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Biała mitologia **Jacquesa Derridy, czyli jak czytać palimpsesty**

Biała mitologia Jacquesa Derridy[1] to tekst w kształcie koła. Zaczyna się i kończy w tym samym miejscu, tym samym obrazem kwiatu, „tego ważkiego kwiatu, jakby odwracającego się od siebie, zwiniętego w sobie", helio-tropu. Aby go „unieść, upuścić, wydobyć całą krasę" cierpliwości trzeba by się uczyć „od szlifierzy drogich kamieni" (1986: 283), pamiętając, że „heliotrop jest także nazwą kamienia: cennego, zielonkawego, porysowanego czerwonymi żyłkami, kamienia, który jest rodzajem wschodniego jaspisu" (1986: 318). Tekst zatacza koło, jak słońce ze Wschodu na Zachód, jak heliotrop za jego światłem i jak ono osiąga swój zenit. Do niego dojdziemy.

Kolisty kształt mają też medale i monety. Nie tylko są okrągłe, lecz znajdują się także w ciągłym obiegu, który zaciera odciśnięte na nich podobizny, ale też i powiększa ich wartość. Koło zatacza także i szlifierska tarcza wygładzająca powierzchnię jaspisu lub polerująca medale i monety, by zatrzeć na nich „napis, cyfrę i rysunek" (1986: 284).

Biała mitologia – tekst o metaforze, który zarazem sam jest metaforą, ma jej kształt, i tak jak ona (należy to do strategii tekstu) ma strukturę subwersywną, jednocześnie unosi i upuszcza, tworzy (się) i (się) znosi, uobecnia i unieobecnia. Dekonstruuje – „metafizyczne i retoryczne schematy", nie po to wszakże, by je „odrzucić i odesłać do diabła, lecz aby je inaczej, na nowo przedstawić" (1986: 290).

Derrida wychodzi od gry słów: *usage*, *usure*, przy czym pamiętać należy, że po francusku *usure* to nie tylko zużycie, ale i lichwa. Termin *usure* w odniesieniu do metafory posiada obie te konotacje: „jest to zatarcie przez ścieranie, wyjałowienie, wyczerpanie, to jasne, ale także jest to produkt dodatkowy kapitału, wymiana, która nie uszczuplając wstępnego wkładu, sprawia, że pierwotne bogactwo owocuje, powiększa

[1] Istnieją dwa polskie przekłady tekstu (patrz: Bibliografia). Pierwszy z nich jest niepełny (bez rozdziałów *L'elipse du soleil: l'énigme, l'incompréhenisible, l'imprenable* oraz *Les Fleurs de la rhétorique: l'héliotrope*). Pracuję z obydwoma przekładami: 1986 (Wiktoria Krzemień) i 2002 (Janusz Margański).

obrót w formie zysku, czyli zwiększenie zainteresowania, pojawienie się nad-wartości językowej – te dwie historie sensu pozostają nierozerwalnie ze sobą związane" (1986: 284). Jak dwie strony medalu, jak rewers i awers monety. Ta ekonomiczna metaforyka doprowadzi Derridę w rezultacie do gry między własnością (np. własnością prywatną u Marksa) i właściwością, tym co posiada się na własność, a właściwym znaczeniem słów, między *eigen* i *eigentlich*, wreszcie między greckim *idion* a idiomem, właściwością stylu, wyrażeniem.

Jednym z założeń tekstu i zarazem przyczynkiem do dekonstrukcyjnej gry jest teza, że metafora zawsze idzie drogą od „natury" ku abstrakcji, jej szlak wiedzie od figury zmysłowej ku metafizycznemu pojęciu, że zużyta, „martwa" metafora daje życie filozofii. Na drodze tej fizyka zastąpiona zostaje metafizyką.

Rysunek skryty w palimpseście

Przedstawiając obszernie dialog Polifila z Arystem z *Ogrodu Epikura* Anatola France'a, a w zasadzie racje Polifila w nim wyłożone, dochodzi Derrida do zawartej już w tytule metafory metafizyki jako białej mitologii:

> Metafizyka – biała mitologia, która organizuje i odzwierciedla kulturę Zachodu; biały człowiek swą własną, indoeuropejską mitologię, swój *logos*, czyli *mythos* swojego idiomu, bierze za uniwersalną formę tego, co powinien chcieć jeszcze nazwać Rozumem. (...)
> Biała mitologia – metafizyka zatarła w sobie samej mit, który ją stworzył i który mimo wszystko pozostaje aktywny, żywotny, napisany białym atramentem – niewidoczny i przykryty rysunek na palimpseście. (1986: 287-8)2

Moment znaczący: gdy padają te słowa, Aryst – „obrońca metafizyki" – wychodzi, nie chcąc już więcej rozmawiać ze „złym graczem" (1986: 288), czy wręcz „oszustem" (2002: 267). Formuła „białej mitologii" jest więc niejako ostatecznym złamaniem metafizycznych reguł gry („Gdybyś rozumował ściśle według prawideł, łatwo by mi było obalić twoje argumenty." 1986: 288), zerwaniem metafizycznego dyskursu. Dlaczego tak jest? Czy dzieje się tak na skutek odwołania się do mitu? Stwierdzenia, że pierwotną warstwą palimpsestu, jakim jest zachodnia kultura, jest właśnie on: „indoeuropejski mit" białego człowieka, to, co jest jego własnością i jemu jest właściwe, własny *idiom*,

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[2] W przekładzie Janusza Margańskiego: „Metafizyka – biała mitologia, która skupia w sobie i odzwierciedla kulturę Zachodu: biały człowiek traktuje swoją mitologię – indoeuropejską – swój *logos*, czyli *mythos* swego idiomu, jako formę uniwersalną tego, co zapewne jeszcze chce nazywać Rozumem. (...)

Biała mitologia – metafizyka sama zatarła w sobie baśniową (oryg.: *fabuleuse* – P.P.) scenę, która ją stworzyła, a która mimo wszystko pozostała żywa, poruszająca; scena zapisana białym atramentem, rysunek niewidzialny i skryty w palimpseście." (2002: 266-7) który tylko na mocy jego egocentryzmu i tylko przez niego samego brany jest za uniwersalną formę, za sam Rozum, którym, w oczywisty sposób, nie jest? Czy w końcu ta dowolna, pozbawiona jakiejś istotnej zewnętrznej legitymacji operacja wymiany i rozszerzenia jest metaforą? Czy rzeczywiście jest ona tropem, który tworzy metafizykę, czy raczej istnieje jedynie dopiero w jej obrębie?

Metafora (martwa wszakże) jest dla Derridy, jak się zdaje, językiem metafizyki. Uobecnia w mowie, czy raczej piśmie, pewne formy bytu fizycznego oraz znaczenia symboliczno-mityczne i jako taka podlega w systemie Derridy dekonstrukcji. Pierwotna postać znaczeń w języku ma więc charakter mityczny (wynikałoby z tego, że u źródeł opisu świata, pisma, filozofii leży mit) i wykazuje strukturę symboliczną, w której „to co symbolizowane zachowuje więź z symbolem" (1986: 287).

Wychodząc od zdania „Dusza posiada Boga w takiej mierze, w jakiej bierze udział w absolucie", które potraktowane zostaje jako wycinek metafizycznego palimpsestu, Polifil-Derrida dochodzi na drodze etymologizmu do formuły: „Tchnienie usiadło na tym, który jaśnieje, w takiej mierze, w jakiej bierze udział w tym, który jest zupełnie rozwiązany" – skąd otrzymamy bez trudu: „Ten, którego tchnienie jest oznaką życia, człowiek, zajmie miejsce (wówczas bez wątpienia, gdy tchnienie z niego uleci) w ogniu boskim, źródle i ognisku życia, a miejsce to będzie mu odmierzone według owej błogosławionej mocy, która mu została dana (przez demonów jak sądzę) celem rozpowszechniania owego gorącego tchnienia, tej małej duszy niewidzialnej, w bezmiarach wolnych przestworów (prawdopodobnie błękitu niebios)." (1986: 287)

Metafizyczne wielkości „Bóg", „dusza", „absolut" sprowadzone zostają do symbolicznego ciągu: tchnienie, życie, ogień, źródło, ognisko, moc, błękit nieba. Polifil konkluduje: „I zauważ przecie, że wygląda to snać na fragment hymnu wedyjskiego, że tchnie to starożytną mitologią Wschodu. Nie biorę na siebie odpowiedzialności za to, czym odtworzył ów mit pierwotny w ścisłej zgodzie z prawami, które rządzą rozwojem mowy. To nie ma wielkiego znaczenia. Dość na tym, iż jest oczywistym, że odnaleźliśmy symbole i mit w zdaniu, które było nawskroś symboliczne i mityczne, gdyż było metafizyczne." (1986: 287)

Myślenie Polifila „uderza zarówno rozum, jak wyobraźnię, obciąża nasz problem niejaką teatralnością" (1986: 288), czy wręcz „pieczętuje rewers naszego problemu teatralnym wizerunkiem" (2002: 267). Czy jednak owa teatralność nie jest częścią gry, jakiej „oddaje się Polifil" (1986: 286) przystępując do odczytywania palimpsestu, częścią tej przewrotnej, subwersywnej gry dekonstrukcji, jakiej oddaje się Derrida, a która na tym przecież polega, by unicestwiać metafizyczny dyskurs przez nieustanne sprowadzanie jego elementów i ich hierarchii do aporii? I w której to grze, jak we Freudowskim *Objaśnianiu marzeń sennych* (cytowanym jako motto do rozdziału *Kwiaty retoryki: heliotrop* 2002: 305) „nie występuje żadna alternatywa, lecz jakieś ‚i'", bo „sen wykazuje szczególne zamiłowanie do sprowadzania przeciwieństw do jedności lub do przedstawiania ich jako czegoś jednego", a ten sam znak, czy symbol odnosi się jednocześnie do jakiejś danej rzeczy, jak i w tym samym stopniu do jej przeciwieństwa? (Por.: Freud: 276) Dialog Polifila i Arysta umieszczony zostaje przecież na egzerdze już od samego początku. Już w tytule czytamy o „białej mitologii". Jak jednak odczytać to, co się z palimpsestu wyłania na jego dnie, ową „biała mitologię", skoro zarazem się ona wcale nie wyłania, nawet wtedy, gdy nie jest już zakryta, bo zapisana jest białym atramentem na białym pergaminie? Jak zinterpretować ten *trop*, ten odkyty *ślad* obecności i nieobecości zarazem? Pierwsza odpowiedź jest prosta: „biała mitologia" jest tylko grą kolorów, mitologią białego człowieka i tak jak on jest biała. Ale skąd pomysł pisania białym atramentem? Dlaczego po rozszyfrowaniu palimpsestu nie znajdujemy już nic, co, jakbyśmy zapewne chcieli, stałoby „czarno na białym"? Czy nie możemy, jak Aryst, czuć się zwyczajnie oszukani, zwiedzeni grą, która prowadzi do ciągle nowych zagadek? Możemy wyjść w (czyż skądinąd nieteatralnym) geście obrońcy metafizyki i nie chcieć już dłużej prowadzić rozmowy, która wiedzie donikąd. Ale możemy też zostać, wierząc, że rysunek, choć niewidoczny, to pozostaje jednak mimo wszystko ciągle „aktywny" i „żywotny", przyjmując, że w grze bez końca, w okręgu, wszystko musi być stale początkiem.

Dekonstrukcja pojęcia metafory

Derrida oddaje się tej grze, jak Polifil wcześniej oddał się grze czytania palimpsestu. Nie bez zastrzeżeń co prawda. „Wydaje się, że słowa Polifila należą do dziedziny, której historyczny i teoretyczny porządek, granice, wewnętrzne podziały, zmiany, trzeba dopiero zinterpretować." (1986: 288) Mówiąc to, ma na myśli tradycję widzenia pojęć metafizycznych jako historii zatartych metafor, którą wywodzi od Renana i Nietzschego. Zinterpretować to znaczy „określić i zachować" rozwarstwienie w obrębie tego dyskursu, czy dyskursów, określanych „jedną tylko nazwą", odkryć ich wewnętrzną tektonikę, a zarazem „określić jedność wszystkich elementów" (1986: 289). Jest to, jak się zdaje, program odhierarchizowania dyskursu poprzez wytyczenie linii jego wewnętrznych napięć z jednej strony, oraz ukazanie równoważności jego elementów z drugiej. Rodzi się z tego problem postrzegania języka, bo „jeśli ktoś doszukuje się w pojęciu ukrytej historii metafory, to znaczy, że uprzywilejowuje kosztem systemu *diachronię*", że wyznaje symbolistyczną koncepcję języka, w której związek między tym co znaczące i tym co oznaczane, jest związkiem „naturalnej konieczności, analogicznego uczestnictwa, związkiem podobieństwa" (1986: 289), jak w przypadku symbolu, który zachowuje naturalną przynależność do tego, co symbolizuje. Metafora nie mieści się w tej koncepcji, bo chociaż zawsze postrzegana była jako trop podobieństwa, czy analogii (Arystoteles), to zachodziły one (analogia bądź podobieństwo) zawsze między dwoma znakami, a nie między sygnifikantem i sygnifikatem.

Symbolistyczna koncepcja języka prowadzi do niesymetryczności i zachwiania równowagi między jego diachronicznymi i synchronicznymi elementami, między metaforą i metonimią. Taka supremacja jednego elementu nad innym trąci zbyt silnie metafizyką semantycznej „głębi", historycystycznym i hermeneutycznym romantyzmem, i trzeba ją, przyjmując Derridiańskie założenia, poddać dekonstrukcji.

