... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 26)

#...oli pidätellyt häntä Espoossa... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 27)

(10) ...une bouteille à la main... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 66)

#...pullo kourassaan... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 67)

Par **le cas elatif** :

(11) ...on va quérir *au* lac... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 26)

#...on kannettava järvestä... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 27)

(12) On le reconnaît tout de suite à *sa peau cuite*, à *ses yeux gonflés*... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 66)

#Hänet tunnistaa heti *ahavoituneesta ihosta, tihruisista silmistä*... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 67)

Par **le cas partitif** :

(13) ...je ne pensais à rien... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 24)

#...enkä ajatellut *mitään*... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 25)

(14) ...penser *au* pire... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 98)

#...ajattellemaan *pahinta*... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 99)

Par **le cas génitif** :

(15) ...c'est un truc à Luther... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 158)

#Se on eräs *Lutherin* itsensä keksimä juttu... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 159)

Par **le cas essif** :

(16) ... à *une première* extrémité... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 64)

#...yhtenä äärimmäisyytenä... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 65)

(17) À ces moments tristes... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 180)

#Noina surullisina hetkinä... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 181)

Et même par **le cas translatif** dans cet exemple :

(18) Je ne sais pas très bien à *quoi*... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 36)

#En kylläkään tiedä miksi. (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 37)

Par le mot **päässä**, qui signifie à *une distance de*. L'exemple donné dans le dictionnaire est « ranta on sadan metrin **päässä** – la

plage est à cent mètres » (Kalmbach ; Sundelin, 2010 : 318) et celui donné dans ce livre est :

(19) ...à quelques kilomètres... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 10)

#...muutaman kilometrin päässä... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* :

11)

Il n'y a pas d'équivalence morphologique dans la traduction pour les cas suivants (verbe + à + verbe à l'infinitif) :

(20) ...j'ai commencé à fouiller... (*Courrier de Finlande* : 6)

#...aloin penkoa... (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 7)

(21) ...n'était à remplir. (*Courrier de Finlande* : 70)

#...ei tarvinnut täydellä. (*Sunnuntaikirjeitä Suomesta* : 69)

Il y a aussi des cas où le traducteur a reformulé le message, par exemple : « la radio à l'antenne cassée » - « radio jonka antenni on poikki » (qui mot à mot signifie *la radio dont l'antenne est cassée*).

Les exemples avec « *se mettre à + infinitif* » ont été rendus en finnois par un verbe + **l'illatif du troisième infinitif** :

(22) « ...mais je ne me suis pas mis *au lit*... » (p. 6) - « ...mutton käynytään nukkumaan... » (p. 7) et (23) « ...se mit à plumer... » (p. 14) - « ...ryhtyi kynimään... » (p. 15)

Et aussi par un verbe + infinitif :

(24) « ...Vesa s'est mis à raconter... » (p. 38) - « Vesa alkoi kertoa... » (p. 39)

D'autres occurrences : la structure (25) « à la recherche de tes lettres » (p. 6) a été transposée en finnois par l'instructif du deuxième infinitif – « kirjeitäsi *etsien* » (p. 7) ;

(26) « à peu près » (p. 34) a été traduit par un seul mot - « lähestulkoon » (p. 35) ;

(27) « tout à coup » (p. 44) par « äkkiä » (p. 45) ;

(28) « à peine » (p. 52) par « tuskin » (p. 53) ;

(29) « aux multiples visages » (p. 112) par « monikasvoinen » (p. 113) ;

(30) « au contraire » (p. 154) par « päinvastoin » (p. 155) ;

- (31) « à chaque fois » (p. 166) par « joka kerta » (p. 167) ;
(32) « au total » (p. 206) par « kaiken kaikkiaan » (p. 207).

La préposition à en traduction roumaine

Nous analyserons le livre de Boualem Sansal, *Le village de l'Allemand ou Le journal des frères Schiller*, publié en 2008, à Paris, aux Éditions Gallimard et sa traduction en roumain, *Satul neamțului sau Jurnalul fraților Schiller*, réalisée par Bogdan Ghiu et Mădălina Ghiu, livre publié en 2018, à Bucarest, aux Éditions Humanitas Fiction.

La langue roumaine dispose elle-aussi de plusieurs prépositions, dont nous énumérons : *de, în, cu, la, pe, din, lângă, până, spre, către, după, pentru*, etc. (Avram 1986 : 209-210) Quelques-unes de ces prépositions se retrouvent également dans la liste du dictionnaire de Condeescu et Haneș, la préposition à ayant les équivalents suivants :

« **1.** la ; ~ *la perfection* la perfecție ; [...] ; *aller ~ Paris* a merge la Paris [...]. **2.** pînă la ; *de trois (heures) ~ quatre* de la (ora) trei pînă la patru. **3.** cu ; [...] ; *mot ~ mot* cuvînt cu cuvînt ; [...]. **4.** de ; *moulin ~ café* rîșniță de cafea ; [...]. **5.** pe ; ~ *pied* pe jos ; [...]. **6.** peste ; pe ; ~ *demain* pe mâine ; *remettre ~ huitaine* a amîna peste o săptămînă, cu o săptămînă. **7.** după, conform, potrivit cu ; ~ *mon avis* după părerea mea ; [...]. **8.** ca ; *prendre ~ témoin* a lua ca martor ; ~ *l'anglaise* ca englezii. **9.** cîte ; *peu ~ peu* puțin cîte puțin. **10.** din ; ~ *nouveau* din nou ; [...]. **11.** în ; *face ~ face* față în față ; [...]. **12.** [...] *donne ce livre ~ Jean* dă această carte lui Jean. **13.** [...] *ce livre est ~ Marie* această carte e a Mariei. **14.** (*în expr.*) ~ *cheval* călare ; [...] ; *au secours !* ajutor ! ». (Condeescu ; Haneș 1967 : 1)

Ci-dessous, nous citons quelques exemples des livres que nous analysons, *Le village de l'Allemand* et *Satul neamțului*.

Des exemples avec « *se mettre à + infinitif* » apparaissent aussi dans ce livre et ont été rendus en roumain cette fois par le verbe + le subjonctif roumain (conjunctiv) :

(33) ...il s'est mis à *courrir*... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 11)

#...a început să *alerge*... (*Satul neamțului* : 7)

(34) ...s'est mis à *glousser*, à *pouffer*... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 129)

#...au început să *cotcodăcească*, să *râdă pe înfundate*... (*Satul neamțului* : 112)

Le même équivalent - le verbe + le subjonctif roumain (conjunctiv) - a été choisi par les traducteurs aussi pour d'autres verbes, comme :

(35) J'ai eu du mal à *lire*... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 21)

#Mi-a fost greu să *citesc*... (*Satul neamțului* : 15)

(36) ...cherchait à *comprendre*... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 136)

#...caută să *înțeleagă*... (*Satul neamțului* : 118)

Des structures de type **à + infinitif** ont été rendues même **par un gérondif** en roumain :

(37) ...à *suivre* des chantiers, à *courir* après la vie. (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 16)

#...*ducându-se* unde îi poartă șantierele, *alergând* să țină pasul cu viața. (*Satul neamțului* : 11)

Et par l'ajout d'un verbe modal, comme dans l'exemple suivant :

(38) ...les gestes à *faire*, les trucs à *ne pas faire*... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 299)

#...*gesturile care trebuie făcute*, *chestiile care nu pot fi făcute*... (*Satul neamțului* : 257)

La préposition **à** a été traduite par **la préposition în** :

(39) ...je suis passé *au* salon. (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 12)

#...m-am dus *în* salon. (*Satul neamțului* : 8)

(40) Ils m'appelaient *au* secours... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 24)

#Mă chemau *în* ajutor... (*Satul neamțului* : 18)

Par la préposition *din* :

(41) Il m'a invité dans un grand restaurant à Paris... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 18)

#M-a invitat într-un mare restaurant *din* Paris... (*Satul neamțului* : 13)

(42) ...*au* Moyen-Orient... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 26)

#...*din* Orientul Mijlociu. (*Satul neamțului* : 20)

Par la préposition *la* :

(43) ...le moral à terre. (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 13)

#...cu moralul *la* pământ. (*Satul neamțului* : 9)

(44) ...à chaque page. (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 15)

#...*la* fiecare pagină. (*Satul neamțului* : 10)

Par la préposition *cu* :

(45) ...rêver à haute voix... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 27)

#...visăm *cu* voce tare... (*Satul neamțului* : 20)

(46) ...se mêle à la terre... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 29)

#...se amestecă *cu* pământul... (*Satul neamțului* : 22)

Par la préposition *de* :

(47) ...s'adosse à la rambarde... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 27)

#...se sprijină *de* balustradă... (*Satul neamțului* : 20)

(48) ...facile à vivre... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 48)

#...ușor *de* trăit... (*Satul neamțului* : 39)

Par la préposition *pe* :

(49) *Au temps* où... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 23)

#*Pe vremea* când... (*Satul neamțului* : 17)

(50) ...j'ai annoncé mon départ à Ophélie. (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 31)

#...am anunțat-o *pe* Ophélie că plec. (*Satul neamțului* : 24)

Par la préposition *după* :

(51) À mon avis non... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 92)

#*După* părerea mea, nu... (*Satul neamțului* : 79)

(52) *Au ton* de la secrétaire... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 104)

#*După* tonul secretarei... (*Satul neamțului* : 89)

Par la préposition *de la* :

(53) ... à Kaboul... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 26)

#...de la Kabul... (*Satul neamțului* : 20)

(54) ...à la maison à Aïn Deb... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 114)

#...casa noastră de la Aïn Deb... (*Satul neamțului* : 99)

Par la préposition *pe la* :

(55) Passe au commissariat... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 14)

#Treci pe la comisariat... (*Satul neamțului* : 9)

Par la préposition *pentru* :

(56) ...ce que l'invisibilité est à Dieu... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 182)

#...ceea ce este invizibilitatea pentru Dumnezeu... (*Satul neamțului* : 156)

Par la préposition *spre* :

(57) ... à la chambre à gaz... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 134)

#...spre camera de gazare... (*Satul neamțului* : 117)

Par la préposition *prin* :

(58) Qui n'a pas fait son marché à Odessa ? (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 235)

#Cine nu și-a făcut cumpărăturile prin Odessa ? (*Satul neamțului* : 202)

Par la préposition *către* :

(59) ...le lit ouvert aux étoiles ? (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 242)

#...patul – deschis către stele ? (*Satul neamțului* : 209)

Dans l'exemple suivant, à a été traduite par *de-a* :

(60) ...devait jouer à l'Indien avec les petites cochonnes du coin ou à cache-cache... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 121)

#...se juca probabil de-a indienii cu micii nespălați din împrejurimi sau de-a v-ați ascunselea... (*Satul neamțului* : 103-104)

L'exemple donné dans le dictionnaire - à l'anglaise a été traduit à l'aide de *ca* (*ca englezii*). Les exemples du livre de Sansal ont été traduits par *în stil* :

(61) ...une poignée de main à l'américaine. (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 27)

#...o strângere de mână în stil american. (*Satul neamțului* : 20)

- (62) ...un filet à l'ancienne. (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 189)
#...o plasă în stil vechi. (*Satul neamțului* : 163)

mais aussi par :

- (63) ...de fumeux, à l'ancienne... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 190)
#...în fumuriu, ca înainte... (*Satul neamțului* : 164)

Dans les cas suivants, à *personne* a été traduit **par le datif** du pronom *nimeni* et *au monde* par le datif du nom *lume* :

- (64) ...ne disait jamais rien à *personne*. (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 13)

#...nu spunea niciodată nimic *nimănui*. (*Satul neamțului* : 9)

- (65) ...je devais le raconter *au monde*. (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 15)

#...trebuie să povestesc totul *lumii*. (*Satul neamțului* : 10)

Et dans le cas suivant, les traducteurs ont opté pour la structure **de partea** :

- (66) ...des prisonniers passés à l'ennemi... (*Le village de l'Allemand* : 131)

#...prizonieri trecuți *de partea* dușmanului... (*Satul neamțului* : 114)

D'autres occurrences :

- (67) « quant *aux* autres » (p. 92) - « cât *despre* ceilalți » (p. 79) ;

(68) « à la longue » (p. 255) - « cu vremea » (p. 221) ;

(69) « à mon tour » (p. 136) - « și eu » (p. 118) ;

(70) « À ce train » (p. 267) - « În ritmul acesta » (p. 230) ;

(71) « d'avoir mal à la tête » (p. 137) - « că ne doare capul » (p. 120) ;

(72) « à hauteur des yeux » (p. 242) - « în dreptul ochilor » (p. 209) ;

(73) « saute aux yeux » (p. 188) - « e izbitoare » (p. 163) ;

(74) « à vide » (p. 171) - « în gol » (p. 146) ;

(75) « utilisée à mort » (p. 240) - « exploatate până la ultima picătură » (p. 207) ;

(76) « à ce qu'il paraît » (p. 143) - « din câte se pare » (p. 125).

Conclusion

Dans cet article, nous avons observé combien de sens peut avoir un seul mot de la langue française, formé d'une seule lettre - à - et comment peut-il être traduit en finnois et en roumain. Dans les exemples extraits du livre de Philippe Guicheteau et du livre de Boualem Sansal, il s'agit de plusieurs sens exprimés par la préposition à et nous énumérons la direction, le temps, la possession, la manière, etc. Cette préposition a été traduite en finnois par plusieurs cas grammaticaux (les cas locaux et également le partitif, le génitif, l'essif et le translatif) et par d'autres mots équivalents (par exemple *päässä*) et en roumain par plusieurs prépositions (*în, din, la, cu, de, pe, după, de la, pe la, pentru, spre, prin, către*) et par d'autres structures (par exemple *în stil, de partea*). Pour certains cas, il n'existe pas d'équivalent morphologique en finnois et en roumain, par exemple : *j'ai commencé à fouiller (aloin penkoa), d'avoir mal à la tête (că ne doare capul)*, etc.

Chaque langue, en effet, possède son propre héritage culturel et linguistique, ce qui se reflète dans ses expressions idiomatiques, ses nuances de ton et ses conventions grammaticales. Cela souligne la complexité liée à la traduction de la préposition à, illustrant qu'un seul terme peut avoir des nuances riches et diversifiées dans différentes langues. Entre le français, le finnois et le roumain existent plusieurs différences, par exemple la possibilité d'exprimer l'endroit en finnois aussi par des cas grammaticaux et de traduire une préposition du français par plus de dix en roumain. Ces différences imposent des défis supplémentaires au traducteur, l'acte de traduction étant à la fois stimulant et exigeant.

Donc, la traduction ne se limite pas à un simple transfert de mots d'une langue à une autre ; elle requiert une compréhension approfondie des subtilités linguistiques et

culturelles du texte source, ainsi qu'une habileté à le rendre de manière à conserver son essence tout en l'adaptant aux particularités de la langue cible.

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The Secret Garden:
English to Romanian
Interlingual Translations
(1992-2022)

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Abstract: This study focuses on interlingual translations of the novel *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett, aiming to analyse and compare four of its Romanian translations in order to reveal translation techniques, challenges for translators, differences between translations. We chose four Romanian translations of the novel: one by Cireașa Grecescu from 1992, one by Anca Silaghi from 2008, one by Maria Iliescu from 2020 and another by Andrei Covaciu from 2022. There are four sections which focus on the strengths and weaknesses of each translation, and a fifth section in which we compare the four translations of a certain phrase or sentence from the original. For the comparative section, we chose the examples that reflect difficulties related to cultural aspects.

Keywords: children’s literature, *The Secret Garden*, interlingual translation, culture, adaptation, omission.

Introduction

Frances Hodgson Burnett’s *The Secret Garden* (1911) has been translated multiple times into Romanian. The novel follows the story of Mary Lennox, who is born and raised in a British family living in India during the period of the British Raj (1858-1947). Her life changes when her parents die and she goes to England to live in her uncle’s manor in the moors. The novel focuses on her character development as she finds a secret, abandoned garden and wants to revive it.

For the purpose of this analysis, we selected four translations, based on their availability and the fact that they reflect the phenomenon of mass translations and retranslations that happened in Romania after the 1989 revolution. The novel is now in the public domain and each publishing house that wanted to publish it hired a different translator, so compared to other translated children’s books, it has not undergone frequent reediting.

We will look into the characteristics of each one of them, highlighting their semantic and cultural strengths (marked as “a.”) and weaknesses (marked as “b.” in our analysis). We will also compare them and examine the translation solutions used.

	Title	Translator	Year of Publication	Publishing House
1.	<i>Grădina tăinuită</i>	Cireaşa Grecescu	1992	Arta Grafică
2.	<i>Grădina secretă</i>	Anca Silaghi	2008	Maxim-Bit
3.	<i>Grădina secretă</i>	Maria Iliescu	2020	Corint Junior
4.	<i>Grădina secretă</i>	Andrei Covaciu	2022	Didactica Publishing House

Table 1: Overview of the selected translations

The novel poses a lot of challenges, translation-wise: the use of the Yorkshire dialect and colloquial speech, the cultural aspects related to the United Kingdom and India, or the various grammatical differences between English and Romanian. We base our analysis of translation techniques on Vinay and Darbelnet’s 1958 classification, according to which adaptation is the process of modifying cultural references from the source language to

integrate the translated text into the cultural and linguistic context of the target language. In the realm of children’s literature translation, adaptation is an important technique which ensures that the target audience of the text understands the terminology used and is able to enjoy the experience of reading the novel. The Romanian translators faced the challenge of adapting the novel in order to facilitate young children’s comprehension of the plot.

Translation 1. *Grădina tăinuită* (Grecescu, 1992)

This section focuses on the translation made by Cireașa Grecescu and published in 1992, a translation which shows her skills of accurately conveying the meaning of the original text, while also adapting it to the target audience in order to make it accessible and engaging for the Romanian-speaking readers, both children and adults.

a. Grecescu paid attention to the language registers and rightfully adapted the Yorkshire dialect to Romanian regional speech. The translator’s skills shined the most in the emotionally-charged passages of the book.

Example 1:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Cireașa Grecescu (1992)	Literal Back-Translation ¹
<i>The fact was that the fresh wind from the moor had begun to blow the cobwebs out of her young brain and to waken her up a little.</i>	Dar vântul răcoros al mlaștinii începea să măture pânzele de păianjen din cugetul ei, deșteptând-o treptat la viață.	But the cool swamp wind was beginning to sweep the cobwebs from her mind, gradually awakening her to life.

Table 2: Grecescu’s translation of poetic speech

¹ All the literal back-translations into Romanian in the present paper are mine.

Through the choice of words, Grecescu conveys the poetic nature of this sentence. Instead of blowing, the wind is “sweeping the cobwebs” which creates the image of a metaphorical spring cleaning of the sad or angry thoughts from Mary’s mind. The noun “cuget”, which is more often used in poetic or idiomatic contexts, provides the translation with another layer of depth. The use of the adversative conjunction “but” at the beginning marks that this was a clear change for Mary’s way of being.

Example 2:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Cîreșă Grecescu (1992)	Literal Back-Translation
<i>He's just fine, is that lad.</i>	Băiatul ăsta-i cu adevărat soi bun.	This boy's truly a good variety / species.

Table 3: Grecescu’s translation of colloquial speech

This is an instance of colloquial speech in the original text which expresses the idea that the “lad” (young boy) is a skilful person (in this context, the fact that Dickon is able to adapt in any situation). The phrase “soi bun” is formed based on the idiomatic phrase “soi rău” (bad variety / species). The use of the noun “soi” which can be employed to refer to types of plants is fitting in the larger context of the book, since it is part of the lexical field of the garden.

b. Grecescu’s work also contains some oversights or mistakes which affect the meaning of the text.

Example 3:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Cîreșă Grecescu (1992)	Literal Back-Translation
<i>The guard lighted the lamps in the carriage</i>	Șeful de tren aprinse becurile din vagon	The conductor turned on the light bulbs in the carriage

Table 4: Grecescu’s semantic error

In this example, the translation of “lamps” as “light bulbs” can be considered an error, as the meaning of the text changes. The actions of lighting gas lamps and light bulbs are different. Also, “light bulb” is an anachronism, since it was not common in the period in which the action of the novel takes place.

Example 4:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Cireaşa Grecescu (1992)	Literal Back-Translation
<i>I'd like to get thee on a pair o' scales</i>	Mi-ar plăcea să văd cum te-ai căţara pe-o scară dublă	I'd like to see you climb a double ladder

Table 5: Grecescu’s semantic error (2)

Grecescu’s translation fails to convey the meaning of the sentence because of a semantic error probably caused by a confusion of terms. The original text suggests the desire of getting Colin on a pair of scales in order to measure his weight. Meanwhile, the translation refers to the desire of seeing Colin climbing a double ladder, a statement totally unrelated to the context and the logical flow of the text. The translator might have mistaken “scales” for “stairs” and she interpreted it as Colin being strong enough to climb stairs (instead of Colin gaining weight).

Translation 2. *Grădina secretă* (Silaghi, 2008)

Anca Silaghi’s translation published in 2008 offers a different approach to Hodgson Burnett’s text.

- a. There are certain meanings which were accurately expressed in Romanian.