Pragnąc poddać pojęcie metafory dekonstrukcji, sięga Derrida po wspomnianą już kategorię zużycia, erozji, paradygmaty monety, metalu, srebra i złota, czyli skądinąd metafory, odwołując się szeroko do Nietzschego, Marksa, de Saussure'a, po to, by pokazać subwersywność metaforycznych znaków i ich wartości, ich sensu. Unieobecnić ich obecność i uobenić nieobecność, pokazać jednoczesny proces zacierania, samounicestwiania się oraz pomnażania zysku i wartości poprzez wymianę. Droga ta prowadzi Derridę nieuchronnie ku słońcu:

> „Wartość, złoto, oko, słońce itd. wciągnięte są, i wiemy to od dawna, w ruch tych samych tropów. Ich wymiana odbywa się przede wszystkim w retoryce i filozofii. Uwaga de Saussure'a (przytoczona poniżej – P.P.) […] da się przeto porównać z wersją Polifila („tchnienie usiadło", „boski ogień, źródło i ognisko życia" itd.). Przypomina nam ona, że rzecz najnaturalniejsza, najbardziej uniwersalna, najbardziej realna, najjaśniejsza, odniesienie najbardziej zewnętrzne – słońce, od chwili, w której wchodzi (a wchodzi *zawsze*) w proces aksjologicznej i semantycznej wymiany, nie wymyka się całkowicie ogólnemu prawu wartości metaforycznej:
> *Wartość jakiegokolwiek składnika jest określona tym wszystkim, co go otacza; nie ma takiego wyrazu – nawet jeżeli chodzi o wyraz oznaczający słońce – którego wartość można by natychmiast ustalić, jeżeli się nie weźmie pod uwagę tego wszystkiego, co znajduje się wokół niego; są języki, w których nie da się w żaden sposób powiedzieć „usiąść na słońcu*" (1986: 293).[3]

Wartość semantyczna metafory, o której pisze Derrida, określana jest zawsze poprzez operację wymiany i na skutek odniesień przez podobieństwo. W związku z tym zadanie, które tekst sobie stawia w rozdziale *Plus de métaphore*[4], jest nierozwiązywalne: „Egzerga zatarta, jak więc odszyfrować w tekście filozoficznym figurę, zwłaszcza metaforę?" (1986: 294) Ponieważ nikt nigdy nie udzielił odpowiedzi na to pytanie,

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[3] Cytat z de Sausurre'a (zaznaczony tu kursywą) pochodzi z *Kursu językoznawstwa ogólnego.* (Wyd. polskie w przekł. K Kasprzaka, Warszawa 1961: 124)

[4] Jest to tytuł, który dostarcza wielu trudności tłumaczom, bo jak wyjaśnia Janusz Margański, wyrażenie to oznacza w języku francuskim zarówno „więcej metafory", jak i „nigdy więcej metafory" (2002: 273). Dwoisty sens tej zasadniczo brzmiącej proklamacji oddaje tym samym wewnętrzną, subwersywną strategię całego tekstu Derridy.

lepiej więc zrezygnować z daremnego i tak ponawiania tej próby i starać się „raczej uchwycić zasadniczy *warunek niemożliwości* takiego zamiaru." Warunek ten polega przede wszystkim na tym, że metafora sama jest „filozofemem, pojęciem metafizycznym. Jest więc uwięziona w sferze, którą chciałaby opanować." (1986: 294) Próbować wyjaśnić metaforą filozofię to zabieg równie karkołomny i bezskuteczny, jak próba ratowania się przed utonięciem przez ciągnięcie się za własne włosy, lub dmuchanie w żagiel łodzi, na której się siedzi, w nadziei, że przyspieszy to jej ruch. „Metafora wywodzi się z sieci filozofemów, które same odpowiadają tropom lub figurom, *są im współczesne i systemowo z nimi zestrojone*. Ta warstwa tropów „ustanawiających", ten pokład „pierwszych" filozofemów (...) nie włada sam sobą. Nie może sobą zawładnąć, ponieważ sam siebie zrodził, rośnie na swoim gruncie, podtrzymywany jest przez swą własną podstawę." (1986: 294) Wyodrębnić i uprzywilejować jeden z tych elementów znaczy tyle, co znieść całą warstwę, unicestwić filozofię. Nawet gdyby udało się „uchwycić i poklasyfikować wszystkie możliwe metafory filozoficzne, przynajmniej jedna metafora pozostawałaby wyłączona poza system: (...) metafora metafory." (1986: 294) Nie istnieje więc nigdzie żadne miejsce do końca niemetaforyczne, od metafor wolne, z którego można by patrzeć na metaforę całkowicie z zewnątrz, spoza niej samej. Możliwa jest więc jedynie droga ciągłego samoograniczania się wobec metafory i wreszcie samej metafory, stałe jej znoszenie, przy czym odniesienie do Heglowskiego *Aufhebung* (1986: 286) ma tu znaczenie zasadnicze. Proces ten prowadzi ku sferze, do której, jak już wiemy, metafora przynależy: ku dziedzinie tropów „ustanawiających", „archaicznych" (1986: 299), „pierwszych" filozofemów, pojęć, które przyznają się jeszcze do swych mitycznych korzeni, pojęć takich, jak: *theoria*, *eidos*, *logos*. Droga, którą idzie tekst, jest niczym innym jak grą z tym samoograniczeniem, ze sformułowanym właśnie „warunkiem niemożliwości". Metafory są klasyfikowane. Najpierw ze względu na miejsce pochodzenia: metafory „biologiczne, organiczne, mechaniczne, techniczne, ekonomiczne" itd., aż po matematyczne (zakładając, że są one możliwe). Z tak dokonanego podziału wyłaniają się dwie zasadnicze kategorie metafor: takie, które wydają się same w sobie „źródłowe": fizyczne, zwierzęce, biologiczne, oraz te, „których przedmiot nie jest już źródłowy": techniczne, ekonomiczne, kulturowe, społeczne (1986: 295). Istnieją niejako dwa źródła pochodzenia metafor odpowiadające relacji *physis-techne* lub *physis-nomos*.

Ponieważ więc w systemie Derridy metafora stoi zawsze jedną nogą na gruncie natury, *physis*, a więc tego, co dostępne jest na drodze zmysłowej percepcji, naturalnym wydaje się sięgnięcie także i po inne klasyczne kryterium klasyfikacji metafor: ze względu na zmysły, do których sie odwołują. Mówić więc można o metaforach wzrokowych, słuchowych, dotykowych, a także – choć rzadziej – o metaforach węchowych i zapachowych. Ten podział prowadzi zainicjowaną w tekście grę ku „ostatniej regresji",

„ostatniej opozycji", fundamentalnej opozycji czasu i przestrzeni. Derrida wyjaśnia: „tej empirycznej estetyce treści zmysłowych musi odpowiadać, jako warunek jej możliwości, transcendentalna i formalna estetyka metafor. Zaprowadzi nas ona ponownie ku apriorycznym formom przestrzeni i czasu. W istocie, czyż – od Platona po Husserla – nie nazywa się metaforami temporalizującymi te metafory, które odnoszą się do słuchu (...). I odwrotnie, czyż nie mówi się często, że każda wypowiedź metaforyczna jest specjalizująca (ma charakter uprzestrzenniający 2002: 283) wówczas, gdy pozwala wyobrazić sobie, zobaczyć, dotknąć?" (1986: 302). Jest to zarazem moment, w którym próba metaforologii dociera do swoich granic: „Skąd możemy wiedzieć, co oznacza temporalizacja i specjalizacja (uczasowienie i uprzestrzennienie 2002: 283) pewnego sensu, pewnego idealnego przedmiotu, pewnej inteligibilnej treści, jeżeli nie zostało wyjaśnione, co znaczą ‚przestrzeń' i ‚czas'?" (1986: 302). Granica zostaje osiągnięta, namysł nad metaforą sprowadzony do krańcowej aporii, warunek niemożliwości jeszcze raz potwierdzony: „podstawowe opozycje metaforologii (*physis*/*techne*, *physis*/*nomos*, zmysłowe/inteligibilne [pojmowalne 2002: 285], przestrzeń/czas, *signifiant*/*signifié* [znaczące/znaczone] itd.) ukonstytuowały się z biegiem historii języka metaforycznego, a raczej w toku procesu ‚tropizacji'" (1986: 303-4). Dlatego już nieco wcześnie zapowiada Derrida: Klasyfikując metafory genetyczne [*métaphores d'origine*] (naturalne) (źródłowe 2002: 282), wkrótce znowu będziemy zmuszeni uciec się do mitologii czterech żywiołów." (1986: 301) Refleksja o tych pierwotnych metaforach kieruje nieodzownie w stronę „*przedednia* filozofii" (1986: 304), który można by zlekceważyć, gdyby stawką nie była sama filozofia, stawiająca tezę, i jest to – jak powiada Derrida – w zasadzie „*jedyna teza* filozoficzna", że „sens, który te figury oznaczają, jest czymś całkowicie niezależnym od tego, co go niesie". (1986: 304) Tylko taka teza pozwala na spokojne zlekceważenie owego mitycznego przededniа, bo tworzy pojęcie metafory na zasadzie opozycji miedzy tym, co „właściwe" i tym, co „niewłaściwe". Jak pokazała jednak dekonstrukcja Derridy, zdaje się tworzyć je bezpodstawnie i samowolnie.

Trzeba więc, jeżeli się szuka źródła tego, co metaforyczne, wrócić dużo głębiej, zwrócić się ku słońcu i ku ziemi. Ku białemu pergaminowi odsłoniętego palimpsestu, ku zagadce, ku temu, co niezrozumiałe i nieuchwytne.

Ku czterem żywiołom, czyli metafora i mit

Definicja metafory, jak zauważa Derrida, następuje u Arystotelesa zaraz po dokonaniu klasyfikacji słów (części mowy) i rozróżnienia między *phone semantike* i *phone asemos* (w rozdziale XX *Poetyki*).[5] „Nie jest to tylko oznaką potrzeby, ale i wskaźnikiem

[5] Por.: Arystoteles (2001), t. VI: 608-610.

trudności.” (2002: 300) Metafora „pociąga za sobą ryzyko rozbicia pełni semantycznej, do której sama jakoby ma należeć”, „otwiera przestrzeń semantycznego błądzenia”. „Sens nazwy, zamiast oznaczać rzecz, którą zwykle miał oznaczać, zwraca się w inną stronę. (...) Dzięki zdolności do metaforycznego przemieszczenia znaczenie pozostanie jakby w rezerwie, między bez-sensem poprzedzającym język (bo on ma sens), a prawdą języka, który ma wyrazić rzecz taką, jak jest w sobie, *in actu*, dosłownie.” (2002: 300) Nie ma jednak w tym układzie żadnej gwarancji prawdy. Metafora może być zawsze chybiona. Skoro zaś „metafora – obciążona ryzykiem szansa *mimesis* – zawsze może chybić prawdy, wobec tego zawsze należy się liczyć z bezwzględną nieobecnością.” (2002: 300) Metafora sytuuje się ze swej natury w obszarze, który jest zawsze pomiędzy: pomiędzy prawdą i kłamstwem, prawdą i błądzeniem, sensem i bez-sensem, obecnością i nieobecnością, wreszcie samym językiem i stanem, kiedy „język jeszcze się nie narodził” (2002: 300). Tym samym metafora sięga nie tylko przedednia *filozofii*, ale i *samego języka*. Wiedzie ku czterem żywiołom, ku słońcu.

W *Poetyce* zastanawia Derridę pewna uwaga Arystotelesa o słońcu. Pisze on, że brak jest osobnej nazwy dla rozsypywania przez słońce swoich promieni, podczas, gdy rolnik, kiedy rozsypuje na polu ziarno, to mówimy o nim, że sieje, „ale przecież ‚rozsypywanie‘ pozostaje w takim stosunku do słońca, jak sianie do ziarna i dlatego mówi poeta o słońcu ‚siejąc boskie promienie.” (*Poetyka*, Arystoteles 2001 t. VI : 611) „Czy *widział kto*, – pyta zdziwiony Derrida – żeby między słońcem a jego promieniami zachodziła taka relacja jak między sianiem a nasieniem?” I odpowiada: „Jeśli ta analogia się narzuca – a narzuca się – to dlatego, że w języku wije się ona długim i krętym łańcuchem, którego pierwsze ogniwo trudno dostrzec, i to nie tylko Arystotelesowi.” (2002: 302) Powiedzieć, że jest to łańcuch wiodący ku wyobrażeniom mitycznym, którego ogniwami są słońce, ziemia, nasienie, płodność i który zaczyna się gdzieś w sferze bez języka, bez-sensu, nieobecności sensu, to (dla Derridy) powiedzieć jakby zbyt dużo. Jest to ślad, który się zaciera. Trudno dostrzec, dokąd prowadzi.

Nieco później Derrida zastanawia się jednak, dlaczego „nieustannie wciąga nas, mimo woli, ów ruch, który słońce obraca w metaforę; albo też pociąga ten, który metaforę filozoficzną zwraca ku słońcu.” (2002: 311) Czyż słonecznik, heliotrop nie jest kwiatem retoryki? Słońce rośnie do rangi „metafory metafory”. Jeżeli mówimy o słońcu jako „najjaśniejszej gwieździe unoszącej się nad ziemią”, to okazuje się, że atrybut ten (unoszenie się nad ziemią) „niekoniecznie i nie zawsze będzie współwystępował z przedmiotem”, „bo gdy słońce zajdzie, to nie jest już pewne, czy unosi się dalej nad ziemią, brakuje wszak postrzeżenia” (Arystoteles 2001 t.I, *Topiki*: 131 b). Derrida wyciąga z tego dwie konsekwencje, „które mogą wydać się sprzeczne, ale ich opozycja poniekąd tworzy filozoficzne pojęcie metafory, dzieli je zgodnie z nieustannie potwierdzającą się regułą dwuznaczności.” (2002: 311) Zmysłowo uchwytne słońce daje nam tylko cząstkową wiedzę o swoich własnościach, „zawsze jest nie-właściwie poznawane, a przeto i nie-właściwie nazywane". Słońce nie zawsze się uobecnia, może się także skrywać, unieobecniać. „Nie objawia się na zamówienie, a jego obecnością nie sposób zawładnąć", „to przykład zmysłowo uchwytnego bytu, który zawsze może zniknąć, ukryć się przed spojrzeniem, nie być obecnym" (2002: 312). Dlatego też „słońce to – z tego punktu widzenia – obiekt zmysłowy *par excellance*. To paradygmat zmysłowości *i* jej metafora: coraz to (się) zmienia i (się) skrywa." „Jego obieg na zawsze pozostanie szlakiem metafory." „Metafora przeto oznacza heliotrop, zarówno ruch zwrócony ku słońcu, jak i obrotowy ruch słońca." Ale chodzi tu oczywiście o coś więcej jeszcze. O to, że „słońce [...] samo ma charakter wyłącznie metaforyczny, [...] nigdy nie uobecnia się w dyskursie w swej własności. Ilekroć pojawia się metafora, niechybnie jest gdzieś i słońce; ale też to, że jest słońce, oznacza, że metafora już jest, że zaistniała." (2002: 311-2) Skoro słońce jest metaforą, tą niezwykłą, wzorcową metaforą metafory, oznacza to zarazem, że nie przynależy już w żadnym stopniu do natury, staje się sztucznym światłem, konstrukcją. Opuszcza sferę *physis* i wkracza do metafizyki, gdzie czeka na nie boski tron zarezerwowany dla Rozumu, którego światłem się staje. Co więc zostaje jeszcze naturalnego w naturze po odejściu słońca w momencie, gdy zaczyna ono przyświecać metafizyce? „To, co w naturze najbardziej naturalne, – odpowiada Derrida – nosi w sobie środki pozwalające na wyłonienie się z siebie; dostosowanie się do „sztucznego" światła, zostaje, ulatnia się, wyłącza i zawsze pozostaje czymś innym, sobą: ojcem, nasieniem, ogniem, okiem, jajem itp." (2002: 313) Pozostać czymś innym niż dyskurs, oprzeć się filozofii (i metaforze), przetrwać w palimpseście jako żywy, poruszający rysunek, obywać się bez języka: to zdaje się być dane tylko elementarnym siłom, niemym bohaterom baśni zapisanych białym atramentem na białym pergaminie.

Ale to przecież nie koniec. To ledwie początek.

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Izabela Napiórkowska

Da Gutenberg a Jakobson: il libro nella comunicazione letteraria

Il messaggio della comunicazione letteraria assume tradizionalmente la fisionomia del libro. E` un mezzo particolare che da una parte ha fatto diffondere testi letterari e con standardizzazione del frontespizio stampato ha fatto riemergere il nome dell'autore, dall'altra parte ha fatto si che lo stesso autore perdesse non solo il contatto diretto con il pubblico, ma anzitutto il controllo sull'opera. D'ora in poi i libri cominciano la loro vita indipendente. Tutto sembra essere la colpa di un orafo magontino di cognome Gutenberg.

Per poter dare al lettore il libro nella forma in cui lo conosciamo doveva passare molto tempo. "Il libro moderno è il risultato di un'evoluzione iniziata 3500 anni dopo la comparsa della scrittura, 1000 anni prima dell'invenzione della stampa. Nell'arco di questo millennio, pazienti copisti hanno plasmato questo strumento divenuto essenziale per la vita culturale." (Blasselle 1997:14)

La parola 'libro' deriva dal vocabolo latino *librum* che significa 'pellicola posta tra la corteccia e il legno dell'albero'. I primi libri, infatti, assumevano la forma di rotolo, *volumen*. Erano nient'altro che dei fogli incollati l'uno dopo l'altro e arrotolati attorno a bastoni di legno o di avorio. Siccome i volumi potevano raggiungere la lunghezza di una dozzina di metri, la lettura dei testi trascritti richiedeva certe capacità nel maneggiare i rotoli. Per questo motivo l'avvento del *codex* è stato considerato qualcosa di rivoluzionario, il momento cruciale nell'evoluzione del libro.