Example 5

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Anca Silaghi (2008)	Literal Back-Translation
<i>and as he crumbled the rich black soil she saw he was sniffing up the scent of it</i>	și în timp ce sfărâma pământul negru și bogat, Mary observă că îl și mirosea	and as he broke up the rich black soil, Mary noticed that he also smelled it

Table 6: Silaghi’s accurate translation

This translation conveys the meaning of crumbling the soil and smelling it, though there is an omission of the personal pronoun “he” (in this case, however, the meaning can be extracted from the wider context of the chapter).

b. In terms of oversights, this translator had the tendency of avoiding writing pronouns, so, for example, instead of “she said” the translation only had “said”. The omission of pronouns or proper nouns related to who does the action can create confusion. Silaghi also struggles with respecting the principles of coherence and cohesion and there are many terminological errors.

Example 6:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Anca Silaghi (2008)	Literal Back-Translation
<i>Very soon afterward a bell rang and she rolled up her knitting.</i>	Curând după aceea, sună un clopoțel și răsuci ciorapul croșetat.	Soon after, a bell rang and twisted the crocheted stocking.

Table 7: Silaghi’s omission of personal pronouns

In this particular instance, Silaghi omits once again the pronoun “she” and this distorts the meaning of the sentence. The translation lacks coherence since “a bell” appears to be the subject

of both “rang” and “twisted”, which creates the absurd imagery of a bell twisting the stocking. The verb “răsuci” (to twist) is also not a verb which renders the meaning of “rolled up” in an accurate way. By translating “knitting” as “ciorapul croșetat” the translator does make a reference to the stocking which Martha was said to be working on previously, but it also changes the technique from knitting to crocheting, which is a terminological error.

Example 7:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Anca Silaghi (2008)	Literal Back-Translation
<i>In India she had always been attended by her Ayah, who had followed her about and waited on her, hand and foot.</i>	În India fusese mereu însoțită de Ayah, care o urmărea și o servea cu mâini și picioare.	In India she had always been accompanied by Ayah, who followed her and served her with hands and feet.

Table 8: Silaghi’s mistranslation of an idiom

Silaghi’s translation does not convey the meaning of the sentence because it fails to recognise “to wait on someone hand and foot” as an idiom which expresses the idea that the nanny was fulfilling each one of Mary’s requests. Instead, Silaghi translates the idiom literally into Romanian which creates a nonsensical sentence and it could awaken the image of the nanny serving Mary hands and feet on a plate.

Example 8:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Tha’ looked like a young plucked crow
Maria Iliescu (2020)	Arătai ca un pui golaș de stăncuță
Literal Back-Translation 1	You looked like a featherless baby jackdaw

Anca Silaghi (2008)	Arătai ca o cioară belită
Literal Back-Translation 2	You looked like a skinned crow

Table 9: A comparison of Silaghi’s translation to Iliescu’s translation

For this example, we’ll compare Silaghi’s translation with Iliescu’s translation as well. The phrase “young plucked crow” is translated as “pui golaș de stăncuță” by Iliescu, a phrase which uses another bird from the Corvidae family, a jackdaw, as a solution to make it sound better to the Romanian audience, no longer having the connotation of the girl resembling a “crow”. But, at most, translating it as “pui golaș de cioară” (featherless baby crow) could have also been an option. Silaghi’s translation, on the other hand, is far from desirable because it uses two terms with negative connotation in Romanian: the word for crow and “belită”, a colloquial and pejorative term.

Translation 3. *Grădina secretă* (Iliescu, 2020)

We will now examine the translation work done by Maria Iliescu, looking at the characteristics of her Romanian version published in 2020.

a) There are many sections which were translated accurately by Iliescu.

Example 9:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Maria Iliescu (2020)	Literal Back-Translation
<i>as if they had suddenly found themselves laughing in a church</i>	ca și când s-ar fi aflat într-o biserică, unde liniștea e sfântă	as if they were in a church, where silence is holy)

Table 10: Iliescu’s translation strenghts

In this scene, the children were in the garden and they decided to be silent in order not to disturb the birds building their

nesses and the whole harmony surrounding them. The author expresses this through the comparison with the atmosphere in a church, where laughing is out of place. Iliescu’s idiomatic translation reflects the idea that being noisy in a church is a sign of disrespect. She omits mentioning “laughing”, but she uses the techniques of addition and compensation in the phrase “unde liniştea e sfântă” (where silence is holy).

b. In this translation, there are also oversights and errors. Iliescu has the tendency of omitting parts of sentences and simplifying them – while most times the central meaning is conveyed, the consequence is that the text loses its charm. The translator also avoids using Romanian regional speech to translate the Yorkshire dialect, so the readers need to imagine that the characters are speaking in a non-standard way. Some readers might even be left thinking that “speaking Yorkshire” is something completely different from speaking English.

Example 10:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Maria Iliescu (2020)	Literal Back-Translation
<i>If the pretty wife had been alive she might have made things cheerful by being something like her own mother and by running in and out and going to parties as she had done in frocks “full of lace.”</i>	Dacă ar fi trăit soția lui, probabil că în casă ar fi fost multă veselie și petreceri în rochii “pline de dantelă”.	If his wife had lived, there would probably have been much merriment in the house and parties in dresses “full of lace”.

Table 11: Iliescu’s mistranslation through omission

In this example, Ilescu omits most of the original sentence, not translating the idea that the wife could have resembled Mary’s mother or the fact that the wife was “pretty”. There is also a mistranslation, since the original mentions the wife going to parties, while the translation implies that the house is the place where parties would have taken place. Also, the wife is the one wearing the lacy dresses in the original, while the translation implies that the party guests would wear lacy dresses.

Example 11:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Maria Ilescu (2020)	Literal Back-Translation
“ <i>Aye, that tha' mun,</i> ” said Mary quite seriously.	Da, trebuie să le vezi, zise Mary, foarte serioasă, în dialect.	Yes, you must see them, said Mary, very seriously, in dialect.

Table 12: Ilescu’s translation of regional speech

As mentioned before, Ilescu does not translate the Yorkshire dialect through the use of Romanian regional speech. In this example, she translates the phrase “Aye, that tha’ mun” in standard Romanian and then adds the intratextual gloss “in dialect” to compensate and to convey the idea that Mary did not speak in Standard English. This makes the text not as expressive as the original. Another change is the use of the adverb “foarte” (very) as a translation of “quite”, which suggests a higher degree of seriousness than the original.

Translation 4. *Grădina secretă* (Covaciu, 2022)

The 2022 translation of *The Secret Garden* is attributed to Andrei Covaciu, who also added many footnotes in which he explains the most difficult terms and some cultural aspects.

a. In terms of strengths, Covaciu’s translation is characterised by a rich vocabulary and a good rendering of humour. The presence of the Yorkshire dialect is translated through the use of many phrases and idioms which resonate well with the Romanian audience.

Example 12:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Andrei Covaciu (2022)	Literal Back-Translation
<i>“My word! she’s a plain little piece of goods! ”</i>	Aoleu, ce mai podoabă mi-ați adus!	Oh my, what an ornament you've brought me!

Table 13: Covaciu’s translation of regional speech

This idiomatic translation conveys the meaning of the original really well and it sounds natural in Romanian. It expresses Mrs. Medlock’s surprise and her perception of Mary’s appearance. The original uses the derogatory phrase “piece of goods” and the Romanian word “podoabă” (ornament) is used here in a derogatory and ironic way, being an accurate and expressive translation.

b. The richness of the vocabulary is also Covaciu’s biggest weakness, because he uses obscure terms and mixes the languages registers in a way in which neologisms can be found next to regional terms. Regional terms are not only used when the characters speak in Yorkshire, but also when there is no particular need for them (“slapped” translated as “trage o scatoalcă”, even though “a pălmui” or “a da o palmă” could have been used as the standard Romanian terms which do not have any additional connotations). As a consequence, the text is not accessible to the target audience, Romanian children, who might become

discouraged by the need to search multiple words in the dictionary.

Example 13:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Andrei Covaciu (2022)	Literal Back-Translation
<i>lulled by the splashing of the rain against the windows</i>	ploaia care bătea în geamuri având asupra ei un efect soporific	the rain beating on the windows had a soporific effect on her

Table 14: Covaciu’s use of neologisms

This sentence describes the calming effect that the rain has on the tired child, helping her fall asleep. Covaciu’s translation uses the verb “bătea” (beating) which describes a stronger sound made by the rain on the window than “to splash”. The use of the adjective “soporific” is not required by the context, since the original can be rephrased in multiple ways in Romanian without the need to use such a difficult word for the target audience. Moreover, the phrase “efect soporific” (soporific effect) is usually used in a medicinal context, and it is more often found on the labels of medicine or tea packages. Its use in this translation makes the text sound less metaphoric and more technical or clinical, changing the tone of the sentence.

Example 14:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	Andrei Covaciu (2022)	Literal Back-Translation
<i>Dickon worked Magic, of course good Magic</i>	Dickon era un fel de magician – unul benign, evident	Dickon was a kind of magician - a benign one, obviously

Table 15: Covaciu’s use of neologisms (2)

This translation rends the original meaning in a different way. The sentence “Dickon worked Magic” has a double meaning: it refers to the “Magic” which is mentioned in the text and it is based on the idiomatic expression “to work magic” which suggests an amazing skill at something and the power to bring positive change. The translation conveys the meaning of Dickon being similar to a magician, but it does not render it completely. The phrase “good Magic” is translated as “unul benign” (a benign one), having Dickon as its referent, not “magic”. Translating “good” as “benign” can be considered a mistranslation. While “benign” ultimately comes from the Latin adverb “bene” (good) and it suggests a positive characteristic or a positive effect, it is mostly used as a medical term and it feels out-of-place in the context of Dickon being on the side of the “good Magic”. Its most used collocation in Romanian is “tumoare benignă” (benign tumour), which makes the Romanian readers prone to react in a surprised way seeing the term “benign” used in this context. Finally, children might be left confused by the meaning of the sentence.

Comparison of the Translations: The Translation of Cultural Terms

The Secret Garden showcases elements of British culture, notably exemplified by the placement of the manor in the moors, a form of landscape characteristic to the United Kingdom. Besides that, there are elements of Indian culture, related to the period in which Mary lived there. Both type of terms represented a translation challenge.

Example 15:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	<i>He’s got a fine lordly way with him, hasn’t he? You’d think he</i>
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	<i>was a whole Royal Family rolled into one—Prince Consort and all.</i>
Cireașa Grecescu (1992)	Chiar că se poartă ca un mare boier. Ce zici? Parcă toată familia regală, Prințul consort și ceilalți sunt cuprinși în mica lui făptură!
Anca Silaghi (2008)	are o alură fină de gentleman, nu-i așa? Ai zice că e o întreagă familie regală concentrată într-un singur Prinț Consort, cu tot ce implică asta.
Maria Iliescu (2020)	se poartă ca un mare senior, nu crezi? Ai zice că întruchipează o întreagă familie regală – plus Prințul Consort.
Andrei Covaciu (2022)	Ce atitudine princiară, nu-i așa? Ai zice că o întreagă familie regală s-a reunit într-un singur om... cu tot cu prințul moștenitor.