Il *codex* è un insieme dei fogli cuciti e posti uno sopra l'altro. Sembra di essere invenzione romana. Proprio nella città eterna a partire dal II secolo avanti Cristo si nota una graduale sostituzione dei *volumina* in favore dei *codex*. Si può dire che l'opera nella forma del codice diventa più vicina al lettore e questo avviene sotto aspetti diversi. Con Cavallo (1988:63) ne possiamo menzionare almeno due: la famigliarità con la forma e l'accessibilità economica. Quest'ultima è l'effetto dei nuovi metodi della produzione. Anzitutto perché i fogli del codice venivano coperti di scrittura da entrambi i lati; con ciò si risparmiava la materia e il prezzo diventava più basso; ed è diventato ancor più basso dopo l'invenzione della carta. Un altro vantaggio del *codex* sul *volumen* era la sua forma: da una parte occupava meno spazio, dall'altra disimpegnava una delle mani rendendo più libera la lettura a tutti gli effetti. "Lo stesso disimpegno di una delle mani permetteva all'altra di scrivere, e quindi di accompagnare la lettura con annotazioni sui margini del codice. E` insieme a quest'ultimo che nasce la pratica dello scrivere sul libro stesso mentre si legge. (...) Sempre sui margini potevano stratificarsi interventi di più mani relative all'esegesi del testo; o vi si potevano trasferire - da libri a parte - interi commentari."(Cavallo 1988:67) Essendo composto di fogli cuciti il libro-codice non doveva essere letto nel suo insieme (lettura totale) come lo imponeva il volume, ma dava la possibilità di una lettura frontale e a spezzoni di varia lunghezza a seconda delle capacità del lettore e delle circostanze. Capitava anche che al testo venivano uniti altri brani o addirittura dei testi interi. Queste operazioni ovviamente non potevano essere effettuate con il volume. Poi bisognava aspettare un certo Gutenberg per dare al *codex* le nuove forze vitali che hanno causato gli ulteriori cambiamenti nella comunicazione letteraria.

Negli atti del processo tra Gutenberg e gli eredi dei suoi soci possiamo leggere su alcuni particolari dell'effetto della ricerca su un'*arte nuova*. Dai documenti, secondo Febvre e Martin, si può dedurre che "i segreti di Gutenberg si riferivano a tre distinti oggetti: la levigazione della pietra, la fabbricazione degli specchi e un'arte nuova' per la quale ci si serve di un torchio, di 'pezzi' (Stucke) che vengono tagliati o fusi di forme (formen) di piombo e infine di 'cose relative all'azione di pressare' (der zu dem Trucken gehoret). Questi testi, suscettibili di tante interpretazioni contraddittorie – concludono Febvre e Martin – sembrano almeno indicare che Gutenberg si occupava di stampa.(2000:46-47)

La tecnica gutenberghiana può essere riassunta in base a tre elementi: i caratteri mobili di metallo fuso, l'inchiostro grasso e il torchio. Per Febvre e Martin l'elemento di svolta non è né l'inchiostro grasso né il torchio, ma i caratteri mobili, e in primo luogo la loro mobilità. Puntano sui caratteri mobili anzitutto perché molti studiosi erroneamente considerano la silografia antenata della stampa. Il fatto che gli incisori in un certo momento, per non rifare un'altra tavoletta simile a tante utilizzate precedentemente, cominciano a ritagliare da quelle vecchie gli elementi che si ripetevano nella composizione di una tavoletta nuova non è una prova convincente anche se dalle parti in legno mobili alla stampa sembra non esserci tanta strada. Ipotesi seducente ma appunto ingannevole.

Febvre e Martin mettono in paragone la stampa e la silografia mentre Braida (2001) fa il confronto tra il manoscritto e l'opera stampata somandandosi se l'invenzione della stampa era qualcosa di rivoluzionario o solo il miglioramento dei vecchi metodi. Il più generale e forse anche un po' di stampo marxista è Mc Luhan, che vede l'invenzione della stampa come "vero e proprio grappolo o galassia di tecnologie precedentemente acquisite"(1976:207).

Ci sono alcune questioni sulle quali Febvre, Martin, Braida e Mc Luhan sarebbero più o meno d'accordo. Nessuno di loro può negare il fatto che anche dopo la stesura della *Bibbia delle 42 linee* e la diffusione della stampa non ci fossero i testi manoscritti e silografici, perché essi sono rimasti in circolazione per molti secoli anzitutto nei paesi dove la stampa non è stata ben accolta, né dalle autorità né dalla Chiesa, e dove di conseguenza non c'era un potenziale pubblico, e per quei pochi lettori interessati al livello quantitativo, la produzione manoscritta era più che sufficiente. Così in Irlanda tutti i testi rigidamente conservatori hanno una forma manoscritta. In Romania invece in questa maniera venivano riprodotti tutti i libri liturgici.(cfr. Febvre, Martin, 2000:209-270, Petrucci, introduzione a *ibidem*: XXXVIII-XXXIX) Comunque anche dalle parti dove trionfava la stampa nei paesi come Italia, Germania, Spagna, Francia, Inghilterra si nota fino al Settecento un certo numero di manoscritti in circolazione. Petrucci li divide in tre categorie (Petrucci 2000:XXXVII): oggetti di lusso dati in omaggio, pubblicazioni clandestine dei libri proibiti e canovacci della commedia dell'arte.

Con l'invenzione gutenberghiana il libro nella sua forma non ha subito dei cambiamenti radicali bensì è cambiato il modo di riempire i fogli con le lettere. La stampa ha alterato comportamenti sociali e culturali. Mc Luhan paragona persino l'invenzione della stampa all'avvento dell'età elettrica, dando ad entrambe l'uguale importanza. "Oggi - leggiamo nella sua *Galassia Gutenberg* del 1962 – siamo immersi nell'età elettrica quanto gli elisabettiani lo furono in quella tipografica e meccanica. E stiamo sperimentando la stessa confusione e le stesse indecisioni che essi provarono vivendo simultaneamente in due contrastanti forme di società e di esperienza."(1976:21) Ma non è l'unico paragone che troviamo nella *Galassia*. "La differenza tra l'uomo di una cultura a stampa e quello di una cultura amanuense è quasi altrettanto grande quanto quella che vi è tra un letterato e un illetterato."(1976:132) Quella di Gutenberg era quindi non solo l'invenzione vista come il miglioramento dei vecchi metodi della produzione libraria o l'invenzione che rese più facile la vita dell'uomo, come lo fecero l'asciugacapelli e il tostapane, ma è stata considerata qualcosa che ha cambiato completamente e irreversibilmente la visione delle cose e del mondo di tutti a partire dai contemporanei del primo stampatore. Steinberg scrive che "la storia della stampa è parte integrante della più vasta storia della civiltà"(in Eisenstein:1986:21), Febvre e Martin affermano che "si tratta di ben altro (...) che di una storia tecnica. Si tratta delle incidenze sulla cultura europea di un nuovo modo di trasmissione e di diffusione del pensiero"(2000:9). Armando Petrucci vede la storia del libro come parte integrae della storia della mentalità in quanto il libro non solo diffusore ma addirittura suscitatore di idee, di ispirazioni, di testi.(2000:IX-X)

Ed ecco le entusiasmanti testimonianze di alcuni umanisti colpiti dall'invenzione gutenberghiana.

> "In questo felicissimo anno [1468] arrivarono a Roma alcuni giovani tedeschi [si riferiva a Sweynheym e Pannartz], che in un solo mese stamparono il *De hominis opficio*, il *De ira Dei* e il *Contra gentiles* di Lattanzio, e ne producevano duecento copie al mese. Il procedimento della loro arte sarebbe molto difficile e spiegare, ma tanti altri poi l'hanno imparato, e si tratta di una straordinaria invenzione."(G. da Verona in Braida 2001:3)

Quello che ha colpito di più Gaspare da Verona era senza dubbi l'efficacia e la rapidità con la quale venivano pubblicati i libri, l'uno dietro l'altro. Gli mancano letteralmente le parole per descrivere le fasi della produzione, ma non bisogna stupirsi più di tanto, i termini specifici mancavano persino a Gutenberg stesso.

> "Sono stati divinizzati Bacco e Cerere per aver insegnato all'umanità l'uso del vino e del pane: ma l'invenzione di Gutenberg è ancora più grande e divina, perché egli ha inciso dei caratteri con i quali tutto ciò che si pensa e si dice può essere impresso e conservato alla memoria posteri."(Fichet in Braida 2001:3-4)

Guillaume Fichet, professore dell'Università di Sorbona vede nella geniale scoperta di Gutenberg una potentissima macchina di trasmissione del sapere, persino ai posteri.

> "Non ho visto Bibbie complete, ma un certo numero di fascicoli di cinque fogli di svariati libri [della Bibbia], di scrittura molto chiara e caratteri senza errori da nessuna parte, che Sua Signoria avrebbe letto senza fatica e senza occhiali [...]. Mi sforzerò, se possibile, di ottenere una di queste Bibbie in vendita e di acquistarla."(Piccolomini in Braida 2001:15)

Sono le parole della lettera risalente al 12 marzo 1455 che Enea Silvio Piccolomini, umanista e diplomatico al servizio di Nicolò V ha scritto al legato pontificio, cardinale Juan de Carvajal. La *Bibbia* incompleta che ha visto a Francoforte nel marzo del 1455 Piccolomini non poteva essere che il primo monumento tipografico, la *Bibbia delle 42 linee*, stampata da Gutenberg a Magonza e all'epoca non del tutto terminata. Piccolomini si sofferma sulla leggibilità dei caratteri o correttezza del testo omettendo però un dato fondamentale. I fascicoli che ha visto non erano dei fogli manoscritti bensì le pagine stampate. Esse tuttavia assomigliavano tanto alla scrittura a mano anzitutto perché i primi tipografi tendevano a imitare il libro manoscritto(cfr. Braida 2001:15). La *Bibbia delle 42 linee* richiama infatti la scrittura gotica in uso per i manoscritti.

> "(...) sarà possibile dapprima leggerlo nella sua intierezza come un romanzo, senza costringere l'attenzione indebitamente su di esso... Sarà necessario soltanto segnare con una penna i punti di maggior difficoltà, e continuare a leggere senza interruzioni fino alla fine." (Descartes in McLuhan 1976:213)

Per Cartesio il libro stampato è anzitutto il contesto nel quale automaticamente viene ambientato e radicato il testo. E questa è la differenza principale tra la filosofia orale e quella rinchiusa nei libri stampati. Sono infatti i mutamenti che ha causato la stampa, mutamenti sia nel linguaggio che nel pensiero: "una filosofia scritta, in particolare modo se stampata, considererà la 'certezza' il principale obiettivo della conoscenza, allo stesso modo in cui lo studioso in una cultura a stampa può venire accettato per la sua accuratezza anche se non ha niente da dire. Ma il paradosso di questa passione per la certezza da parte della cultura tipografica è che essa deve procedere secondo il metodo del dubbio. Troveremo molti paradossi del genere nella nuova tecnologia - continua Mc Luhan - che rese ogni lettore di un libro il centro dell'universo e permise al Copernico di gettare l'uomo alla periferia dei cieli, sloggiandolo dal centro del mondo fisico."(1976:213)

In questo breve brano Mc Luhan ha toccato delle questioni importanti che costituiscono la base della teoria della letteratura e della critica contemporanea, che possono essere attribuiti all'invenzione della stampa. "(...) precedere secondo il metodo del dubbio": dubbio infatti è la sensazione che ci accompagna durante la lettura e che potrebbe portarci o agli stadi paranoici della sovrainterpretazione, se seguiamo troppi percorsi lasciandoci trascinare dal paradosso della semiosi illimitata, o ad una lunga e ponderata riflessione su quello che stiamo leggendo. Il metodo del dubbio potrebbe diventare quindi la fonte del piacere, del godimento, e alla fine della soddisfazione che prova il lettore in contatto con il testo. Del resto è proprio Umberto Eco a prendere in giro i troppo sicuri: chi dice che ha capito tutto, non ha capito niente. Non ha capito niente perché non ha messo in dubbio il primo strato testuale per arrivare ai significati nascosti. Leggere è come giocare a nascondino, chi non cerca non vince.

Secondo argomento menzionato da Mc Luhan è il paradosso riguardante sempre la figura del lettore che, da una parte grazie alla stampa può permettersi il contatto personale e individuale con il libro, e dall'altra lo stesso lettore viene apparentemente emarginato, spostato dal centro dell'attenzione. Possiamo allora osservale la seguente situazione: un libro, un testo, grazie alla stampa viene moltiplicato e in questa maniera può raggiungere il pubblico piuttosto numeroso. Ciascuno dei lettori riceve il testo in modo personale ed azzarda una propria interpretazione di esso. Così abbiamo un testo e tanti lettori, ciascuno dei quali lo vede da un'angolatura diversa. Infatti le loro interpretazioni non saranno mai uguali, però non si può nemmeno dire che ce n'è una sola, quella giusta. No, tutte le interpretazioni hanno il pieno diritto di esistere. E diversi lettori sono consci del fatto che quella azzardata da loro è corretta, giusta, adeguata, ma ce ne sono anche tante altre dello stesso valore. Quindi da una parte al lettore viene data la libertà di agire che lo pone al centro considerando il suo rapporto con il testo, dall'altra parte però gli viene fatto capire che è uno di tanti e che non è necessariamente il più importante, e deve prendere in considerazione l'esistenza degli altri.

In ogni modo nonostante tutti questi paradossali effetti causati dall'invenzione della stampa una cosa è certa: la stampa ha fatto scatenare l'individualismo. Il libro come oggetto ha cessato di giacere, non di rado persino incatenato, sugli scaffali delle biblioteche conventuali o fungere da preziosissima decorazione nelle dimore reali o dei nobili. Con il moltiplicarsi dei libri e l'abbassamento dei prezzi, il libro non è più irraggiungibile oggetto di lusso. L'ultima fase di questi cambiamenti è l'invenzione del libro tascabile e dell'e - Book

L'invenzione della stampa da una parte fu qualcosa di rivoluzionario che ha cambiato irreversibilmente il modo di diffondere le idee e la comunicazione, dall'altra sembrerebbe il processo graduale di trasformazione, vista la coesistenza di forme diverse della trasmissione del testo. Nell'insieme delle cose uno degli scopi principali della stampa quello di "rendere la lettura di queste opere più facilmente accessibile a un vastissimo pubblico"(Febvre, Martin 2000:322) è stato raggiunto. Con il numero sempre più crescente delle copie, con la stampa grazie alla quale il libro diventava ripetibile e riproducibile, man mano si raggiungeva l'uniformità e la standardizzazione dei libri prodotti.

La produzione dei libri a stampa, anche se ancora a tirature molto limitate, impediva la trasformazione del contenuto che si concedevano molti copisti interpretando a modo loro, omettendo interi frammenti, cambiando le parole. "Non riuscisti a riconoscere gli stessi scritti che hai composto" si lamentava, non a torto, Petrarca forse per questo, appena lo era possible, o trascriveva da se, o controllava il eavoro dei copisti durante le successive fasi della copitura dei suoi manoscritti. E la stampa in queste circostanze fu un tipo di garanzia dell'omogeneità del testo trasmesso e della fedeltà all'originale anche se tra i tipografi, compositori e correttori c'era chi non riusciva a resistere alla tentazione di rimaneggiare il testo da stampare. Non possiamo tuttavia negare il fatto che le tirature, anche se per gli standard di oggi piuttosto basse, garantivano l'apparizione sul mercato di un modesto numero di copie tutte identiche, ed pure se contenenti qualche errore, anche questi errori venivano riprodotti fedelmente dando all'opera il carattere più o meno stabile. Successivamente gli stampatori tendevano ad eliminare le fantasie ortografiche e le espressioni dialettali. Tutto questo per raggiungere con il loro prodotto il pubblico sempre più vasto.

Non si trattava esclusivamente dei piccoli errori voluttuari che mutavano leggermente il testo. È stato, in certo senso, il libro stampato accompagnato dalla cinquecentesca passione per la cultura antica paradossalmente a "purificare" sempre di più la lingua latina fino a farla scomparire. I primissimi libri a stampa erano in maggioranza in latino: la *Bibbia*, trattati teoretici o testi filosofici universitari, anzitutto perché la maggior parte dei destinatari erano ecclesiastici o studenti. Pian piano a partire dalla fine del Quattrocento si nota però lo sviluppo delle lingue nazionali, dei volgari, sia nella forma parlata che quella scritta. Questo divulgarsi riguarda ovviamente anche la produzione libraria. "Ciò che è implicito qui – fa notare McLuhan – è l'idea che il linguaggio della vita quotidiana una volta *visto* evochi il bisogno di una letteratura della vita quotidiana. La stampa applicata alle lingue parlate le trasforma in mezzi di comunicazione di massa, cosa del resto non troppo strana dal momento che la tipografia la prima forma di produzione di massa."(1976:301) "La cosa che non può stupirci. – continuano la riflessione Febvre e Martin – Il pubblico delle librerie, (…) diventa sempre più un pubblico di laici, spesso donne e borghesi, molti dei quali non hanno la familiarità con la lingua latina. Perciò appunto i riformati usano sistematicamente le lingue volgari moderne."(2000:369)

E come alla nuova e inquietante situazione linguistica reagiscono i tradizionalisti, amanti del latino? Gli umanisti, indubbiamente in buona fede, cominciano a purificare il latino ritornando ai modelli troppo ideali per essere usati comunemente. Rinunciano al latino medievale e interrompono la continuità linguistica. Prendono come il modello il latino dell'antica Roma ed eliminano i solecismi e i barbarismi tradizionali. L'effetto di queste operazioni è un po' buffo: gli scrittori per esprimere un'idea o per descrivere un oggetto nuovo dovevano far ricorso alle perifrasi imbarazzanti. La purificazione del latino che lo doveva far rinascere e risplendere ha avuto le conseguenze del tutto inaspettate. Ne scrive C.S.Levis: "Gli sforzi dei grandi umanisti italiani (…) ebbero l'effetto inatteso di purificare il latino fino a farlo scomparire. (…) Essi ci riuscirono ad uccidere il latino medievale: ma non a mantenere in vita la severità scolastica del latino augusteo da essi ripristinato."(in McLuhan 1976:369) Insomma "il ritorno alle lettere antiche contribuisce a fare del latino una lingua morta"(McLuhan 1976:369).

Emarginata e scomparsa la lingua latina degli antichi romani, vennero intrapresi dei lavori che come scopo avevano, in quanto lo era possibile, individuare e descrivere le regole delle nuove lingue: non solo la grafia, l'ortografia, l'interpunzione, ma anche il lessico e le forme grammaticali. "Col moltiplicare i testi in volgare – leggiamo ancora nella *Nascita del libro* – la stampa favorisce un po' dappertutto (…) lo sviluppo e la normalizzazione delle lingue letterarie nazionali."(Febvre, Martin, 2000:373) In ogni modo anche esso fu un processo graduale segnato dai tentativi di comporre delle grammatiche. Il più grande successo e degli effetti clamorosi la politica linguistica raggiunse in Germania e il ruolo di Martino Lutero nello sviluppo delle lingue nazionali non può essere sottovalutato. Volendo, come egli stesso dichiarava, 'esser capito tanto dagli abitanti dell'Alta Germania quanto della Bassa', egli cercò d'imporre alla lingua che andava foggiando alcune regole, che permettessero di conseguire l'intento, e la diffusione delle opere, soprattutto della Bibbia, gli permise di diventare il legislatore della lingua tedesca. (…) Il suo vocabolario s'impone in modo tanto imperioso, che la maggior parte degli stampatori non osa apportarvi il minimo cambiamento."(Febvre, Martin 2000:371-372)

In Italia la situazione si è rivelata assai più complessa anzitutto per il fatto che l'Italia come tale non esisteva ancora. Sull'odierno territorio della Repubblica Italiana troviamo un mosaico di stati, più o meno dipendenti, sottoposti non di rado a diversi influssi: spagnolo, francese, greco o addirittura arabo. Altrettanto complicata e diversificata era la realtà linguistica a causa degli innumerevoli dialetti e delle loro varianti locali. Ciononostante già nel Trecento Dante Alighieri con il suo trattato *De Vulgari Eloquentia*, un elogio del volgare in latino, ha segnalato il problema. Lo seguono Macchiavelli, Bembo con i tentativi di costruire una grammatica.

Ci siamo soffermati brevemente sulla questione della lingua per dimostrare non solo il potere della stampa, ma anzitutto per far capire di quanto il torchio gutenberghiano ha mutato la trasmissione e la ricezione dei testi letterari: sempre più uniformi, sempre più riproducibili, sempre più numerosi. Sempre più numerosi diventavano anche i lettori e gli autori se ne allontanavano sempre di più.

Alla standardizzazione e riproducibilità del testo, alla nascita del vasto pubblico e alla grande emancipazione dei lettori possiamo aggiungere ancora la questione del mercato del libro, magari da trattare in un'altra sede.

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Agnieszka Muszyńska

Gli italiani nell'estetica e nella filosofia musicale e il significato della loro ricerca nell'ambito della cultura musicale europea[1]

Il pensiero degli italiani riguardante la musica si sviluppava con l'intensità diversa e dipendente dall'epoca. I secoli come il Cinquecento, il Seicento e la maggior parte del Settecento erano ricchi sia dal punto di vista pratico, che teoretico. Della musica e soprattutto dell'opera italiana si parlava in tutta l'Europa; gli autori italiani e il loro pensiero estetico era spesso l'oggetto delle numerose polemiche. Nell'Ottocento il punto di riferimento per le nuove idee filosofiche ed estetiche diventò prima di tutto la Germania; in questo periodo Italia non partecipava in una grande fioritura delle nuove tendenze nel campo dell'estetica e della teoria musicale. Solo alla fine dell'Ottocento e nel Novecento abbiamo a che fare con la ripresa del pensiero musicale italiano, prima fortemente ispirato sia dalle idee tedesche che positivistiche, poi per lunghi anni rimasto sotto l'influenza dell'estetica di Benedetto Croce.

Per trattare il problema storicamente dobbiamo all'inizio menzionare uno dei più grandi teorici del Medioevo, Guido d'Arezzo, il pensiero del quale diventa un punto di riferimento per quanto riguarda la notazione musicale e i nuovi metodi didattici. Durante tutta l'epoca regna il pensiero di Boezio, il quale adoperando tutte le teorie musicali del mondo antico, soprattutto di Platone e Pitagora, divide la musica in tre tipi: *mundana, humana* e *instrumentalis.* Il concetto di *musica mundana* riguarda l'armonia delle sfere celesti, la quale è l'unica vera musica. *Musica humana* rappresenta l'armonia dell'anima e del corpo umano; infine *musica instrumentalis,* che in Boezio è il tipo più disprezzato, perchè secondo lui la pratica è molto meno importante e dipendente dalla teoria[2]. La crisi definitiva di questo modo di pensare arriva con XIV secolo, quando appare il nuovo stile, *ars nova,* e le idee riguardanti la musica escono fuori del circolo degli specialisti e dei teoretici. Il suo ruolo nel rafforzarsi di *ars nova* svolge l'illustre Dante Alighieri, il quale nel suo *opus magnum*

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[1] Nell'elaborazione di questo paragrafo la base è il già citato libro di Enrico Fubini, *Historia estetyki muzycznej,* Musica Iagellonica, Kraków 2002.

[2] Ibidem, pp. 79-83.

descrive un tipo di musica che fa pensare proprio a questo stile nuovo[3]. La musica nel *Paradiso* dantesco acquista una tale importanza che diventa una parte integrale di tutte le rappresentazioni letterarie e pittoriche del Paradiso cristiano. Dante sottolinea l'influsso che esercita la musica sull'anima umana e in questo modo accentua il suo valore umanistico, tirandola fuori dalla sfera mistico-matematica in cui essa rimane per tutta l'epoca medievale[4].

L'umanesimo, che fra poco avrà il suo inizio nel pensiero di Petrarca, nella storia della musica appare un po' in ritardo e costituisce nella razionalizzazione dell'esperienza musicale. Il più grande teoretico di questo tempo si chiama Gioseffo Zarlino. La sua opera significa il ritorno alle origini del pensiero pitagoreico, dunque alla teoria della musica basata sulla serie delle relazioni numeriche che costituiscono il fondamento dell'armonia. Nel suo pensiero viene anche sanzionato l'uso delle due scale nuove: maggiore e minore, che sostituiscono il sistema delle scale modali gregoriane. Zarlino cerca nella musica un ordine di carattere matematico e razionale, così come semplice e razionale è la natura. La musica dovrebbe essere insieme uno strumento che muove le emozioni e tocca l'anima[5]. Al questo problema si unisce la questione delle relazioni tra la parola e la musica. La lingua diventa la matrice alla quale la musica dovrebbe adeguarsi e adattarsi. Nel suo ampio lavoro intitolato *Istituzioni harmoniche*[6] Zarlino delinea un tipo del dizionario musicale in cui descrive in che modo l'armonia deve corrispondere al senso della parola con la quale coesiste nell'opera musicale. Enumera anche in un modo dettagliato i significati di ogni intervallo armonico e melodico, creando così le basi per la scienza che oggi chiamiamo la semantica musicale, fondata sui valori naturali dei suoni e degli intervalli. Il linguaggio di Zarlino, sfruttato dagli autori delle opere, verrà elaborato e perfezionato e, attraverso la musica vocale, troverà molti riflessi nella musica strumentale fino ai tempi in cui apparirà il nuovo linguaggio romantico[7]. I primi ad adoperare la teorie di Zarlino sono i musici e i teoretici della Camerata dei Bardi. Intanto loro negano la vecchia tecnica polifonica, dove le ragioni della musica sono più importanti delle ragioni della parola. Vincenzo Ga-

[3] Canto XIV, versi 118-126: "E come giga e arpa, in tempra tesa/di molte corde, fa dolce tintinno/a tal da cui la nota non è intesa,/così da' lumi che li m'apparinno/s'accogliea per la croce una melode/che mi rapiva, sanza intender l'inno./Ben m'accors' io ch'elli era a'alte lode,/però ch'a me venià "Resurgi" e "Vinci"/come a colui che non intende e ode" (Dante Alighieri, *Divina Commedia (Paradiso),* Bantam Books, New York 1986). *Ars nova* consisteva nel nuovo stile polifonico molto complicato, in cui le parole non si capivano per via della densa fattura contrappuntistica.

[4] E. Fubini, op. cit., pp. 107-109.

[5] Ibidem, pp. 114-121.

[6] Prima edizione a Venezia, 1558.

[7] E. Fubini, op. cit., pp. 125-127.

lilei che nel suo lavoro *Dialogo della musica antica e della musica moderna* dal 1581 riporta le idee principali di quel nuovo stile, dice che la monodia è l'unico e insieme il più autentico modo d'espressione musicale, perchè sta nella natura dell'uomo. Al puro "diletto per l'udito", cioè la polifonia, viene contrapposto l'ideale della musica come l'espressione e l'imitazione degli affetti[8]. La manifestazione letteraria dei cambiamenti culturali troviamo nel *Libro del Cortegiano* di Baldassare Castiglione[9], che già nel 1528 anticipa gli ideali della Camerata dei Bardi. Tra poco, però, quell'invenzione nuova, cioè l'opera, nata dalla collaborazione tra i letterati e i musici, diventa il pomo della discordia. Il cosidetto *recitar cantando,* cioè il modo di cantare strettamente legato alla parola e subordinato ad essa, postulato dai teoretici della Camerata dei Bardi, presto si esaurisce come troppo "rozzo e noioso"[10]. Per soddisfare i gusti del pubblico e rafforzare l'effetto emotivo bisogna rendere lo spettacolo più variato dal punto di vista musicale. Grazie a quella nuova tendenza la musica ottiene la possibilità di elaborare il proprio linguaggio delle emozioni attraverso i mezzi propri e svilupparsi di più nel campo delle forme puramente strumentali. Sul suolo tedesco, dove domina la pratica strumentale, questa tendenza provoca la creazione della nuova corrente nell'estetica musicale: la teoria degli affetti.

Nella patria dell'opera, cioè in Italia, e in Francia, i due paesi dove l'opera costituisce un filone principale della vita musicale, il dibattito estetico viene dominato dalla questione delle relazioni tra la musica e la poesia. Il teatro musicale barocco diventa un oggetto della critica da parte di tali pesonaggi come Muratori, Gravina, Maffei o Baretti, che disapprovano il basso livello letterario dei libretti e giudicano negativamente la musica, condannandola dal punto di vista morale ed intellettuale[11]. Una parte opposta della discussione spetta ai letterati ed ai teoretici affascinati dall'opera, che intanto postulano il suo rinnovamento nello spirito dettato dalla corrente intellettuale proveniente d'oltralpe nella persona di Jean Jacques Rousseau e degli enciclopedisti. Il pensiero di Benedetto Marcello[12], Francesco Algarotti, Antonio Planelli e Vincenzo Manfredini si concentra sulla difesa della poesia (tutti tranne Marcello, musico, poeta e avvocato, sono letterati) contro la musica sempre più espansionista, il

[8] Ibidem, pp. 127-133.

[9] L'opinione dell'autore sul valore della polifonia e del canto con l'accompagnamento della viola, decisamente più positiva per quell'ultimo, la troviamo alla p. 128 del *Libro del Cortegiano,* Einaudi, Torino 1960.

[10] È l'opinione di Vincenzo Giustiniani, espressa nel suo *Discorso sopra la musica dei suoi tempi,* 1628. Un'opinione simile esprime anche Giovanni Battista Doni nel *Trattato sulla musica scenica.*

[11] E. Fubini, op. cit., pp. 75-176.

[12] B. Marcello è l'autore del *Teatro alla moda* (1720), una satira del teatro italiano e delle convenzioni che in esso regnano.

cui ruolo desiderano limitare. L'atteggiamento di Algarotti, ch'egli esprime nel *Saggio sopra l'opera in musica* dal 1755, è caratterizzato da una mentalità del letterato che vede il ruolo della musica nel servire la poesia. L'ideale dell'opera secondo lui sarebbe *tragedia recitata per musica.* Le riflessioni di Algarotti costituiscono un punto di partenza per Raniero de Calzabigi, poeta e collaboratore del famoso compositore tedesco Christoph Willibald Gluck, con cui progetta una riforma dell'opera[13]. Calzabigi e Gluck non parlano più della funzione servile della musica nell'opera, come lo fa Algarotti, ma intendono il ruolo della musica come elemento collaborativo. Il loro scopo non è più la difesa della musica o della poesia, ma il rafforzamento del potere drammatico dell'opera, che si può ottenere soltanto tramite la stretta collaborazione tra la musica e la poesia. Gluck è insieme il protagonista dell'ultima *querelle*[14] tra quelli che percepiscono la musica come l'espressione della natura e delle emozioni e quelli che vedono in essa la realizzazione dei valori razionali ed intellettuali. L'opera italiana, che nei tempi di Rousseau diventa, per l'opposizione ad una tradizione classica francese rappresentata da Lully e Rameau considerata artificiale e difficile, un sinonimo della semplicità, naturalezza e spontaneità[15], adesso diviene l'oggetto della critica. La riforma di Gluck, come dice Enrico Fubini, dipende nella stessa misura dalla cultura italiana che dalla cultura degli enciclopedisti francesi[16].