Table 16: Translation of “Prince Consort” and “lordly”

The original sentence refers to a particular historical and cultural context: the British Royal Family and the existence of a Prince Consort (in this case, Queen Victoria’s husband). The term “Prince Consort” constituted a translation difficulty for the Romanian translators, since the concept of the husband of the queen who is not called “king” is foreign to the Romanian audience and it might also seem strange. Covaciu translates “Prince Consort” as “prințul moștenitor” (the crown prince), which obviously refers to another person from a Royal Family, to the child of the queen instead of to her husband. He either did not understand the cultural context behind the word or he might have wanted to use a term which is easier to understand by the reader. The others translate it as “Prinț Consort” (Prince Consort) and

they do not explain the term. The sentence is not correctly rendered in Silaghi’s translation, which implies that Colin was similar to a Prince Consort (“You’d think there was a whole royal family concentrated in one Prince Consort, with all that implies.”). The term “lordly” refers to the concept of “lords”, but their existence is not part of Romania’s history and culture. None of the four translators used the borrowed term “lord” in their versions. Grecescu translates this adverb as “ca un mare boier” (like a great boyar) referring to the existence of the class of the “boieri” on Romania’s territory, in medieval times. In Iliescu’s version the adverb is translated as “ca un mare senior” (like a big lord), referring again to medieval rulers, but, in this case, to rulers specific to Western Europe. Covaciu translates it as “princiară” (princely), making reference to the attitude of a prince. Silaghi uses the word “gentleman”, a borrowed term which exists in Romanian and it makes the reader think about the cultural landscape of the English people. However, the phrase used in Silaghi’s translation, “o alură fină de gentleman” (a fine gentlemanly allure) does not convey the meaning of the original which refers to Colin acting in an authoritarian manner, not to him having the characteristics of a gentleman.

Example 16:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	<i>five miles across Missel Moor</i>
Cireaşa Grecescu (1992)	opt kilometri prin mlaştinile Missel
Anca Silaghi (2008)	cinci mile prin stepa Missel
Maria Iliescu (2020)	cinci mile de mers prin Missel Moor
Andrei Covaciu (2022)	cinci mile prin mlaştina Missel

Table 17: Translation of “miles” and “Missel Moor”

Using the technique of adaptation, Grecescu translates “miles” as “kilometri” (kilometres) and converts the value, transforming it from “five” to “eight”. On the other hand, the other three translators keep the mile as the unity of measure, being more source-oriented. A translation problem is related to the word “moor”, because the terms “swamp”, “marsh” and “moor” are all under the same umbrella in Romanian, being all translated as “mlaștină”. The moor is a type of landscape which is particular to the British Isles and its referent has no direct equivalent in Romania. Grecescu and Covaciu translate “moor” as “mlaștină”, which is not entirely wrong, but it also does not render all the characteristics of the landscape, flora and fauna of the moor. Silaghi uses the term “stepa” (steppe), which shares the characteristic of being an open landscape as the moor, but it remains a vastly different form of landscape and one which is not characteristic for Yorkshire. Iliescu leaves the term “moor” as it is, not giving any details about what it means, which could make the readers think that “Missle Moor” is simply the name of the place where Mary is going.

Example 17:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	<i>a well-trained fine young lady's maid</i>
Cireașa Grecescu (1992)	o fată în casă bine instruită
Anca Silaghi (2008)	o damă de companie bine educată, a unei domnișoare finuțe
Maria Iliescu (2020)	o slujnică mai rafinată și cu mai multă experiență
Andrei Covaciu (2022)	o cameristă calificată

Table 18: Translation of “lady’s maid”

Some household functions mentioned in the novel are typical to British households. In this case, “a lady’s maid” is a

specific type of maid which had proper training to attend to a lady's needs. Grecescu's translation ("a well-trained girl in the house") uses the noun phrase "fată în casă" (girl in the house), commonly used in Romanian to refer to a young servant. The term does not convey the same meaning as a "lady's maid", since it is more general and it could refer to any young female servant in the house, but it remains a good translation choice, especially when compared to other translations. Iliescu's version (literally: a more refined and experienced maid) is accurate as well, though, once again, it uses a general term, since there is no direct equivalent for "lady's maid" in Romanian. On the other hand, Covaciu and Silaghi's translations use terms which are inaccurate in this context. Covaciu's version uses the adjective "calificată" (qualified) in combination with the noun "cameristă" (chambermaid), which sounds like a phrase someone would find in a 21st century résumé. The term "cameristă" has an out-of-use / archaic meaning which would be a good translation of "a lady's maid". However, nowadays the term is used to refer to hotel workers who clean the room and there is a high chance that this will be the first referent in the reader's mind. Silaghi's version (literally: a well-educated companion of a fine young lady) provides two subjects of analysis. First of all, the term "damă de companie" does not refer to a lady's maid in Romanian, but it is a quite old-fashioned term which refers to a person hired to entertain and take care of an elderly woman or an ill woman coming from a wealthy or aristocratic family. The term is sometimes used to refer to a female escort as well, which gives the phrase a problematic double meaning. Second of all, Silaghi interprets the sentence differently, as "a well-trained maid of a fine young lady" instead of "a lady's maid who is well-trained, fine, and young". Her interpretation is inaccurate when considering the larger context of the paragraph.

Example 18:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	<i>th' scullery-maid</i>
Cireaşa Grecescu (1992)	fata de la spălătorie
Anca Silaghi (2008)	ajutorul de bucătar
Maria Iliescu (2020)	fata de la bucătărie
Andrei Covaciu (2022)	fata care spală vase

Table 19: Translation of “scullery-maid”

This example presents a difficulty related to a certain position occupied by a servant in a British Manor, a position without direct equivalent into Romanian, but one which can be described as the person which washed the dishes and helped clean the kitchen. Covaciu’s translation is the closest to the original: “fata care spală vase” (the girl who washes the dishes). Iliescu’s translation (literally: the girl from the kitchen) expresses the idea that the young female servant was working in the kitchen, though it could have been anything from helping around to cooking. Silaghi’s translation (literally: the cook's helper) does not specify if it is a female or male worker and it is a term most often used to refer to someone who would prepare the ingredients and help the chef cook (in a restaurant). On the other hand, Grecescu’s translation (literally: the girl from the laundry) is misleading and inaccurate. While the Romanian word “spălătorie” comes from the verb “a spăla” (to wash) which is used both for “washing dishes” and “washing clothes”, the noun “spălătorie” refers strictly to the room in which people do the laundry.

Example 19:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	ayah	Mem Sahib	Missie Sahib	bungalow
Cireaşa Grecescu (1992)	ayah	Stăpâna	Mica Stăpână	casă
Anca Silaghi (2008)	Ayah	Mem	Missie	bungalou

		Sahib	Sahib	
Maria Iliescu (2020)	ayah	Mem Sahib	Missie Sahib	vilă
Andrei Covaciu (2022)	ayah	Mem Sahib	Missie Sahib	bungalow

Table 20: Translation of some terms related to India

Grecescu used the word “ayah” for the Indian nanny, explaining the term in the text after mentioning it for the first time. She did not keep “Mem Sahib” and “Missie Sahib”, preferring to translate these terms as the Romanian versions of “mistress” and “little mistress”, which shows an approach that is target-text oriented. Iliescu also adds an explanation after the first mention of the word ayah (“ayah – o dădacă indiană”, literally: “ayah – an Indian nanny) and she does the same for the other two terms, explaining that “Mem Sahib” is the way in which the lady of the house was called, while “Missie Sahib” was term in which Mary, the little mistress of the house, was addressed. Covaciu added a footnote in which he explained that “ayah” means “doică” (nurse) and it is a term used in India and Pakistan. He also translated “the ayah” as “ayaha”, adding an inflection to the word as if it was a Romanian word. He added a footnote for “Mem Sahib”, explaining that the term was used to name the wife of a British official, but “Missie Sahib” was left as such, without further clarification. In Silaghi’s translation, however, the terms are kept as in the original but without any further explanation related to their meaning, and “ayah” is capitalized and written as “Ayah”, which might create the confusion that this was the first name of the nanny. Keeping these terms as they are shows an approach which is source-text oriented.

As for the translation of “bungalow”, we can observe that Covaciu used the borrowed term “bungalow”, just like in the original. Silaghi used the word “bungalou”, a Romanian version

of the English term. Both Grecescu and Iliescu chose to make the term more accessible to the audience and translated it as “casă” (house) and “vilă” (mansion) respectively, though these choices lose a part of the local colour of the text and the specific characteristics associated with bungalows as opposed to regular houses.

Example 20:

Frances Hodgson Burnett (1911)	<i>They were of different sizes, and some had their mahouts or palanquins on their backs.</i>
Cireaşa Grecescu (1992)	Erau de tot felul: unii purtau pe spinare palanchinul, un fel de jilț cu streășină și înconjurat cu perdele, ce ține loc de șa, iar pe grumazul lor gros era așezat cornacul, cum se numește conducătorul acestor animale uriașe.
Anca Silaghi (2008)	Erau de diferite mărimi și unii îi aveau pe conducători sau pe palanchini în spinare.
Maria Iliescu (2020)	Erau de diverse dimensiuni, iar unii aveau în spate palanchine.
Andrei Covaciu (2022)	Aveau diferite dimensiuni, iar unii purtau în cârcă mahuți sau palanchine. “mahut – (India) persoană însărcinată să poarte de grijă elefanților (n.trad.)” “palanchin – lectică folosită în Orient (n.trad.)”

In the original sentence, the terms “mahouts” and “palanquins” represented a translation challenge, since the terms are not often used in Romanian and they come from a different cultural background. Grecescu’s approach is to explain the objects (the ivory elephants) using a lot of details, more than the original, in order to make the text more approachable for the target audience. She explains the term “palanquin” as “un fel de jilț cu streășină și înconjurat cu perdele, ce ține loc de șa” (a sort of chair that has a roof and it is surrounded by curtains, one that takes the place of a saddle), then she translates “mahout” using the term “cornac”, the correct Romanian equivalent, then giving further explanations – “conducătorul acestor animale uriașe” (the guide of these huge animals) – and mentioning that the mahout sits on the elephant’s neck. Meanwhile, Silaghi’s translation can be misleading, as she translates “mahout” as “conducător” (leader) and she phrases the sentence in such a way that it might be interpreted as if the palanquins are also some kind of people who ride elephants. She does not explain the terms. Iliescu’s translation also does not give further explanations and, moreover, it omits the terms “mahout”, avoiding its translation. On the other hand, Covaciu uses the terms “mahuți” and “palanchine” in the text, using footnotes to explain the words, as he usually does. The word “cornut” could have been used in this context, but Covaciu’s choice was to borrow the term “mahout” and coined a Romanian version, “mahut”. A problem would be that “mahut” exists with other meanings in the Romanian dictionary (it refers to a type of fabric or to a type of bird), and this could confuse the readers.

Conclusion

This analysis presented a series of examples from four Romanian translations of the novel *The Secret Garden*. We looked at the words, phrases and sentences which proved to be difficult to

translate from English into Romanian. Our research can serve as a valuable resource for a diverse audience, including translators, language teachers, linguists, and professionals engaged in intercultural studies. We found inspiring translation solutions and creative wordplay in the analyzed translations. We also focused on translation oversights or mistakes, in order to understand the differences between the two languages and for translators to avoid similar situations in the future.

We find Grecescu's translation the most successful one because it is well-adapted to the target audience, it respects the original, it renders poetic language and humour well, it expresses the linguistic charm of the original, and it has the smallest number of mistakes. Iliescu's translation was the second most successful. It conveyed the meaning of the English novel in a way in which readers who did not read the original would feel satisfied. The omission of certain phrases and the lack of regional speech when it was needed mark this translation as less expressive and colourful than Burnett's text. Covaciu's translation had a really big potential to be a fun reading experience. Covaciu's text is very expressive, humorous, full of life. The great majority of sentences are rendered in a natural way in Romanian. However, the mix of old-fashioned terms and neologisms, of regionalisms and bookish terms, make it difficult to follow by children. His peculiar word choices make the text seem outlandish at times, even for adult readers. Silaghi's translation is unfortunately deficient in various aspects, which makes it the least successful one out of these four. As shown in our analysis, there were many inaccuracies, terminological and semantic errors, misuse of language registers and lack of research. Many errors are caused by her misunderstanding the source text, which implies a limited proficiency of the source language.

The comparison of the translation of cultural aspects focused on a number of translation difficulties and the ways in which they were solved (or not). It further showcased each translator's approach and the fact that each translation has its own strengths and weaknesses.

Interlingual translations are met with many challenges related to the specific ways in which actions are expressed in the two languages, but also related to the different cultural backgrounds. These translations introduce the Romanian audience to elements of British culture, playing an important role in intercultural education. Our analysis and comparison of the four translations has practical applications in the field of English to Romanian translation studies. It could be used by teachers as a didactic material, by translators who can learn from the successes and mistakes of other translators, by linguists who study the similarities and differences between the two languages.

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Reviews and Interviews



Ciprian POPA, *Sintassi della lingua italiana. Teoria & esercizi*, Suceava, Editura Universităţii “Ştefan cel Mare”, 2019, 142 p.

Mirela AIOANE

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Il libro *Sintassi della lingua italiana. Teoria & esercizi* di Ciprian POPA, docente di italiano presso la Facoltà di Lettere e Scienze della Comunicazione dell'Università “Stefan cel Mare” di Suceava, pubblicato nel 2019 con la Casa Editrice dell'Università “Stefan cel Mare” di Suceava, comprende, secondo le spiegazioni dell'autore stesso nella premessa, “nozioni teoriche ed esercizi di sintassi della lingua italiana” (p. 7), divise in 25 unità (13 unità per la sintassi della proposizione e 12 unità per la sintassi del periodo), con esercizi alla fine di ogni argomento di sintassi per il consolidamento delle nozioni apprese.

Il libro si rivolge agli studenti o agli insegnanti di lingua italiana che vogliono studiare, approfondire o insegnare nei licei o nelle Facoltà di Lettere del nostro paese, la sintassi della lingua italiana, molto diversa dalla sintassi della lingua romena.

Si inizia con un'introduzione alla sintassi della lingua italiana in cui si presentano le principali caratteristiche della *sintassi della proposizione e del periodo* (p. 8), aggiungendo anche *i tipi di analisi* che si possono fare all'interno di una proposizione o di un periodo (p. 8).

La prima unità rappresenta un'introduzione più dettagliata alla sintassi della proposizione in cui si introduce la *frase semplice*, il *nucleo della frase semplice* con la *frase minima* e gli

elementi della frase minima (p. 9) e alla fine dell'unità si presenta la *struttura interna della frase* (p. 10). Nella seconda unità si continua con la presentazione del primo elemento essenziale della frase semplice: *il soggetto* (p. 12), con *il gruppo del soggetto* (p. 13), *il posto del soggetto* (p. 14) e *il soggetto sottinteso* (p. 15). Nella terza unità viene presentato il secondo elemento essenziale della frase semplice: *il predicato* (p. 17): *il predicato nominale con i verbi copulativi* e *il predicativo del soggetto* (p. 17), *il predicato verbale* (p. 19) e *il predicato sottinteso* (p. 19). Nella quarta unità si presenta *la concordanza tra il soggetto e il predicato* (p. 40) e si continua con *la struttura interna della frase* (p. 22). La quinta unità presenta *l'attributo* (p. 25), *la collocazione dell'attributo* (p. 26) e alla fine dell'unità *l'apposizione* (p. 28). Nella sesta unità si inizia la presentazione dei *complementi* (p. 31), con *le caratteristiche generali* (p. 32), proseguendo con il complemento diretto per eccellenza, *il complemento oggetto* (p. 32), *la posizione del complemento oggetto* (p. 33), *il complemento oggetto partitivo* (p. 34) e *il predicativo dell'oggetto* (p. 35). Nella settima unità, si prosegue con i *complementi indiretti* (p. 36), a cominciare con *il complemento di specificazione* (p. 37) e continuando con *il complemento di denominazione* (p. 41) e *il complemento di termine* (p. 43). L'ottava unità presenta *il complemento di causa* (p. 45), *il complemento di fine* (p. 46), *il complemento di modo* (p. 48) e *il complemento di mezzo o strumento* (p. 50). Nella nona unità vengono presentati i *complementi di luogo* (p. 51), che in italiano sono di quattro tipi: *il complemento di stato in luogo* (p. 52), *il complemento di moto a luogo* (p. 53), *il complemento di moto da luogo* (p. 53) e *il complemento di moto per luogo* (p. 54), con le corrispondenti preposizioni. I complementi di luogo possono essere figurati: *i complementi di luogo figurati* (p. 55) e anche avverbiali: *i complementi avverbiali di luogo* (p. 55). Sempre nella stessa unità

ci sono presentati anche *i complementi di tempo* (p. 57), che in italiano sono di 2 tipi: *il complemento di tempo determinato* (p. 58) e *il complemento di tempo continuato* (p. 60). Nell'undicesima unità sono presentati *il complemento di agente o di causa efficiente* (p. 62), *il complemento di compagnia e di unione* (p. 64), *il complemento di allontanamento o di separazione* (p. 66), *il complemento di origine o di provenienza* (p. 67) e *il complemento partitivo* (p. 68). Invece nell'undicesima unità vengono presentati *il complemento di età* (p. 69), *il complemento di limitazione* (p. 70), *il complemento di paragone* (p. 71), *il complemento di argomento* (p. 73), *il complemento di qualità* (p. 74) e *il complemento di materia* (p. 75). La dodicesima unità presenta *i complementi di quantità* (p. 77), che sono di cinque tipi: *il complemento di peso o misura* (p. 77), *il complemento di estensione* (p. 78), *il complemento di distanza* (p. 79), *il complemento di stima* (p. 80) e *il complemento di prezzo* (p. 81). Nella stessa unità sono presentati anche *i complementi di abbondanza e privazione* (p. 83). La tredicesima unità presenta *il complemento di colpa* (p. 84), *il complemento di pena* (p. 85), *il complemento di vantaggio o svantaggio* (p. 87), *il complemento distributivo* (p. 88), *il complemento di esclusione* (p. 89) e *il complemento di sostituzione o di scambio* (p. 90).

Nella seconda parte del corso si presentano, nella prima unità, le caratteristiche generali della *sintassi del periodo* (p. 92), aggiungendo *i tipi di proposizioni principali* (p. 93). Nella seconda unità si continua con la presentazione della *coordinazione* (p. 94) e dei *tipi di coordinazione* (p. 95). La terza unità presenta *la subordinazione* (p. 97) e *i tipi di proposizioni (frasi) subordinate* (p. 98). Nella quarta unità si inizia con *la proposizione (frase) soggettiva* (p. 102) e si continua con *la proposizione (frase) oggettiva* (p. 104). Nella quinta unità si presentano *la proposizione (frase) interrogativa indiretta* (p. 107)

e la *proposizione (frase) relativa* (p. 110). La sesta unità continua con la *proposizione (frase) causale* (p. 112) e la *proposizione (frase) finale* (p. 114). Nella settima unità vengono presentate la *proposizione (frase) temporale* (p. 117), la *proposizione (frase) modale* (p. 119) e la *proposizione (frase) dichiarativa* (p. 121). Nell'ottava unità il percorso della sintassi del periodo arriva alla *proposizione (frase) consecutiva* (p. 122) e continua con la *proposizione (frase) concessiva* (p. 124) e la *proposizione (frase) incidentale* (p. 125). La nona unità presenta la *proposizione (frase) strumentale* (p. 126), la *proposizione (frase) comparativa* (p. 127) e la *proposizione (frase) avversativa* (p. 129). Nella decima unità vengono presentate: la *proposizione (frase) limitativa* (p. 131), la *proposizione (frase) esclusiva* (p. 132) e la *proposizione (frase) eccettuativa* (p. 133). Nell'undicesima unità sono presentate la *proposizione (frase) condizionale* (p. 134) e il *periodo ipotetico* (p. 134). Invece la dodicesima unità presenta il *discorso diretto* e il *discorso indiretto* (p. 137). Tutte le lezioni sono accompagnate da vari esercizi.

La bibliografia selettiva contiene nomi importanti di linguisti italiani: Luca Serianni, Maurizio Dardano, Pietro Trifone che rappresentano una testimonianza della correttezza e della serietà del libro che abbiamo recensito.

In conclusione, il libro *Sintassi della lingua italiana. Teoria & esercizi* di Ciprian POPA rappresenta un ottimo materiale didattico per gli studenti della Facoltà di Lettere che studiano la lingua italiana e anche per gli insegnanti liceali che desiderano avere un supporto didattico utile per le loro lezioni.