Con l'epoca del romanticismo, quando si indebolisce fortemente l'influsso dell'opera italiana e insieme cresce l'importanza della musica strumentale, la partecipazione dei critici e dei teoretici italiani diventa meno importante e significativa nell'ambito della cultura musicale europea. Non vuol dire che nella musica italiana avviene qualche crisi particolare: essa semplicemente cede il campo alla musica tedesca e francese

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[13] Il manifesto della riforma fu pubblicato nel 1767 nella premessa al *Alceste,* la prima opera di Ch. W. Gluck composta per il libretto di R. Calzabigi. Dal punto di vista teorietico la riforma di Gluck e Calzabigi non portò nessun elemento nuovo, ma sintetizzò e realizzò in un modo particolarmente riuscito le esigenze dell'ambiente critico sia in Francia che in Italia, che combatteva contro superficialità dell'azione drammatica e le esibizioni eccessive dei cantanti.

[14] Il primo grande dibattito sull'opera avvenne all'inizio del XVIII secolo tra i seguaci di Lully e Rameau, che poi si trasformò nella polemica tra buffonisti e antibuffonisti. L'ultimo atto di quelle dispute fu la *querelle* tra Gluck e Piccinni, conclusa con la vittoria di Gluck, la concezione del quale risultò più universale. "La nuova opera può restituire l'arte la sua dignità originaria", disse Gluck nella premessa al *Ifigenia in Aulide.* Un tale atteggiamento soddisfece gusti e ideali della maggioranza del mondo intelletuale europeo.

[15] La predilezione di Rousseau per l'opera risulta dalle sue concezioni linguistiche, espresse nel *Essai sur l'origine des langues.* Secondo lui nei tempi primitivi musica e parola furono unite e permetterono di trasmettere pienamente le passioni. Lo sviluppo della civiltà fece distaccare la lingua e la musica. Il canto ristabilisce quell'unità perduta, la musica invece è l'arte d'esprimere e d'imitare.

[16] E. Fubini, op. cit., p. 238.

che adesso si pone nel centro del discorso. Intanto appaiono i grandi nomi come L. Cherubini, G. Rossini, G. Dionizetti o V. Bellini, ma è sintomatico che tutti i suddetti compositori operano in Francia, dove funziona il più grande teatro d'opera europeo di questo tempo. Nel XIX secolo, come dice Bogusław Schaeffer[17], la musica italiana, che per secoli decideva dello sviluppo della musica europea, passò sul secondo piano e lì sarebbe rimasta se non ci fosse l'attività di Giuseppe Verdi e dei compositori della corrente verista con i più grandi: G. Puccini, P. Mascagni e R. Leoncavallo.

I primi studi musicologici in Italia provengono dalla fine dell'Ottocento. Per via delle diverse ragioni, sia culturali che politici, l'estetica italiana si sviluppava in un certo isolamento dal mondo degli studi europei. Il pensiero di Luigi Torchi e Oscar Chilesotti, considerati i precursori degli studi musicologici in Italia, proviene in linea stretta dall'estetica e musicologia tedesca e dalle idee positivistiche. Già nei primi anni del Novecento, però, la cultura musicale italiana comincia una forte polemica con il positivismo sotto l'egida delle teorie croceane. Nella sua vasta opera estetica e critica Croce stesso dedicò poco spazio alla musica; lo fecero i suoi allievi, che possedettero la maggior conoscenza dei problemi musicali. Il lavoro degli studiosi raccolti attorno alla rivista "Il Pianoforte" fondata nel 1920, la continuazione della quale fu "Rassegna Musicale", il periodico che esiste fino ad oggi, aveva una grande importanza, perchè elevò la critica e la storiografia italiana al livello europeo.

Un fondamento del pensiero crociano sull'arte, espresso tra l'altro nei due capitoli del suo *Breviario di estetica*[18] costituisce il concetto dell'unità delle arti. Alfredo Parente, che pone quel problema al centro della sua polemica con le idee positivistiche e con l'estetica romantica[19], rimane fino alla fine l'acanito seguace di Croce. L'importanza del pensiero di Parente sta nel suo carattere polemico con le principali correnti della musicologia e storiografia tedesca, che presenta una visione storica della musica come la storia dei generi e delle tecniche musicali. Secondo Parente ogni opera è una creazione in assoluto, un processo che ha la sua fonte nella visione lirica prodotta nell'anima e nella mente del compositore. Quell'idea costituisce la prima tappa del processo creativo, la seconda invece sta nella realizzazione tecnica e pratica di quella visione spirituale. Parente sottolinea l'importanza dell'atto creativo, polemizzando

[17] B: Schaeffer, *Dzieje muzyki,* WSiP, Warszawa 1983, p. 308.

[18] Si tratta del capitolo I *('Che cosa è l'arte?')* e III *(Il posto dell'arte nello spirito e nella società umana)* dal *Breviario di estetica. Quattro lezioni,* Ed. Laterza, Roma 1913.

[19] Anche uno dei primi storici ed estetici italiani che si scontrò con il positivismo, Fausto Torrefranca, nel suo studio *La vita musicale dello spirito* (Bocca, Milano 1910) si lasciò guidare dal pensiero di Schopenhauer e dei romantici, accanto alle forti ispirazioni senza dubbio crociane.

con i tipi del pensiero storico secondo i quali la forma e lo stile si sviluppa in un modo indipendente dall'artista e dall'opera[20].

Sottolineando l'importanza dell'atto creativo, gli estetici italiani raccolti attorno alla "Rassegna Musicale" mettono in rilievo il problema dell'interpretazione esecutiva, nell'estetica romantica trattato solo parzialmente. Nel pensiero degli italiani si possono vedere i due poli opposti. All'uno abbiamo il già citato Parente, che intende l'interpretazione come ubbidienza completa alle disposizioni del compositore; all'altro Salvatore Pugliatti[21], che concede all'esecutore le vaste possibilità creative. Interessante è che ambedue gli studiosi, partendo dalle stesse premesse neoidealistiche, giungono alle conclusioni diverse. L'atteggiamento di Parente risulta dalla sua concezione già citata in precedenza, che colloca il problema dell'esecuzione solo nella sfera tecnico-pratica. Invece per Pugliatti la tecnica costituisce una fase iniziale dell'esecuzione, il cui scopo finale è la piena partecipazione sprituale dell'esecutore. Sia la concezione di Parente che quella di Pugliatti è caratterizzata da una grande coerenza filosofica, il che non si può dire delle concezioni di Bastianelli, Pizzetti, Mila, Gatti, Casella, Graziosi o Ballo; però il loro pregio è l'introduzione degli elementi realistici, basati sull'esperienza musicale[22]. Un po' diversamente, ma sempre con i riferimenti all'esecuzione musicale, tratta il problema dell'interpretazione musicale Luigi Pareyson[23]. Secondo lui l'opera d'arte come pura forma esiste e si attualizza attraverso l'infinifo numero delle possibili esecuzioni. La stessa legge che dà vita alla composizione musicale, induce anche una varietà inesauribile delle interpretazioni.

I frutti del neoidealismo troviamo non solo nel campo dell'estetica, ma prima di tutto nell'area della critica e storiografia. Massimo Mila, all'inizio fortemente formato dall'estetica di Croce, rimane però aperto ai diversi influssi culturali. Egli, come nessun'altro in quel tempo in Italia, studiava il pensiero degli estetici francesi, tedeschi, inglesi o americani e diede l'inizio ad un dialogo positivo e costruttivo. Nel suo lavoro, *L'esperienza musicale e l'estetica,* Mila presenta una concezione nuova dell'arte come un'espressione involontaria delle emozioni. Secondo Mila per creare un'opera d'arte non basta una volontà d'esprimersi coscientemente, ma c'è bisogno dell'elemento

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[20] Il suo pensiero A. Parente espone prima di tutto nel libro *La musica e le arti. Problemi di estetica,* Laterza, Bari 1936.

[21] S. Pugliatti era prima di tutto un avvocato famoso, che però spesso riprendeva la tematica musicale. Più importante è il suo libro intitolato *L'interpretazione musicale,* Edizioni di Secolo Nostro, Messina 1940.

[22] Due degli studiosi enumerati, Ildebrando Pizzetti e Alfredo Casella, erano i pregiati compositori..

[23] L: Pareyson, *Estetica, teoria della formalità,* Zanichelli, Bologna 1960.

inconscio[24]. Supponiamo che solamente l'intenzione espressiva del compositore decide del valore artistico o non-artistico della sua opera. In questo momento si dovrebbe escludere come opere d'arte non solo le composizioni contemporanee di Hindemith, Strawinsky, Casella o Ravel, ma anche una gran parte della musica composta prima del XIX secolo[25]. Nella concezione storica di Mila la personalità dei suddetti compositori si rivela proprio nell'aspirazione della purezza formale.

Il neoidealismo fu un forte impulso per la ricerca musicale in Italia, il frutto del quale furono molti lavori storici e critici di livello e di rilievo europeo[26]. Un tratto caratteristico del pensiero sviluppato dagli studiosi italiani è costituto da in un conglomerato di teoria e pratica. Negli anni Sessanta e Settanta la nuova generazione dei filosofi, storici e compositori si allontanò da quella corrente filosofica, interressandosi più delle nuove idee d'oltralpe[27]. Nella musicologia italiana si svilupparono delle ricerche sul linguaggio musicale, la sua sintassi e il suo significato.

La semiotica musicale come una disciplina indipendente ha la sua origine nella linguistica, apparsa a cavallo del XIX e XX secolo. Il campo delle ricerche sul linguaggio verbale abbastanza presto si allarga a tutti sistemi capaci di comunicare, tra cui si trova anche la musica. Gli studiosi si occupano soprattutto delle interne strutture del segno musicale e dei meccanismi grazie ai quali funzionava. Un dilemma ottocentesco riguardante il problema del significato, nella semiotica musicale assume una forma della domanda sulle funzioni della musica, che possono avere un carattere artistico e non-artistico. Per via delle funzioni diverse che la musica svolge nella società, la semiotica musicale deve unirsi alle altre discipline come psicologia della musica, sociologia, musicoterapia, psicologia della percezione e molte altre, che allargano il campo della ricerca.

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[24] M. Mila, *L'esperienza musicale e l'estetica,* Einaudi, Torino 1956, p. 150.

[25] Ibidem, p. 159. A quel concetto si riferisce Umberto Eco parlando dell'errore d'intenzionalità (U. Eco, *Interpretacja i nadinterpretacja).*

[26] Si può menzionare i nomi dei tali studiosi come Andrea Della Corte *(Antologia della storia della musica,* Paravia, Torino 1926; *La critica musicale e i critici,* Utet, Torino 1961; *L'interpretazione musicale e gli interpreti,* Utet, Torino 1951), Guido Pannain *(La vita del linguaggio musicale,* Curci, Milano 1947, *Le musiche di Pizzetti e Debussy,* "Scenario", aprile 1938), Guido Gatti *(Dell'interpretazione musicale,* "Rassegna Musicale" nr 3, 1930, i numerosi scritti su d'Annunzio e i compositori con i quali collaborava), Luigi Magnani *(La musica, il tempo, l'eterno nella "Recherche" di Proust,* Ricciardi, Milano 1967), Luigi Ronga *(Bach, Mozart, Beethoven: tre problemi critici,* Neri Pozza, Venezia 1956).

[27] Nel campo della filosofia bisogna menzionare i due critici d'orientazione marxista: Luigi Pestalozza e Fedele D'Amico; per quanto riguarda la storia bisogna notare il nome del celebre Luigi Rognoni. I pionieri nell'introdurre in Italia la dodecafonia furono prima di tutto Bruno Maderna e Roman Vlad, romeno di origine, compositore e autore dei numerosi lavori sulla musica novecentesca.

Il maggior sviluppo della semiotica musicale avviene negli anni Settanta del XX secolo. In uno dei primi lavori riguardanti questa disciplina, *Le cru et le cuit*[28], un famoso antropologo Claude Lévi-Strauss adopera le tecniche linguistiche per la ricerca sui messaggi musicali. Un'altro studioso, già da me citato in precedenza, Nicolas Ruwet[29], sottolineando l'importanza del pensiero di de Saussure e di Jakobson, indica le difficoltà che incontriamo adoperando i metodi dell'analisi linguistica nel campo musicale. Per Ruwet l'elemento che decide del significato musicale è prima di tutto la struttura. Gino Stefani, sul pensiero del quale ci soffermeremo, invece si concentra di più sulla funzione comunicativa. Stefani è convinto che la musica parla di una vera condizione in cui si trova la cultura di una data società[30], la quale tesi ha molto in comune con il pensiero dei sociologi della musica[31]. Stefani definisce la semiotica come "una disciplina che studia i codici sociali nei quali il segno musicale viene studiato con la stessa assiduità che il significato"[32]. Secondo Stefani lo scopo della semiotica sta nel decifrare i codici di base e nel chiarire attraverso la ricerca psicolinguistica in quale modo la musica viene da noi intesa. L'analisi semiotica dovrebbe essere effettuata ai due livelli. Il primo riguarda il significante, dunque la struttura musicale e le sue regole interne, il secondo invece si riferisce al significato della musica nel contesto culturale. Il metodo dell'analisi semiotica era un oggetto della discussione negli anni Settanta del XX secolo, quando si postulava il criterio di "neutralità". I più accaniti seguaci di questo metodo di ricerca semiotica erano Jean-Jacques Nattiez e Gino Stefani. Ogni analisi musicale divide il testo in unità più piccole e cerca di darvi un significato che dipende spesso da un linguaggio tipico per una data epoca o corrente. L'opzione di Nattiez e Stefani mira alla comprensione globale, non determinata dalle tendenze tipiche per un dato contesto storico, culturale e sociale. Un interessante parere presenta Enrico Fubini, dicendo che l'analisi semiotica non dovrebbe differenziarsi, almeno nelle sue concezioni generali, dall'analisi fatta da un critico musicale, la quale è caratterizzata da un approccio in parte intuitivo, in parte basato sulla conoscenza del contesto culturale e sociale e delle diverse reazioni emozionali. L'analisi

[28] C. Lévi-Strauss, *Mythologique I: Le cru et le cuit,* Plon, Paris 1964.

[29] Mi riferisco al paragrafo *Musica come una specie di lingua,* il citato libro di Ruwet è *Lingua, musica, poesia,* Einaudi, Torino 1983.

[30] G. Stefani, *Introduzione alla semiotica della musica,* Sellerio, Palermo 1976. p. 13.

[31] C'è anche la parentela con il pensiero di Th. W. Adorno, a differenza che Stefani, parlando del ruolo della musica nella società usa la parola "rispecchiare". Per Adorno questo ruolo è più complicato e non si può ridurre alla semplice relazione causa-effetto. La musica è fortemente radicata nella società come il suo elemento immanente.

[32] G. Stefani, op. cit., p. 48.

semiotica invece dispone di un ricco apparato metodologico, dunque i suoi risultati hanno un carattere più scientifico e meno intuitivo[33].