***Transmedial Narration: Narratives and Stories in
Different Media*, Lars Elleström, Springer
International AG, 2019, 152 pp.**

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Lars Elleström teaches Comparative Literature at Linnaeus University, Sweden. He conducts the Linnaeus University Center for Intermedial and Multimodal Studies, and chairs the board of the International Society for Intermedial Studies. He has written and edited several books: *Divine Madness* (2002), *Media Borders, Multimodality and Intermediality* (2010), *Media Transformation* (2014), and *Transmedial Narration: Narratives and Stories in Different Media* (2019) – the subject of review. He has also signed and published various articles on poetry, gender, irony in different art forms, such as music, film, literature, semiotics, and intermediality.

There is little reason to expect that narratives and stories may still be subject to innovative practices, considering the road so many times taken by this process of conveying forms of discourse to audience in different media formats. Let us remember that transmedial narration - also known as multiplatform storytelling or transmedia narrative - is the arguable technique of telling a story across various forms of media. Why arguable? Because, on the one hand, semiotically analysing this process, the same piece of creation may induce different perceptions to different audiences (consumers); on the other hand, narratively speaking, communication does not maintain its unique structural

layout while being dispersed, even though the theme of the message rests the same.

It goes without saying that this cultural phenomenon is highly commercial due to its entertaining and engaging features, where comics, films, radio, print media, social media are the vehicles which transport the story to the masses. In other words, it is no longer regarded as individual or personal, it belongs to the community or to the world. Who has actually read all the book series of *Harry Potter* and how many of you have enjoyed their fantasy scenery on a screen? The answer is predictable. Consequently, this example shows that the story must be self-contained, a characteristic which conveys the fact that it should fulfil the consumers' needs and be satisfying enough. Of course, our intention here is not to trespass on medical property and discuss the cortical areas when processing language, but to showcase Elleström's studies on how narratives reach destination across multiple forms of media.

The first to have coined and outlined a definition for transmedia storytelling is the American researcher Henry Jenkins in 2003, claiming in his book *Convergence Culture* that *transmedia* means *across media*, where "every important story gets told, every brand gets sold, and every consumer gets courted across multiple media platforms [emphasis added] (p. 3)." This courtship proves nothing but the importance of the reader, listener or viewer who needs to decode the narrative structure with a profitable, yet substantial retention. Moreover, modern linguists recognise the constructivist importance of this device in educational contexts, highlighting its engaging and entertaining features.

Elleström's treatise, in its three parts – "Drawing the Frame", "Scrutinizing the Essentials", "Demonstrating the Principles" – gradually indulges in explaining key terms and

theoretical concepts, continues with media types analysis which are relevant to narrative creation and dissemination, and finally applies the theoretical gains to different media narratives. To be noted the abundance of references and cited works pertaining to each chapter, which clearly suggest the author's affiliation to the domain chosen to theorise. Besides referential coordinates, each chapter contains an abstract and specific key words, thus preparing and introducing the reader to the topic.

The daily "communicative occurrences" (p. 4) from Elleström's viewpoint are connected narratives which find meaning by means of our cognitive system. The hybrid characteristic of media is perceived through *transmediation*, the process which enables to "find the relations between email and movie and between speech and music meaningful" (p. 5). Consequently, narratives must possess the ability of being *transmediated* so that *transmedia storytelling* can occur. Lutas' arguing point that narration is not to be "found in all media" (2016, p. 33) is perfectly agreed on, considering that many types of media have released and are releasing non-narrative material, instead being focused on engaging the message receiver on multiple sensory levels.

Further on, readers recognise the process of mediation (pre-semiotic) and representation (semiotic), two interrelated devices allowing for interpretation, evidence of the fact that the message has reached the audience. Moreover, these interpretations rely on perceptions of the surrounding world due to meaningful stimuli, as Elleström supports his theory based on thorough cognitive, neurological, together with gestalt psychology research and knowledge. It is obvious that narrating through different types of media is rather mischievous, considering the operational elements, i.e. words (either written or spoken, pertaining to semiotics), and visuals (relating to sense), adding to this the other

sensorial modalities which play a pivotal role in human communication: hearing, touch and smell, all having a well-defined position in this study.

Persons, environments, ideas, events which form *le récit* are all active elements in present occurrences, but they may have been part of a framework in the past, and they may be part of a future framework as well. Gérard Genette's structural analysis is employed here to support the "temporal divergence in narratives regarding order, duration, and frequency" (p. 92), just like Bakhtin used the *chronotope*, a narrative asset underlining that time cannot exist without a spatial referent. The professor's voice is distinguishable and supported with a plethora of examples which help readers synthesise the theoretical approach to understand the narrative processes.

Apart from theories, concepts, taxonomies and new findings encompassed in the first two parts, the third part prioritises "qualified media types" (p. 115) which the author analyses by beginning with painting and instrumental music and ending with "non-artistic" media domains, such as "mathematical equation and guided [city] tours" (p. 116). If, for instance, one wishes to understand the narratological status of a guided city tour where the guide (narrator) indulges in a multimodal communication with the narratees (participants in the tour) or how to investigate the media modalities of mathematical equations, the answer will be found in this book. Special mention must be made as well of the author's minute research and exposure of results in a comprehensive manner.

Throughout the treatise, the reader will rediscover many sustained theories or explained hypotheses being reiterated many times in the book, perhaps an appanage of tutors who need to be assured that the information provided has reached his or her tutees, in view of the amount of information and terminology used

which is, at a certain point, rather overwhelming. Whatever the *trans* media used to reach this publication, professor Elleström's readership will find in his methodical treatise either a scientific springboard for new conceptualisations or the cultural mechanism for detecting narratives.

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Giorgio Agamben, *Misterul răului. Benedict XVI și sfârșitul veacurilor*, traducere de Anamaria Gebăilă, Humanitas, București, 2023, 98 p.

Cristiana-Mădălina CHIRICA

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Anul 2023 s-a dovedit a fi unul prielnic aparițiilor editoriale și traducerilor unor studii de însemnătate majoră, iar *Misterul răului. Benedict XVI și sfârșitul veacurilor* al lui Giorgio Agamben se înscrie cu succes în acest areal.

Fiind inițial textul prelegerii susținute în 2012, în urma acordării titlului de *doctor honoris causa* în teologie, cercetarea lui Agamben s-a concretizat într-un studiu compact, de dimensiune redusă, articulat corespunzător și în concordanță cu subiectul urmărit. Fără divagări de la demonstrație, scriitorul își ia drept prim reper de analiză abdicarea istorică și neașteptată a Papei Benedict al XVI-lea, pe care o investighează prin comparație cu precedentă renunțare la Sfântul Scaun și nu numai.

Retragerea din îndatoririle papale a lui Joseph Ratzinger a uimit și a contrariat întreaga lume, a destabilizat, a deconstruit și a fondat în egală măsură mituri legate de Biserică și de legitimitatea pe care o are. Plecarea de la Vatican nu doar că a indicat existența unei boli în corpul Bisericii, ci a întărit ideea de neputință și slăbiciune a trupului legitim al instituției bisericești. Spre deosebire de Papa Celestin al V-lea, care a invocat în discursul de abdicare *debilitas corporis*, Papa Benedict al XVI-lea depune două justificări integrate într-un cod discursiv abil conceput: pe de o parte, vorbește despre o șubrețire a „puterilor trupești”, *vigor corporis*, iar pe de alta, invocă argumentul slăbiciunii personale - *infirmitas personae* (Agamben 2023 : 12).

De la aceste mărturii, Agamben demarează acțiunile necesare pentru o mai bună înțelegere a motivelor nerostite care locuiesc în penumbra autosuspendării Papei Benedict.

În demersul său, filosoful italian aduce în atenție un articol scris de tânărul Joseph Ratzinger, care vizează sursele teologice pe care le utilizează în redactarea observațiilor despre conceptul de Biserică al lui Ticonius¹. Plecând de la acest articol, în care teologul Ratzinger admite, asemenea lui Ticonius, existența unui corp bipartit al Bisericii, Giorgio Agamben merge mai departe și explică în ce constă partiția, sfârșind prin a admite că Răul și Binele nu sunt două forțe contrare, aflate în conflict, ci sunt două stări care co-există și se susțin reciproc sub cupola Bisericii și a societății moderne.

Filosoful italian aduce în prim-plan ideea conform căreia Biserica este alcătuită dintr-o parte întunecată și una luminoasă. Biserica *fusca* și Biserica *decora* (*Idem* : 19) nu sunt entități legitime diferite, ci sunt părți ale aceleiași Biserici, inseparabile până la sfârșitul veacurilor: o parte neagră, *fusca*, care adăpostește păcătoșii și, prin urmare, pe Diavol, și una luminoasă, *decora*, asociată celor drept-credincioși și lui Christos. Cu toate acestea, tânărul teolog și viitorul papă Benedict al XVI-lea știe că marea *discessio* nu este posibilă în timpul prezent, ci în cel de la sfârșitul veacurilor, deoarece Biserica *fusca* și cea *decora* sau, altfel spus, Biserica lui Antichrist și cea a lui Christos funcționează ca un întreg. Nu există în istoria prezentă divizare, ci unire și contopire. Biserica *neagră* împreună cu Biserica *albă* alcătuiesc Biserica, cele două neavând suficientă putere pentru a rezista separat până

¹ Articolul menționat se numește „Observații despre conceptul de Biserică al lui Tyconius în *Liber regularum*” și a fost publicat în 1956, în *Revue des Études Augustiniennes*.

la finalul lumii. Altfel spus, unirea răului cu binele oferă un fundament stabil structurii lumesti a Bisericii.

Conform lui Agamben, răul nu se erijează într-o „dramă teologică tenebroasă, care să paralizeze și să facă orice acțiune enigmatică și ambiguă, ci este o dramă istorică” (*Idem* : 58), dezvăluindu-ne, astfel, caracterul său teatral și statutul dramatic pe care Biserica îl ocupă în acest *teatru al lumii*. Rolul Bisericii este, așadar, de a încadra sfârșitul lumii „într-o structură onto-teologică” (*Idem* : 56), nu într-un timp istoric cunoscut, menținând echilibrul între elementele care o definesc: escatologia și iconomia, fapt care o plasează într-o criză constantă. Escatologic, Biserica nu aparține lumii, iar iconomic renunțarea la lume semnifică autodistrugerea ei.

Criza instituției Bisericii se leagă de o alta la fel de importantă: criza politică modernă, înțelegând prin aceasta mai mult decât influențele politice care acaparează mapamondul. Criza principală a epocii moderne este determinată, în fapt, de substituția reperelor morale și de incorecta gestionare a normelor etice. În acest context al fragilității societății, Papa Benedict, în discursul de abdicare ținut în Consistoriu, menționează fără să lase loc de interpretări că, în lumina provocărilor pe care societatea le traversează, pentru a asigura continuitatea existenței credinței este necesară vigoarea: trupească și sufletească (*Idem* : 65).