Un punto centrale nella ricerca semiotica era la relazione tra il segno e il significato. Il trattare separatamente di quei due fenomeni aprì le nuove possibilità e porse i nuovi problemi davanti agli studiosi. La ricerca riguardante il segno musicale portò molti lavori interessanti nell'ambito dell'analisi linguistica[34]. Gli studi sul significato condussero la semiotica alla cooperazione con le diverse discipline, in particolare con sociologia e psicologia. In quel modo l'ambito della ricerca semiotica si allargò, premettendo ad un ulteriore sviluppo di quella disciplina.

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[33] E. Fubini, *Historia estetyki muzycznej,* pp. 507-508.

[34] Erano soprattutto i lavori dei due studiosi di Montreal, Jean-Jacques Nattiez (*De problematiques sémiologiques à l'analyse musicale,* "Semiotica" 15:1, 1975, *Problémes de sémiologie musicale et de poétique structurale,* "Semiotica" 11:3, 1974, *Quelques problémes de la sémiologie fonctionelle,* "Semiotica" 1973, nr 2, *Proust musicien,* Christian Bourgois Editeur, Paris 1972, *Fondements d'une sémiologie de la musique,* Union Général d'Éditions, Paris 1975) e Louise Hirbour-Paquette.

Barbara Kowalik

"Judas" and Other Middle English Religious Ballads: Towards Reconstructing a Genre and Deconstructing a Stereotype

Christian heroes of great popular appeal, the mysteries and miracles of faith, and even sin and sinners provide subject matter for a small group of Middle English religious ballads and ballad-like lyrics. In this paper the nature of this minor genre is elucidated with ample reference to "Judas", one of the oldest British ballads extant in written form, surviving in a single, thirteenth-century manuscript (MS. Cambridge, Trinity College, 323, f. 34a), and portraying the archetypal traitor in a somewhat unconventional way.

In their appreciation of "Judas" critics have either reduced its value to "the attraction of the antique" (George Kane, quoted after Dronke 1978: 69) or extolled it as "one of the most 'modern' of medieval poems (...) the first masterpiece of expressionism" (Dronke 69).

In fact, many of the unquestionable artistic merits of "Judas" can be accounted for in terms of its ingenious realisation of the medieval ballad convention, of which the metrical pattern is but the most obvious symptom. Although the scansion is not always regular throughout the eighteen quatrains, it begins as a variation of four- and three-stressed lines in the first stanza, rhyming *abcb*, and thus closely approaches the ballad metre. Some of the stanzas (e. g. 6, 7, 8) employ lines of three plus three stresses, which is a common variant of that metre. The ballad narrative mode is established from the start with the opening formula: "Hit was upon a Shere Thorsday" (all quotations from the poem are after Duncan 1995: 151-153). Incidentally, the same opening formula was used much later by William Blake in his "Holy Thursday" lyric from the *Songs of Innocence*: "'Twas on a Holy Thursday!" (Sampson 1995: 91).

The story of Judas is told in seemingly arbitrary narrative fragments, in the elliptical manner characteristic of all ballads. In the same vein, the poem makes an extensive use of parallelism and repetition, while dialogue occupies as many as fifty out of its seventy-two lines. In sum, the text's apparently modern features, such as its "dramatic expression" visible in the "swift, taut scenes, throwing dialogue in such sharp relief that even 'he said', 'she said' become superfluous" and "its sharp moments of tension and climax" (Dronke 67-69), are all part of the popular ballad convention.

However, to account fully for the nature of medieval religious ballads, one must also take into consideration the working methods of their Christian authors. Middle English ballads are almost always based on scriptural sources and as such constitute the most compressed possible treatments of biblical material, for they reduce well-known Christian myths and stories into narrative and highly dramatised lyrics. This means, on the one hand, that the poetic medium of the popular ballad is exploited to the maximum. In addition, whatever information survives a merciless process of compression is presumably of the highest significance and encapsulates the cultural climate and current ideas and attitudes of the author's day.

Retellings of biblical narratives form an important branch of Middle English literature, as in the case of *Genesis* and *Exodus*, written at the same time as "Judas" (c. 1250) and *Cursor Mundi* (c. 1300). Those biblical adaptations had been influenced by the Latin *Historia Scholastica* of Peter Comestor, completed in about 1173, a work which "encouraged a new attitude toward the biblical text that licensed later medieval authors to recast biblical narratives" (Twomey 2002: 141-142). It has been demonstrated how Comestor's scholastic methods, which consisted in "assembling various historical accounts into an expanded biblical narrative" and in interspersing "canonical stories with legends, typologies, moralities, and *exempla*", were utilised in the alliterative *Cleanness* (Twomey 144). Religious ballads, because of their slender form, can deal with one story at a time. However, their approach to the scriptural material was evidently influenced by the same methods of scholastic history. The scholastic approach allowed later poets who retold biblical stories to pick and choose their narrative details without involving themselves in heresy, to add other materials, and to leave it to their readers to decide about a final interpretation. Medieval religious ballads, I propose, are a product of combining the popular song convention with the spirit of scholastic scriptural exegesis.

Like Comestor, the "Judas"-poet rewrites the gospel accounts of betrayal into one synoptic narrative, while privileging the gospel of Matthew. This is conspicuous in the use of a few details that are present only in Matthew's version, in particular the thirty pieces of silver, the fact that Jesus himself, in direct speech, announces the coming feast of the Passover, and the question "Is it I?" asked by Judas. Moreover, the general tone of Matthew's account is the most favourable for Judas out of the four gospel accounts. Thus, only Matthew mentions Judas's repentance and his casting down of the pieces of silver in the temple. The medieval poet shares Matthew's sympathy for Judas, though he communicates it in different ways.

Generally, he has suppressed a number of the decidedly negative details of the gospel accounts, like the kiss by which Judas identified his master for the persecutors, and has avoided any straightforward condemnation of Judas's deed. In the gospels either Jesus himself or the authors condemn the traitor ("woe unto that man by whom the Son of man is betrayed; it had been good for that man if he had not been born", Matthew 26:24; "entered Satan into Judas", Luke 22:23; cf. John 13:27). Apart from Matthew, the second most important gospel source for the poet was the Gospel of John. Only John identifies the apostle that smote off a soldier's ear with a sword as Peter (John 18:5), so the poet probably took this detail from him. Furthermore, only John refers to Judas's bag, suggesting that he kept in it the group's money and provisions (John 13:29). In the ballad, similarly, Judas is portrayed in the role of the provider and treasurer.

Having selected those details he thought most useful for his purpose, the poet shapes the story in his own way. He changes the order of the incidents to make a logical and coherent narrative sequence. Thus, while in the gospel of John disciples think, somewhat illogically, that the master has sent Judas away to buy things for the feast, though the feast is almost finished, the medieval poet shifts this incident to the beginning of his story. Moreover, he links the buying of food for the Passover with the thirty pieces of silver, details that remain unconnected in the known sources. The poet must have drawn upon non-biblical materials, although no definite source for the legend of Judas and his sister has been discovered. In a Wendish folk-song it is related that Jesus entrusted to Judas thirty pieces of silver to buy bread for a poor widow, but Judas gambled the money away (Child, referred to after Brown 1932: 183). The Coptic Gospel of the Twelve Apostles, in turn, presents Judas as stealing habitually in order to satisfy his wife, who also urges him to sell Jesus and gain riches thereby (Baum, referred to after Brown 1932: 183). Ultimately, the poet invents action and dialogue out of his own imagination, creating an original story out of traditional material and casting it in the form of a popular ballad. His indebtedness to Comestor is quite likely as the latter mentions in his *Historia Scholastica* that Judas had a wife and children, whom he gave what had been stolen (as noted by Brown 1932: 183). The poet apparently transformed the wife into a sister, while omitting the children altogether.

The most striking change between the ballad account and the gospel narrative is that the latter presents Judas as an active conspirator who goes to the high priests on his own initiative and plots with them against his lord for profit (cf. Matthew 26: 14-15). By contrast, the Middle English poet makes Judas a weak and passive victim of an inevitably unfolding chain of adverse circumstances and intrigues of hostile individuals. Surprisingly, he attempts to justify Judas or at least to attenuate his guilt by setting it aside the guilt of other traitors. The first person Judas meets is a woman who is identified as his sister and “the swikele wommon” (treacherous woman, l. 14). She tells Judas he deserves to be stoned for believing in a false prophet. Judas’s reaction is telling: he silences and rebukes the woman, but apparently does so merely out of fear of the lord’s anger (stanza 6). He is obviously quite ignorant of his master’s character, whose quiet manner and gentle temper are implied in the way he addresses his apostles. The lord’s mild words suggest a merciful and compassionate heart, in accordance with the meanings of such Middle English words as *mildernisse* and *mildheortnesse* (=mercifulness, compassion).

Having failed to intimidate Judas, the woman employs a different strategy: she suggests he accompany her to a remote and secluded place on a hilltop where she will allow him to lay his head in her lap. The diction and imagery are highly suggestive. On the one hand, Judas’s sleep on a cliff prefigures the way the other apostles will fall asleep on the Mount of Olives after they have been asked to watch and pray, and so betokens the weakness of the flesh (cf. Matthew 26,41). On the other hand, the significant repetition of the word “ston” (l. 26), a crucial word occurring thrice in the end-rhyme position, which has been used ten lines back in quite a different sense (l. 16), provides a psychological insight into Judas’s mind. Apparently, this is somewhat unusual in a ballad as ballads seldom provide psychological motivation (see Błaszkiewicz 2004). In this case, Judas’s fear of being stoned, at first suppressed by a greater terror of his master, now surfaces when he hears again the word “ston” and chooses, against his better judgement, to take a rest in his sister’s *soft* lap rather than fall dead under hard stones. Furthermore, the motif of stoning may be reminiscent of the Old Testament figures of Joseph and Jeremiah, persecuted by their family and fellow countrymen respectively. For that reason, in the medieval liturgy of the Holy Week, Joseph and Jeremiah were regarded as types of Jesus in his Passion (Frizzell et al. 2001: 195). Stoning also brings to mind Stephen, Protomartyr of the Church, stoned to death for his adherence to the Christian faith. Unlike all these biblical characters, Judas is here depicted as an anti-type of Christ in his Passion.

The next incident occurs when Judas awakes and finds his silver to have been taken away, presumably by the sister, who is to be seen nowhere. He falls into such despair that citizens of Jerusalem think he is mad. Pilate then approaches him with a proposal of a deal. In contrast with the scriptures, the poem suggests that Judas sold Jesus only because he wanted to get back the stolen money. This motivation is evident when he refuses gold offered by Pilate and insists on being paid exactly thirty silver coins (stanzas 11-12).

In the third and last episode the reader is thrown into the midst of the Last Supper, where Judas clumsily betrays himself as his lord’s traitor. However, his fault is once again reduced, being juxtaposed with Peter’s denial. Both apostles stand up when Jesus mentions being sold out. Peter's loud display of bravado and loyalty contrasts with the awkwardness of Judas. Significantly enough, Jesus fails to comment upon the latter's deception, but quietly rebukes Peter, predicting that he will forsake him thrice before the cock's crow. The open ending leaves the judgement of Judas entirely to the reader, who must make sense out of the diverse clues provided in the text.

The text as a whole repeatedly makes us reformulate the concept of Judas's kinsmen. Thus, sending Judas to buy food, Jesus foretells that he may meet on his way some of his "kinnesmen", in the plural and with the implication of the masculine gender. The reader is therefore startled when Judas comes upon his "sister". The word seems to be intentionally ambiguous: it is a strong indication of a blood relationship, but it may also be a euphemism designating Judas's mistress (Dronke 68). Moreover, when Judas subsequently meets more of his kinsmen, the idea of kinship is extended, encompassing wider and wider circles of people. He encounters a crowd of Jerusalem Jews (l. 35) and then Pilate, who in the gospel narrative emphatically dissociates himself from the Jews, asking the rhetorical question "Am I a Jew?" (John 18:35), but here is marked as Judas's kinsman (ll. 37-38).

The poem broadens the idea of being a Jew and associates it with the most negative stereotypes that functioned in the medieval society. Thus, being a Jew is associated with the image of dangerous femininity and illicit sexual behaviour embodied in Judas's sister. Next, Judas is described as a typical madman. The ballad relates that he tore his hair so much that it all streamed with blood and the residents of Jerusalem thought he was mad (ll. 33-36). It is noteworthy that the insane person's hair (or lack of it) was one of the most distinctive features used in the medieval depictions of madness (Sprunger 2002: 228). Finally, the ballad emphasises throughout the reputedly Jewish concern with money, particularly when it turns Pilate into a caricature of a Jewish moneylender, an occupation that was anathema to the medieval Christian society. In sum, the poet totalises a number of unfavourable descriptions, creating a single model of the alien, in line with widespread medieval anxieties about the dangerous Other (cf. Freedman 2002). He thereby reflects the resentments of his own social milieu. The Other transcends the medieval Catholic community, evoked in the ballad's opening words, "*oure* Loverd" and "upon *a* Shere Thorsday" (italics mine), which establish the ideological viewpoint of the poet's contemporary society.

However, the opposition between "us" and "them" is ultimately deconstructed by Peter's behaviour. Peter, this rock upon which the Church is to be founded, proves disloyal when he brags about his readiness to overcome a thousand of Pilate's soldiers but, in fact, is about to deny Christ. The parallelism of Peter and Judas is underscored syntactically (cf. ll. 57, 61) and through the master's right predictions of betrayal in each case. Surprisingly, Judas's verbal behaviour resembles that of Christ (cf. ll. 21, 69). In addition, each of the twelve apostles is burdened with a potential for failure. When Jesus comes to the feast, he finds them sitting despondently, unable to eat (ll. 51-54). The gospel narrative more openly admits that the apostles suspected one another of betraying the lord (cf. John 13:22).

The poem does not simply reflect a strongly negative attitude of the medieval Christian society towards Jewish people, whereby individuals and whole groups – Judas, his sister, Peter, high priests, and soldiers – are identified as the Jews, that is, enemies of "our Lord" (cf. Frizzell et al.). The open ending ultimately turns the questions "Who is a Jew?" and "Am I a Jew?" upon the reader, who is forced to re-examine the concept of Judas's "kinnesmen" and eventually to discover a Jew, that is, a potential traitor of Jesus, in him- and/or herself. The ultimate opposition is between the lonely, subdued figure of the master and the various representatives of the *humanum genus*. The story is framed with Christ's sadly quiet prophecies of his disciples' failures and so foregrounds him as its true protagonist, all knowing, yet forgiving.

The representation of the Last Supper contributes to the process of assimilating and appropriating sin, encoded in the text. Christ's sadly ironic words, "Ich am abought and y-sold / today for oure mete" (ll. 55-56), underline an exchange of goods – the master's body for food for the apostles. It parallels, in an inverted form, the transubstantiation of bread and wine into body and blood of Christ at the Eucharist, which was instituted at the Last Supper. In this context, the bargain of Judas becomes a necessary step towards the institution of the chief sacrament of the Catholic Church. Although this does not diminish his guilt, still it provides a different perspective upon his sin, which is placed in the divine economy of salvation as having a part in Christ's mission. The redemption of sinners consists, after all, in purchasing them back by the Saviour from Satan, as the word *redeem* derives from the Latin *re-* (= again, once more, afresh) and *emere* (= to buy). Thus, Christ's accomplishment is defined in the idiom of trade, redeeming the bargain of Judas from utter condemnation.