Pe de altă parte, Giorgio Agamben atrage atenția asupra riscului repetitivității, în acest sens fiind mai mult decât explicite trimiterile sale la scrierile biblice despre Babilon. Iată că G. Agamben face o paralelă subtilă între babilonieni și modernii contemporani, între provocările istorice și pierzania civilizației, îngroșând tușa asemănarilor foarte subtil. Desigur că exercițiul demonstrativ pe care îl face nu acaparează teza propusă, însă îndeamnă la reflectare.

Misterul răului. Benedict XVI și sfârșitul veacurilor este un volum concentrat, care urmărește atât formarea convingerilor teologice de tinerețe ale celui care a fost Papa Benedict al XVI-lea, cât și o scurtă și abia perceptibilă analiză a timpului actual. Vocea lui G. Agamben nu rămâne nici de această dată fără ecou. Fie că se declară un susținător al deciziei Papei și chiar îl privește pe acesta cu admirație pentru gestul plin de curaj al renunțării la Scaunul Papal, fie că reliefează anumite idei și concepții care îndeamnă la observare și meditație, Agamben reușește să impună un punct de vedere original, precis conturat, formulat astfel încât mesajul să fie accesibil tuturor.

În încheiere, un alt atu al studiului îl constituie faptul că acesta nu emite pretenția de a nu fi contrazis, ci, din contră, lasă la atitudinea fiecăruia concluziile; textul lasă spațiu dezbaterii, conversației, adăugirilor și, de ce nu, controverselor, însă, cu siguranță, nu și nepăsării. Agamben prezintă faptele care au precedat decizia de abdicare papală, compară discursurile (pe care le redă în *Anexe*) de abdicare ale celor doi Papi și analizează modul în care Biserica își exercită funcțiile într-un timp care favorizează apariția crizelor morale, sociale, politice și, bineînțeles, creștine.

Marianne Lederer, Madeleine Stratford (sous la dir. de), *Culture et traduction. Au-delà des mots*, Classiques Garnier, Paris, 2020, 197 p.

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Par ses quatre parties vouées à l’analyse du traitement des éléments culturels dans l’acte traductif, l’ouvrage *Culture et traduction. Au-delà des mots*, rédigé sous la direction de Marianne Lederer et Madeleine Stratford, réunit onze contributions groupées thématiquement sur les axes suivants : *Faits culturels, Questions de genre, Postcolonialisme et Hybridation*.

L’ensemble de ces onze études qui forment le texte proprement-dit de l’ouvrage est entouré, pour être complété et explicité, par des éléments relevant du péri-texte. Préfigurant le corps du texte est ainsi présente une *Introduction* signée par une des directrices de l’ouvrage ; à la fin de cet ouvrage collectif figure la *Bibliographie* qui comprend les références de tous les livres et de tous les articles cités le long des onze contributions, suivie, à son tour, d’un *Index* des auteurs y mentionnés. Et avant la *Table des matières*, le lecteur est introduit aux *Résumés* des contributions et aux *Présentations* des onze auteurs, professeur.e.s, chargée de cours, traducteurs ou traductrices en France, en Italie, en Norvège, ou bien au Canada.

Comme il a été déjà mentionné, l’entrée dans l’univers de ce livre se fait par le biais d’une *Introduction* signée Madeleine Stratford. Dans cet élément péri-textuel la professeure canadienne de l’université du Québec en Outaouais passe en revue des jalons

importants dans l'évolution de notre appréhension sur la traduction, à savoir la « pensée binaire » d'opération de transfert d'une langue A à une langue B (qui donne l'impression d'une certaine facilité de l'acte traductif, qui laisserait à penser qu'il pourrait être envisagé comme un acte mécanique) et la perspective qui prend en compte les « variables individuelles et collectives » (p. 7) spécifiques à la parole. Cet élément péritextuel nous rappelle aussi que le terme « culture » se décline sur plusieurs axes. À son sens social, de somme d'éléments acquis par l'individu d'une manière presque spontanée, « par contact avec l'environnement immédiat » au sein d'une communauté, d'un groupe partageant « une vision du monde et un ensemble de coutumes sans être nécessairement reconnu comme distinct sur le plan politique » (p. 8), se rajoute le sens de la culture vue en tant que savoir, relevant de l'érudition et dont l'acquisition suppose effort et apprentissage menant à une culture générale mais aussi spécialisée que le traducteur se doit de posséder. À la culture-savoir se joint la culture émotionnelle que le traducteur se doit aussi de détenir (même si, à l'heure actuelle, elle semble être injustement moins prisee), un certain degré d'empathie vers l'Autre car « tout savoir n'est pas de nature intellectuelle, et l'on oublie souvent que les facultés de l'esprit ne suffisent pas à l'heure de traduire » (p. 8). La dernière acception du terme « culture » analysée par la co-directrice de cet ouvrage collectif est celle contenue par le syntagme « cultures traductives » qui envisagent la traduction en termes de « fidélité à la lettre ou à l'esprit », d'où l'établissement de différentes normes de traduction privilégiant soit la « lettre », soit « l'esprit », ce qui équivaut à une entreprise vouée à l'échec, puisqu'il s'avère qu'« une telle binarité n'existe ni dans la pratique, ni dans l'absolu » (p. 8).

La partie introductive continue par la présentation individuelle de chacune des quatre parties composant cet ouvrage

collectif, concluant que l'ensemble des articles y présents brosent un panorama « certes partiel, mais contrasté des divers points de vue traductologiques » (p. 14) dans l'espoir d'avancer la réflexion sur la vaste problématique de la traduction de la culture.

La première partie du livre, intitulée *Faits culturels*, débute par un article signé par sa co-directrice Marianne Lederer, professeure à l'Université Paris 3. Le titre contient une métaphore, réfléchissant l'image de la culture vue comme une « pierre angulaire » de la traduction. Mais dès l'introduction l'auteure attire l'attention sur la perspective faussée impliquée par l'emploi de la formulation « traduire la culture », plaidant en revanche en faveur de l'emploi du syntagme la « traduction des éléments culturels » car, bien que la culture soit comme l'eau insidieuse qui passe dans les recoins d'un texte, on ne saurait dire que ledit texte puisse à lui tout seul contenir « toute » la culture d'une collectivité. Posant le principe du lien entre la langue et la culture, l'auteure passe en revue autant les noms des traductologues qui ont jalonné la perspective d'une traduction fidèle à la lettre – Friedrich Schleiermacher, Antoine Berman, Henri Mechonnic, Lawrence Venuti -, que les noms des traductologues qui ont remis en question l'indissociabilité entre la langue et la culture : Jean-René Ladmiral (qui parle plutôt de « deux instances qu'il s'agit de distinguer et d'articuler l'une à l'autre » 1998), Albrecht Neubert et Gregory M. Shreve pour qui le contenu peut être séparé de la forme linguistique et textuelle et Fortunato Israël pour qui la langue « reste un moyen, un vecteur de la pensée ou de l'effet » (1994).

Mais après ce panorama qui dresse l'image de deux positions antinomiques, l'auteure nomme la *sous-détermination du langage* comme la raison majeure qui bat en brèche

l'indissociabilité de la langue et la culture, obligeant tout lecteur (et par voie de conséquence, tout traducteur) à tenir compte de l'implicite comporté par le discours : « en comparant les langues, on s'aperçoit que, dans chaque langue, l'explicite d'un vocable ne désignera la plupart du temps qu'une partie du référent, et non le référent entier » (p. 21). L'auteure entreprend ensuite de mettre en évidence le poids de la dimension culturelle comportée par d'autres types de textes que les textes littéraires traditionnellement vus comme les détenteurs suprêmes d'indices culturels. Citant les noms des traductologues Mary Snell-Hornby (1995), Elisabeth Lavaut et Claudia Wolosin (1998), elle rappelle que les textes juridiques, culinaires, journalistiques, informatiques, les essais, la correspondance – qu'elle soit privée ou commerciale, recèlent tous des éléments culturels. Elle revisite aussi le concept d'« entropie » en traduction du point de vue de l'attitude avec laquelle il faudrait envisager la « perte », car s'il est vrai que la traduction ne saura jamais « évoquer chez son lecteur un monde aussi vaste et aussi riche que celui qu'évoque le texte original chez l'autochtone » (p. 22), elle doit néanmoins être un motif de réjouissance, étant donné que, grâce au traducteur qui se doit d'être bilingue et biculturel, un texte peut être rendu accessible à un public qui ne connaît pas sa langue. Ainsi, au-delà du traitement des culturèmes qui restent une pierre de touche de la traduction, M. Lederer insiste-t-elle sur le rôle essentiel joué par le traducteur grâce à l'activité à laquelle il s'applique même lorsqu'il traduit des éléments culturels qui ne réclament ni une réflexion particulièrement poussée aux différences entre la langue source et la langue cible, ni le recours à des procédés de traduction particuliers : « les institutions, les mœurs, la façon de raisonner, de réagir aux événements, la manière d'être et de se comporter

spécifique à une culture donnée » (p. 24) - autant d'éléments importants qui se retrouvent dans la traduction, qui dévoilent tout un monde au lecteur qui l'ignorait avant et finalement qui, grâce au traducteur, contribuent à créer une atmosphère culturelle et « à faire ressentir au lecteur sinon l'effet affectif complet, du moins l'effet notionnel qui fera naître une appréhension rationnelle de l'affectif ressenti par le lecteur de l'original » (p. 25).

L'étude descriptive d'Isabelle Collombat sur la métaphore fonctionnelle, celle qui ne joue pas le rôle de « simple enjolivure » (p. 32), mais qui se charge de celui de facilitateur pour la compréhension de notions inconnues au lecteur - envisagée donc comme outil de construction du monde et d'appui à l'acquisition des connaissances (Joshua et Dupin 2003, Jacobi 1987) -, identifie des stratégies de traduction dans un corpus bilingue, anglais et français, constitué à partir d'articles de revues de vulgarisation scientifique et de tourisme. S'y retrouvent ainsi analysées la neutralisation des images dans le cas des référents culturels, la façon littérale de réexprimer dans la langue cible les constituants sémantiques du comparé et du comparant, ainsi que la suppression pure et simple de l'image. Comme le précise l'auteure elle-même, le cheminement de la réflexion contenue par cet article est « de nature à favoriser une approche décloisonnée et objective de la responsabilité du traducteur dans la recherche de l'idiomaticité et les paramètres de sa créativité » (p. 32). Elle prône une interprétation détaillée de toute image rencontrée dans le texte source « selon des critères cognitifs et fonctionnels - non pas seulement rhétoriques » (p. 43).

Ancré dans la Théorie Interprétative de la Traduction qui pose que le traducteur doit tenir compte du fait que le sens « prend appui sur une partie explicite - la formulation linguistique - dite

synecdoque, et une partie implicite cognitive qui la complète » (p. 45), l'article d'Antin Fougner Rydning met en exergue le profit qui peut être tiré par le traducteur de deux théories de la sémantique cognitive : la Théorie de la Métaphore et de la Métonymie Conceptuelle et la Théorie de l'Intégration Conceptuelle. Ayant comme corpus toujours un texte pragmatique, l'étude de Rydning se concentre sur la représentation cognitive de la création du sens en discours dans deux énoncés culturellement marqués en français, tels que retrouvés dans trois versions en norvégien, à savoir l'expression « Beaucoup de mes clients *se sont faits à la force du poignet.* » et la formule syglotypique, Le BSAM (*bonjour-sourire-au revoir-merci*).

La deuxième partie de cet ouvrage collectif, *Questions de genre*, est inaugurée par l'étude de Caterina Riba sur l'œuvre de l'écrivaine et traductrice catalane Maria-Mercé Marçal qui réfléchit sa vision sur « les dynamiques du pouvoir dans le fait littéraire » (p. 63) et sur la place du *féminin* dans le canon littéraire dont la constitution n'est pas neutre mais répond en fait à des intérêts « très concrets » et liés « aux structures du pouvoir » (p. 70). C. Riba remarque que c'est justement de l'absence des femmes écrivaines au sein de la littérature que Marçal fait un des sujets de prédilection de ses écrits. Comme Marçal s'est réclamée d'une généalogie féminine, Riba analyse le rôle joué par l'intertextualité présente dans ses poèmes et son seul roman sous forme manifeste ou voilée par le biais de la traduction. Absorbées et transfigurées dans le projet littéraire catalan de Marçal, les voix de Sapho, Sylvia Plath, Anna Akhmatova et Renée Vivien contribuent à dénoncer le malaise de l'écrivaine et traductrice catalane devant le sexisme de la société et de la littérature.

Dès le début de l'étude *Traduire un sexe et un genre autre* qui porte le sous-titre *Récit d'une expérience de l'empathie*, son

auteur Benoit Laflamme (traducteur professionnel au Parlement du Canada) fait l'aveu que la traduction du recueil de poèmes en prose intimiste *eating matters*, qui dit le combat de l'auteure canadienne Kara-lee MacDonald avec ses troubles alimentaires lui a offert l'occasion de se départir de l'attitude habituellement adoptée lors de l'exercice de sa profession, dont le code d'éthique lui interdit formellement « toute ingérence dans le texte » (p. 71) dans toutes les circonstances, quelles que soient ses valeurs et ses convictions. Cet article du traducteur professionnel est un témoignage issu d'une expérience de traduction autre, qu'il a vécue comme un projet de recherche-crédation concrétisé dans un journal destiné à rendre compte des réflexions générées par le parcours traductif au fur et à mesure que le discours traduit prenait forme. Lors de la traduction de ce discours poétique féministe et militant, quand il sent son « invisibilité se dissoudre » (p. 71), B. Laflamme médite sur des thèmes tels l'éthique du traducteur et le rôle de *témoin secondaire* dans le domaine de l'histoire ou d'*allié* dans le champ des luttes minoritaire que peut endosser le traducteur ; le dessein d'assumer la position d'allié le mène à la recherche de l'empathie que tout traducteur se doit de cultiver afin de « bien saisir le vouloir-émouvoir de manière à l'exprimer fidèlement dans la traduction » (p. 80), ce qui lui permettra de remplir adéquatement sa mission d'allié.

La troisième partie, portant le titre *Postcolonialisme*, réunit les contributions de Corinne Méné-Caster, de Loïc Céry et de Chiara Denti. Corinne Méné-Caster s'intéresse aux conditions de possibilité d'un projet de traduction des textes caribéens et de réflexion profonde sur l'essence de la Caraïbe, « creuset d'Europe, d'Afrique, d'Asie, et peut-être même du monde » (p. 87) dont la spécificité qui la distingue d'autres espaces-creuset réside dans la mise en scène de « l'impossible origine « une » », à la différence des logiques des cultures homogènes prônées par

d'autres espaces, et la mise en avant de la Relation telle que conçue par Édouard Glissant. La traduction devient un réel acte de création, « pratique transculturelle » (p. 88) qui ne se propose pas d'atteindre le statut d'identification à l'original, ce qui lui permet de se soustraire à la pensée de « défaite du texte traduit » au profit de son approche comme « alternative polymorphe et revivifiante du texte originel, trouvant ses ressources dans les potentialités de la langue-cible, et du faisceau de langues ou variétés de langues avec lesquelles cette langue-cible est ou fut en relation, de manière affichée ou cachée » (p. 98). Dans cette perspective, l'image que l'éditeur et le lecteur doivent avoir du traducteur ne doit plus être celle d'une « seconde main » invisible ; le traducteur devient un ré-écrivain qui ne se sent plus assujéti à un original tout-puissant.

Dans « La traductologie au risque de la créolisation », Loïc Céry examine la Relation telle qu'elle a été conçue par Édouard Glissant, ensuite les perspectives ouvertes par la prise de conscience de la mise en contact des langues et, par voie de conséquence, la Relation qu'il qualifie comme « traduisante » qui permet de décliner la traduction « en de nouveaux accents, ceux du Tout-Monde » (p. 110).

La dernière contribution de la partie *Postcolonialisme*, celle de Chiara Denti, fait en fait la transition vers la dernière partie de l'ouvrage qui porte le titre d'*Hybridation* ; et C. Denti et G. Acerenza, A. Grutschus, F. Courriol-Seita ou bien A. Orlandi traitent du poids de l'hétérolinguisme dans le discours littéraire, tel que défini par Rainier Grutman : « la présence d'idiomes étrangers, sous quelque forme que ce soit, aussi bien que de variétés (sociales, régionales ou chronologiques) de la langue principale » (1997), « les manières dont les langues se font écho à l'intérieur d'un texte » (Rainier, 2019), en réfléchissant aux défis

posés par la traduction des textes en question. Denti réunit dans son corpus les textes postcoloniaux francophones parus chez des éditeurs parisiens après 2000, y dénichant les dimensions comportées par la forme linguistique : « esthétique et politique à la fois » (p. 111). Le choix des écrivains postcoloniaux de s'exprimer dans la langue maternelle ou bien dans la langue européenne, le recours fréquent aux emprunts, aux calques, aux néologismes ou aux interlangues - voilà autant d'éléments dont le traducteur se doit de tenir compte et qui se constituent dans une question longtemps évitée par la traductologie qui préférerait se savoir étayée par un soubassement binaire : d'une seule langue source vers une seule langue cible. Denti conclut que propre à toutes les traductions analysées est une « ligne fondamentalement monolingue » (p. 116). Soucieux d'être compris par leurs lecteurs, les traducteurs des écrivains postcoloniaux surtraduisent. Aussi font-ils appel aux italiques pour mettre en évidence les mots étrangers (ce qui rompt la fluidité de la lecture à laquelle donne lieu le texte auctorial qui ne marque d'aucune façon le terme étranger), à la glose intratextuelle, aux notes en bas de page ou bien à l'insertion d'un glossaire explicatif en fin d'ouvrage afin de ne pas risquer de contrarier un lecteur monolingue. L'espace textuel, tout comme l'espace péritextuel sont mis à profit pour le compte du travail de clarification dans « la volonté d'atteindre une compréhensibilité maximale » (p. 119) pour le lectorat. Le résultat de cet effort d'atténuation de l'hétérolinguisme est que la complicité que l'auteur veut instaurer entre son lecteur et lui ne saurait qu'en pâtir.

Dans la quatrième partie du livre, Gerardo Acerenza et Anke Grutschus, Florence Courriol-Seita, ainsi qu'Adriana Orlandi s'attachent à analyser l'hybridation discursive dans la

littérature italienne dont l'hétérolinguisme constitutif lui a valu le titre de « laboratoire du plurilinguisme » (E. Sciarrino, 2016). L'emploi de dialectes et de langues étrangères dans l'italien standard dans l'œuvre du Sicilien Andrea Camilleri, du Napolitain Erri De Luca et du Calabrais Carmine Abate, les multiples réflexions métalinguistiques faites par les narrateurs et les personnages crée une « mosaïque linguistique » avec des implications stylistiques qui « rend la tâche des traducteurs assez ardue » (p. 125). Après avoir entrepris d'identifier les formes exactes de l'hétérolinguisme caractérisant les romans des écrivains susmentionnés, Gerardo Acerenza et Anke Grutschus mentionnent l'éventail des stratégies qui s'offrent aux traducteurs : la neutralisation de la variation diatopique ou la standardisation, l'adaptation grâce à d'autres éléments dialectaux ou bien la défamiliarisation par report d'éléments de la langue de départ dans la langue d'arrivée. L'article continue par l'investigation du corpus constitué de traductions françaises, allemandes et espagnoles suite à laquelle les auteurs concluent que la stratégie la plus couramment employée dans ces cas de figure est la neutralisation.

Florence Courriol-Seita traite la traduction des dialectes, ayant comme point de départ la question « Comment conserver dans la traduction française l'identité italienne exponentielle vue la présence massive de particularismes péninsulaires ? » (p. 142). Sa perspective est que leur statut de pierre de touche pour le talent du traducteur ne doit pas empêcher celui-ci de trouver une façon équivalente de transmission de la variation diatopique, par l'emploi d'un autre vernaculaire connu par le lecteur de la langue d'arrivée. L'effet de lecture serait ainsi préservé et le but de la traduction, accompli.

L'article qui clôt cet ouvrage collectif, signé Adriana Orlandi, « Plurilinguisme et traduction » explore les stratégies de traduction que Dominique Vittoz a utilisées pour rendre les variétés diatopiques propres à *La vedova scalza* de Salvatore Niffoi, mettant en exergue le principe du dosage. Au lieu du dialecte sarde de l'original, la traductrice a employé un parler régional français en vertu de son équivalence fonctionnelle, mais qu'elle a su alterner astucieusement avec « d'autres formes marquées ou idiomatiques de la langue française » (p. 161) : des formes désuètes ou vieilles, des néologismes, des expressions dans différents registres et niveaux de langue. Le soin de réaliser le bon dosage des éléments susmentionnés pour le lecteur français ne laisse pas la traductrice ignorer les passages où le sarde, le sarde italianisé ou l'italien régional de Sardaigne sont neutralisés, ce qui la motive à employer des procédés de compensation.

La conclusion d'A. Orlandi est que grâce à sa connaissance du public lecteur et, par voie de conséquence, à son respect du dosage des stratégies de traduction en accord avec l'horizon d'attente du lectorat, la traductrice Dominique Vittoz a réussi à créer un nouveau langage qui se prête à la comparaison avec le langage de l'original. Projet mené à bon port.

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