Admittedly, in the light of the adamantly condemnatory medieval attitudes to Judas Iscariot, this relatively lenient treatment is hardly believable. There are hundreds of examples in the visual arts, drama, and writing that emphasise Judas's exclusion from the Christian community. Thirteenth-century lyrics repeatedly refer to Judas treacherously selling Jesus (cf. Brown 1932: 28, 34, 155). In a Middle English Marian lament from the fifteenth century, one finds a particularly strong and persistent condemnation of both Judas and all the Jews, coming from the Mother of God herself, who is the speaker of this dramatic monologue (Brown 1939: 18-19). This is much more typical medieval treatment of the treacherous apostle than the attitude inscribed in our ballad. On the other hand, one does find poems where the speaker identifies with the traitor. Thus, the author of "A Prayer of Penitence to God Almighty"

(MS. Harley 2253 f. 105a) holds himself viler than any Jew (Brown 1932: 157). Another thirteenth-century poet (see B. M. MS. Egerton 613, f. 1b) quite unconventionally identifies himself with the seller of Christ (Brown 1932: 109). Such lyrics prove that the medieval treatment of Judas's sin was not entirely homogenous. Some authors apparently appropriated the sin in order to probe their own and their implied reader's conscience. Lyrical discourse, by its very nature, represents and addresses an individual at the present moment, that is, when his or her salvation is still an open question. Projected identifications with the archetypal traitor seem to be the poets' deliberate strategies of realising the potential choice between salvation and damnation. It is not necessary to postulate, as Brown does, that the "Judas" poem is incomplete in order to accommodate it to the prevailing attitudes (1932: 184). In fact, from a purely aesthetic point of view, the poem is complete. Christ's prophetic utterances provide an effective compositional frame, while the elliptical narration is a source of suspense typical of the ballad style.

The broad-minded attitude to sin inscribed in "Judas" is paralleled in one of the best-known Middle English lyrics, the fifteenth-century "Adam lay y-bownden" (MS. London, British Library, Sloane 2593, fol. 11), here referred to after Duncan (144-145). If not a regular ballad, the poem is certainly a ballad-like lyric, telling a story in verse, beginning, as ballads often do, *in medias res* and near the climax of the action. It focuses on a significant action but leaps over other actions and details (Hirsh 2005: 124). It arouses a sense of wonder for it relates highly surprising incidents. It makes use of repetition and parallelism, and employs a variant of the ballad metre. Furthermore, as explicitly stated in the reference to the clerks' book, the poem follows the tradition of retelling biblical history, as in Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, but constitutes perhaps the most compressed medieval version of that history, summarising it in sixteen short lines. The poet's achievement consists in putting the entire biblical history in a nutshell, while highlighting its turning points: sin and salvation. They are here represented in two suggestive images: the image of Adam lying in bondage, in a downward, horizontal position, and the image of the Queen of Heaven, implying an upward, vertical position. Mary's victory counterbalances Adam's lapse. The poet refrains from a chronological account for the sake of bringing out cause-and-effect relationships between events, whereby Adam's sin, minimised to the taking of an apple, emerges as a necessary link in the chain of happenings leading to Mary's eventual triumph.

Both "Judas" and "Adam" take an astonishingly optimistic and tolerant attitude towards sin and sinners. The former internalises a particularly interesting representation of sin for, instead of polarising, usual in medieval writing, righteousness and wickedness, it situates all human behaviour along a continuum of evil-doing. This is especially evident in comparison with a very late medieval ballad, "Dives and Lazarus", coming probably from the sixteenth century, based on a parable related in the Gospel of Luke (Luke 16: 19-31). The author has enhanced the narrative quality of his poem by means of an opening formula, "As it fell upon a day". He invented a feast given by Dives and supplied certain narrative details. He also added dialogue between Dives and Lazarus, underscoring the gulf between the rich and the poor by means of repetitions and parallelisms. Furthermore, he emphasised and expanded the marvellous in the story. Thus, neither the merry men nor the hungry dogs have the power to harm Lazarus. His soul is guided to heaven by two angels, who call him their brother. In contrast, the soul of Dives is guided to hell by two serpents, which likewise call him their brother. At the end, Dives laments, not unlike Marlowe's Faustus, over the infinitude of his damnation. Evidently, the poet has modified the scriptural account so as to bring out a moral lesson more clearly. He polarises the fates of his characters, introducing neat, symmetrical oppositions. In his account Dives is unquestionably and irreversibly damned. Accordingly, his sin has been magnified: rather than being indifferent, he actively oppresses Lazarus. The poet has also suppressed the biblical detail of the rich man's concern about the fate of his still living brothers. In this ballad there is no hope for the sinner after his death and no fortunate aspects of sin are recognised. Vices and virtues are absolute, mutually exclusive categories, while judgement is inscribed in the text. The supernatural judge punishes Dives for his lack of mercy but remains merciless himself. This comparatively more censorious attitude to sin may correspond with a growing sense of guilt and fear in European culture from the early through the late Middle Ages and up to the early modern times, as documented by Jean Delumeau. Or it may simply reflect a certain variety of attitudes to sin and archetypal sinners within a seemingly uniform medieval paradigm. It certainly marks the end of a minor medieval genre, in which the popular ballad and scholastic history worked together to create a sense of mystery and ambivalence in the treatment of well-known Christian topics.

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Joanna Moczyńska

'Now you see me, now you ---' The Metafictional Characters in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* by John Fletcher and William Shakespeare

A lot of critical work has been assigned to studying *The Two Noble Kinsmen* as an adaptation of Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Knight's Tale* and tracing other sources that could have influenced Fletcher and Shakespeare, such as Boccaccio's *Teseida* or John Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*. Even more attention seems to have been devoted to the question of authorship, which has resulted in numerous linguistic and literary analyses ascribing particular scenes to either Fletcher or Shakespeare and investigating their working relationship. However, the reading presented in this discussion follows another line of criticism, focusing on the play not as an intertextual construct or a product of collaboration between the two playwrights, but as an integral artistic undertaking. *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is a strikingly self-conscious dramatization of the Chaucerian text. First, it provides a framework of references to the authority of the source material by means of the parenthood metaphor, examined here on the examples of the intertextual character of Emilia and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*'s own protagonist, the Jailer's Daughter. Secondly, and perhaps even more importantly, it draws on Chaucer's idea of appearing as a character in *The Canterbury Tales* and making him speak in the Prologue of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. The three above-mentioned personas, though differing in their apparent status in the play as well as the levels of intertextuality they represent, will be discussed here as metafictional characters that point to a significant problem inherent in *The Two Noble Kinsmen* as a reconstruction of a well-known text. Such a reading does not undermine the importance of the source material, but leads to a hightened awareness of the limitations that Fletcher and Shakespeare's play had to face.

In order to steer clear of the former interpretation I would like to present the relationship of the source text on the one hand and its reconstruction on the other along the lines proposed by a contemporary 'review' of Renaissance drama, Tom Stoppard's famous play entitled *Rosencrantz And Guildenstern Are Dead*. It appears that, in spite of obvious differences, *The Two Noble Kinsmen* and *Rosencrantz...* have a lot in common as regards the approach towards dramatic material and certain concerns they communicate.

Before discussing these issues, however, it seems advisable to consider one of the critical assumptions underlying such a reading of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, the often-mentioned disparity between the characters' rhetoric and behaviour. Theodore Spencer ascribed it to Fletcher and Shakespeare's enhancing Chaucerian tale's 'undramatic' character (the quality explained by Paula S. Berggren as the result of Chaucer's preoccupation with the Boethian idea of man acting in a world he cannot control) with 'clotted rhetoric' which is used to disguise human inertia (Berggren 1984:4). Madelon Lief and Nicholas F. Radel discussed the apparent aporias of Fletcher and Shakespeare's text as a conscious 'undermining of [the Elizabethan] idealist mimesis and decorum,' which they traced back to Francis Bacon's emphasis on empirical approach or to Fletcher's new notion of tragicomedy (1987:409). Whatever the source, the result pinpointed by the critics has always been the same: the play's storyline cannot but be perceived as a series of delays, disjunctions and thwarted fulfilments. The inconsistency between artificial speech patterns and stage events is said to highlight the strained 'ritual imposition of order in a disordered world' which is considered to be of primary importance in the reception of the play (422). The spectators and readers are usually the targets of such analyses: it is ultimately them who are left pondering on the practicalities of the disrupted version of reality with which they are presented, and referring it to the reality that they know.

Admittedly, this type of interpretation was given an artistic rendering in Stoppard's *Rosencrantz And Guildenstern Are Dead*, and was subsequently defined by Richard Corballis as a dramatic collision between 'the mystery and the clockwork,' the former signifying the audience's uncertain real world and the latter – the artificial world of abstraction, the playworld of *Hamlet* (1984:11). Thus Stoppard's characters find themselves trapped between two linguistically differing styles which do not meet at any point and the audience is made a part of a construct which defies the principles of communication. This is the first trap in the general drift of *Rosencrantz...* and of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. The analogy could be supported with numerous textual parallels between the plays, e.g. the feeling of displacement voiced by Arcite and Palamon in Thebes and in prison, or the repeated mistaking of one for the other. There are also more significant aspects which connect the two plays, such as giving the off-stage events an on-stage presentation and *vice versa*, the apparent awareness of the underlying presence of some other text which controls the action and the feeling that 'we aim at the point where everyone who is marked for death dies' (Stoppard 1968:58). Last but not least, Stoppard's play indicates a possibility different from approaching *The Two Noble Kinsmen* as the audience's reading of

Fletcher and Shakespeare's 'gloomy revision of Chaucer's tale [which] merely explores the problematic values inherent in the source itself' (Lief et al.:412). As Tim Brassell pointed out, *Rosencrantz...* is not really a juxtaposition of a real world and a playworld, but rather the **collision of two playworlds**, the one of the source material and the one of the play's protagonists. The same pattern can be observed in *The Two Noble Kinsmen,* with the result of focusing not on the characters being caught in a play, but rather on a play being caught in a larger framework, the authority of its literary precedent.

Thus, *The Two Noble Kinsmen* can be interpreted as a work indicating certain characters as the mouthpieces of its own entanglement with the consequences of being burdened with artistic heritage: namely, it allows for the discussion of two virgins, Emilia and the Jailer's Daughter, as the representatives of the play's predicament. In the very Prologue, giving a maiden in marriage is explicitly associated with launching a new play, Chaucer being the father of the 'bride,' the playwrights and players handing the 'bride' over to the 'bridegroom,' and the audience being the 'bridegroom' himself. This pattern seems to provide a stable frame of reference for the process of reconstructing an old tale in a new form, complemented with the standard display of affected humility. While the play develops, however, there appear more and more obstacles to this system, referring mostly to virgin- and father-figures which are going to be discussed later in more detail.

As mentioned above, the special status of virgins and their association with new plays is introduced in the Prologue and the analogy is sustained throughout *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. The manifestation of their importance occurs, for instance, when Cicely, a character who is not even alluded to elsewhere in the play, does not turn up for the May day celebrations. The schoolmaster (being a father- / author-figure) says: 'Our business is become a nullity, / Yea, and a woeful and piteous nullity;' fortunately, the Jailer's Daughter happens to arrive and helps to carry out the morris dance (Fletcher et al. 1997:234). Moreover, women's opinions seem to have a mysterious grip on female protagonists. Even though reluctant to take the responsibility for men's actions, Emilia is very concerned about the scorn of other women that her decision or lack thereof may cause. It is also 'companion maids' who manage to convince the Jailer's Daughter to accept the Wooer as Palamon. In contrast to these indications of intertextual power on the development of the two 'plays,' other characters seem to evince a rather dubious attitude towards the two maidens. It is telling that, while goodness is explicitly stated as the quality of both Emilia and the Jailer's Daughter, the distinction implied in 'They are honourable; / How good they'll prove, I know not. [...] 'Twill be known' hints at an alternative interpretation of the play, which in the end proves as difficult to define as the role of its female protagonists (261). Paradoxically, we can thus say that we are reading / watching a play about female protagonists who in turn become dramatic masks for the play itself.

Emilia, for instance, illustrates the condition of the play in which Fletcher and Shakespeare opt for silencing the authority of the source material and its author. She has no father and can decide for herself – except that she is exceedingly insecure and tries to push the responsibility away. Theseus asserts her predicament in the following terms: 'You are a right woman, sister: you have the pity / But want the understanding where to use it' (254). This is exactly the quality she shares with the play seen as the result of a conscious effort on the part of the playwrights and performers, which is articulated in the Prologue:

> This is the fear we bring;
> For, to say the truth, it were an endless thing
> And too ambitious to aspire to [Chaucer],
> Weak as we are, and, almost breathless, swim
> In this deep water. Do but hold out
> Your helping hands and we shall tack about
> And something do to save us. You shall hear
> Scenes... (138-139)

Emilia's self-effacement makes her shun direct action even to the point of not attending Arcite and Palamon's tournament, the fact which places the events off stage. She chooses to rely solely on her wrong interpretation of sounds (a version of dramatic hearsay, highlighted in the Prologue's 'you shall hear') and unsupported opinions ('I did think / Good Palamon would miscarry, yet I knew not / Why I did think so' (315)). Still, even though she evades participating in the course of affairs as much as possible, floating on the surface of the 'deep water' without looking downwards, other characters such as the Jailer and the Doctor are determined not to 'lose the sight' of the story, and, like the servant, will 'hold out [their] helping hands' to arrive at the expected conclusion. The problem is that such a choice allows them to project their passions onto female characters and, consequently, the play. Even though the vulnerable Emilia / play is often provided with codifying meanings ('if she say "traitor," / I am a villain fit to lie unburied' (251)), she can also be 'appropriated' for more subversive uses:

> Were I at liberty, I would do things
> Of such a virtuous greatness that this lady,
> This blushing virgin, should take manhood to her
> And seek to ravish me. (197)

As in the Prologue, Emilia can 'something do to save her;' but being unable to consult her parent she turns to another maiden / play, the chaste Diana, to ask which contender has 'the truest title' to her love (298). However, unlike an outspoken father (such as Chaucer or the Jailer) Diana does not convey her thoughts and the only thing that Emilia is able to say is:

> I shall be gathered –
> I think so, but I know not thine own will; [...]
> I hope she's pleased:
> Her signs were gracious. (299)

Surely, they were 'honourable,' but would they 'prove good'?

In addition to this core-less diffusion of command, *The Two Noble Kinsmen* explores the possibility of an explicit rejection of authority in the character of the Jailer's Daughter, who shares the male protagonists' plight of the disturbing 'intemperate surfeit of [...] eye' (285). In contrast to Emilia she has a father, but in her determination to get what she wants she betrays him. When her plan fails, she plunges into madness, the cure for which is a series of 'falsehoods.' She is introduced into, and then allowed to live in, her imagined ideal world for fear of running amok: the Jailer's brother warns the others, 'By no means cross her, she is then distempered / Far worse than now she shows' (267). In this closed circuit 'her brain coins' a story of her and Palamon's life, but the bridegroom-to-be is in fact the Wooer, not Palamon. The play continues without interruptions, but this is clearly not a good play, because – apart from all the deception it involves - there are suspicions regarding the chastity of the protagonist. This in turn casts doubt on the principal demand voiced in the Prologue, which connects the reputation of the play with that of an honourable lady:

> And a good play,
> Whose modest scenes blush on his marriage day
> And shake to lose his honour... (137)

The Jailer's Daughter is not even given a name, probably because of her conscious act of discarding the parentage and authority.

> Farewell, father!
> Get many more such prisoners and such daughters
> And shortly you may keep yourself. (213)

The play goes astray and is allowed to continue harmlessly, though falsely; still, it causes a great deal of unease on the father's side. The Jailer is extremely anxious to know whether there 'was nothing said of [him] / Concerning the escape of Palamon' (259). Ironically, he is to be associated with her till the end of the play, notably by Palamon whom she gave freedom (the fact that the Jailer eagerly wishes to be forgotten). This situation once again brings to mind the Prologue, and specifically Chaucer's agonized cry, 'Oh, fan / From me the witless chaff of such a writer / That blasts my bays...' (138). In spite of the exclamation, Chaucer does not disown his 'daughter' and, like the Jailer, chooses to stay with her forever.

Not that the playwrights actually want it to be the case. It is a curious fact that, while Chaucer is so prominently present in the Prologue of *The Two Noble Kinsmen,* the Epilogue contains no explicit reference to this looming authority. It reminds us of one of the central motifs haunting Stoppard's *Rosencrantz And Guildenstern Are Dead*, the obsession with death, summed up in the phrase 'Now you see me, now you don't' (1968:62). It seems that the development of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* is a fierce fight for this 'don't.' Chaucer reappears in the play in a number of increasingly disturbing contexts. At first, he is evoked as bones to be laid to 'sweet sleep.' The figure does not entail any negative connotations, supported with the Schoolmaster's 'marrow of understanding' it can even be said to emphasize Chaucer's high status, until the Theban Queens intensify it with the imagery of their husbands' decaying bodies (1997:230). When this discordant element is subdued, the Thebans' bodies once again are referred to as 'bones' to be respectfully buried. But by now the way has opened for depicting 'a world of physical corruption, bloated, dismembered, incapable of healthy and productive function' (1984:8). Then Chaucer seems to surface out of the 'deep water' once again as an old diseased man in whom 'life [seems] torture,' no longer a father but a husband to a young girl. Like in the Queens' scene, Shakespeare's technique identified here by M. Lief and N. Radel is to deny 'the influence of discord while simultaneously alerting the audience to its existence' (1987:414). The apparent wonder at the miracle of life displayed in the old man's begetting a child is immediately undermined by the awareness of the clash with the father-daughter pattern reiterated earlier in the play and an additional veiled hint at marital infidelity. The frame of reference is pushed even more out of focus and the motif appears more and more distorted.

The initial praise bestowed on the author of the source material is thus marred with the possibility of not grasping the imposed order, as well as the subversiveness of passions projected onto his work, the plights that were made manifest in the cases of Emilia and the Jailer's Daughter. What is more, the author himself becomes increasingly repulsive. The nature of the resulting tension between the authority of the source and the successful elaboration of the story can be best summarized by evoking once again Tom Stoppard's play, where one of the characters says:

> I had an actor once who was condemned to hang for stealing a sheep [...] so I got permission to have him hanged in the middle of the play – had to change the plot a bit but I thought it would be effective, you know – and you wouldn't believe it, he just *wasn't* convincing! It was impossible to suspend one's disbelief [...] he did nothing but cry all the time – right out of character – just stood there and cried... Never again. (1968:62)

In other words, the reconstruction of a literary work is an act in which it has to become a 'Robin Hood fable,' even if feared so much by Shakespeare's Chaucer in the Prologue to *The Two Noble Kinsmen.* It is better to concentrate only on the tale, to 'suspend one's disbelief,' and let the real-life characters such as authors crying for their 'famed works' just 'fail to reappear' as it happens in Shakespeare's Epilogue, after the poet's tortured pilgrimage through the play (1997:138; 1968:62). Viewed from this perspective, the implied audience of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* Epilogue will become a Stoppardian crowd that does not offer any applause ('But no one gets up after *death* – there is no applause – there is only silence and some second-hand clothes' (1968:90)). That is because the play appears to be devoted less to making the spectators realize any specific point than to reflecting on its own limitations and exhibiting the dissemination of meaning in the characters of Emilia, the Jailer's Daughter and Chaucer, who are inevitably 'slipping off the map' of a successful re-creation because '[their] movement is contained within a larger one that carries [them] along as inexorably as the wind and the current:' the ebbs and flows of the seeming authority of the source material (79; 90).

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Ewa Meducka

The Absurdities of War in William Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida*

> The war is pointless, but a pointless war, too, has to be won.
> (Kott, 1967: 64)

If the matter of Troy still remains a hallowed ground for the 'collective conscious' shared by the people of the Western world, it must seem striking that, as Harold Bloom argues, we have no evidence of *Troilus and Cressida* (Shakespeare's only play dealing with the subject) ever being performed before the twentieth century (1998: 344). Bloom subscribes to the views of Anne Barton, who claims in *The Riverside Shakespeare* that this play's lack of stage history continued from its putative first staging until 1898 (1974: 443). The alternative opinion, presented by Peter Holland in his article 'Shakespeare in the twentieth century theatre' is that apart from a few performances of Dryden's adaptation between 1679 and 1734, the play remained outside Shakespeare's theatrical canon until 1907 (2001: 202). Apart from the problems of the hazy stage history of *Troilus and Cressida*, we have to deal with the rumours of the play's quick suppression due to its biting literary and political satire[1], and with its subsequent life of a 'read' play. In fact, the textual level of the play poses a serious challenge to the director: the text is Shakespeare's third longest, its vocabulary and syntax so strenuous at times that the question of the distribution of certain lines remains controversial even today.

Even more difficult is the message of *Troilus and Cressida*; this amalgam of tragedy, mockery and absurd might be impossible to assimilate by a pre-Beckett audience. Indeed, even though the play was initially intended as a 'sneering political pamphlet' (Kott, 1967: 63) on the British-Spanish war, some of its long dormant elements manifested their alarming applicability to the twentieth century condition. And even though one should not feel tempted to analyse this play as seminal to the tradi-

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[1] Harold Bloom speculates that the play's Achilles could have been modelled upon the fallen Earl of Essex (1998: 327), whereas Jan Kott reads *Troilus* as a parable of the British-Spanish conflict (1967: 63).

tion which issued the theatre of the absurd - with the play long unappreciated, this would be a striking example of backward analysis – it must be admitted that some similarities can be observed between *Troilus and Cressida* and the post-war twentieth century drama, some of them making it a rewarding adaptation material. In this context, one should consider the characters' quest for any justification or meaning to their actions, the analysis of human behaviour in a situation of military conflict or prolonged stress, the characters' attempts to establish intimate sub-worlds within the play's microcosm. All in all, the focus of this brief paper will be to highlight these selected features of *Troilus and Cressida* which have a special appeal and immediacy for a modern, absurd-infected reader.

The place and time of the play's action is the siege of Troy at the point of turning into a nightmare. Both the spectator/reader and the characters move back and forth between the Greek camp and the city, protected – as it seems – only by the yet-unfulfilled conditions of its prophesied fall. Stifled by the atmosphere of a 'dull and long-continu'd truce' (Shakespeare, 1982: 141) and the never-changing balance of forces, the Greek soldiers grow ill-tempered: a few years after the siege started the hierarchy is falling apart; all 'degree' is lost; apathy combines with aggression. On either side of Troy's walls the purpose of the war is discussed, questioned and confirmed anew every day; the soldiers of both sides seem to doubt that one woman is worth such a slaughter; the 'white noise' in the background is a rumour that Helen's beauty is slowly passing away.

The personae of *Troilus and Cressida* are vividly depicted, yet lack deeper characterisation: they are more of symbolical portraits, ideograms, than personalities. Due to what Harold Bloom calls 'a certain lessening of character (…) we are invited, almost compelled, to care less for those figures' (1998: 331). (This technique makes the 'figures' of *Troilus* seem closer to the abstract, conventional figures populating the post-war European drama.) This conventionality reaches its peak in Act III, Scene 2, when three characters – Troilus, Cressida, and their go-between Pandarus - form a self-conscious tableau, openly determining their roles within the play:

> PANDARUS: If ever you prove false one to another, since I have taken such pains to bring you together, let all pitiful goers-between be called to the world's end after my name: call them all Pandars: let all constant men be Troiluses, all false women Cressids, and all brokers-between Pandars.
> TROILUS: Amen.
> CRESSIDA: Amen.
> PANDARUS: Amen. (…) (1982: 203)

This moment defines and seals the progress of the play: moreover, the characters – Cressida, Troilus, Pandarus - step out of the play-reality for a long moment to place themselves in a wider theatrical and cultural context.

For everyone involved, the predominantly symbolic value of the war they partake in – the war in the name of love and beauty - becomes, in fact, a real aggravation. The events that started the bloodshed (the capture of Hesione and the subsequent rape of Helen) are far in the past; some of the key figures (Hercules and Laomedon, Priam's father) are already dead. Helen and Paris themselves appear only episodically 'as mere nonentities' (Shakespeare, 1982: 40), emitting the aura of an absurdly strange, parallel reality (like Claudius and Gertrude in Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead*) as they try to prolong their 'long love's day' at any cost, and to convince the world and themselves that, having come so far, they cannot turn back.

Both parties seem to be locked in the conflict, only able to slaughter their enemies and mouth stale arguments whenever any change to the *status quo* is possible. Neither Paris nor Menelaus is willing to yield. Menelaus wants his wife back and says little; Paris eloquently refuses to return her to the Greeks, claiming the motives much purer than just his personal interest:

> Sir, I propose not merely to myself
> The pleasures such a beauty brings with it,
> But I would have the soil of her fair rape
> Wip'd off in honourable keeping her.
> What treason were it to the ransack'd queen,
> Disgrace to your great worths, and shame to me,
> Now to deliver her possession up
> On terms of base compulsion! (1982: 166)

It cannot be denied that Paris is still strongly attracted to Helen, and acts under her influence. Still, Helen's graces seem to extend further than her captor, as Pandarus suggests that the queen might have taken a lover: 'My niece is horribly in love with a thing you have, sweet queen' (1982: 188). For Helen, getting new lovers and bragging about her hold on Paris become strategies for survival: she has her beauty, and a reputation of a beauty, to maintain.

Still, one of the most memorable descriptions in the play presents Helen as a walking statue of death, when Diomedes converts each drop of her blood, each scruple of her weight (as if giving us gruesome counterparts of the mocking *milihelen*) into the lost lives of the Greek and Trojan soldiers (1982: 227). Her body, immortalized by the epic, is here reduced to the reality of a putrid corpse. This reflects the attitudes of the soldiers themselves, who question the limits of madness, mercilessly stretched in the case of this prolonged war for beauty and love. This is also rounded up by Thersites in the play's most characteristic 'aphorism': 'All the argument is a whore and a cuckold: a good quarrel to draw emulations, and bleed to death upon' (1982: 173). The war is reduced, in a metaphorical sense, to a war for *nothing.*

Unable to find any justification for taking part in this ongoing bloodshed, apart from a mere sense of duty, the play's characters are depicted at the moment of resignation, or near-resignation, dropping their weapons. In the first line of the play Troilus significantly calls for a servant to take off his armour: 'Call here my varlet, I'll unarm again' (1982: 100). He then continues to proclaim his unreadiness for fight: his love for Cressida makes him weak - he has no spirit left in him (1982: 100).

By refusing to fulfil his duty as a soldier Troilus meets a conventional image of a lover, and thus defines his role in the play from its very onset: still, he is only one of the Trojan or Greek soldiers unfit for war. The play multiplies this image, showing us men disarming themselves, calling for disarmament, or plainly disarmed and unprepared for a fight. The Greek war-machine, Achilles, is sulking in his luxurious tent - one of the fragile private spaces in the play – partly out of boredom, partly out of his love for Priam's daughter Polyxena. This motif also surfaces in Act II, Scene 1, when Paris, somewhat embarrassed, admits: 'I would fain have armed today, but my Nell would not have it so' (1982: 190). Even Hector himself is killed when caught changing - in the battlefield - into a lavishly decorated armour. (1982: 297-298)

The boredom of the war camp – the same boredom which made Collatine describe his beloved wife to Tarquin – pushes the soldiers, especially the home-sick invaders, into alternating fits of anger and apathy, the latter described in terms of sleep or drowsiness. Unveiling his plans to Troilus, Hector pictures the situation in the Greek camp in the following words:

> I have a roisting challenge sent amongst
> The dull and factious nobles of the Greeks
> Will strike amazement to their drowsy spirits.
> I was advertis'd their great general slept,
> Whilst emulation in the army crept:
> This, I presume, will wake him. (1982: 169)

The lack of motivation and respect could have particularly serious consequences, as it is in the case of Achilles. 'Having his ear full of his airy fame' (1982: 133), the hero puts into jeopardy not only the course of the war, but also his good name. In fact, the etymology of the word 'acedia', a rough early modern equivalent of today's 'burnout syndrome', can be traced to Greek *akedía*, *akedeía:* 'carelessness', meaning neglect of one's faith, opinion, career and life standards. A term initially used to describe the so-called 'monks' malady' (a variety of depression caused by lack of stimuli in the monotonous monastic life, and a difficult test of faith and vocation), changed its meaning with time. The 1603 definition of acedia, provided by Cesare Ripa in his *Iconologia*, focuses on a general, moral interpretation (Ripa, 2002: 3-4). The symptoms of the early-modern acedia were, among others: general apathy (often caused by old age); lack of interest in one's own affairs and good name; stupor and neglect. Achilles is then rebuked by Ulisses, who reminds him of the transient nature of reputation, which must be repeatedly secured anew with continuous effort:

> Perseverance, dear my lord,
> Keeps honour bright: to have done is to hang
> Quite out of fashion, like a rusty mail
> In monumental mockery. (1982: 213)

Still, Achilles prefers to withdraw with his friend-lover Partoclus. Shutting the war behind the thin walls of his tent, the two men give their own rendition of the outside world in an absurd private performance, mocking the voices, gestures and manners of their peers and superiors. This illusion of intimacy, however, only lasts until the first clash with the reality.

Obviously, Achilles and Partoclus are not the only ones who seek the comfort of relationship with another person, and the closeness in a noisy world of ever-present politics and all-ruling war. The two parallel couples are Troilus and Cressida on the one hand, and (a little more successful) Paris and Helen on the other; it must be remembered, though, that all love in this play is either fleeting, or artificially fuelled, as it seems to be the case with Paris and Helen; the intimacy is only illusory, and all the walls are but a variation on the thin walls of Achilles' tent. It takes an army to protect Paris and Helen; it only takes one messenger to shatter the fragile happiness of Troilus and Cressida. And, perhaps, of all the aspects of the play which the modern audience might find especially appealing (such as questioning the ideas behind war, politics, virtue) it is this reflection on the impossibility, or near-possibility, of finding safety and affection in the world of deeply invasive politics, that is the most modern, and the most bitter.

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Łucja Kozubowska-Puławska

"The sea is wide and easie for to stray" – Fate and Providence in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*

Fated or chosen – in the end, the vista of future loneliness only allows a choice between two alternatives: either to despair in desolation, or to stake so high on the 'possibility' that one acquires the right to life in a transcendental co-inherence. But doesn't choosing the second call for the kind of faith which moves mountains?

(Hammarkjöld 1976:70)

Renaissance Protestantism, and especially the more radical Puritanism, was one of the factors stressing the importance of self-scrutiny and the individual's focus on inner spiritual life. This, in turn, resulted in the broadening of the private realm and also led to the appreciation of the domestic sphere of life. Edmund Spenser, whose Calvinist inclinations are frequently stressed by his biographers,[1] wrote an epic which reflects the changes in the vision of history by including the individual's perspective. In Book I of *The Faerie Queene* Spenser invokes Clio, asking her to 'lay that furious fit aside / till [he] of warres and bloudy Mars do sing' and 'to [his] tunes [her] second tenor rayse, / That [he] this man of God his godly armes may blaze (Spenser 1977:144)[2].' As he reveals in the letter to Sir Walter Ralegh, in the first twelve books he intends to focus on individual combat and private virtues[3]. Thus, though the poem is a national epic, structured around references to great national past, like the myth of Troy, and the praise of imperial future, it also emphasises the role of an individual

[1] For instance it is mentioned by E. De Selincourt in his 'Introduction' to *Spenser: Poetical Works*.

[2] Henceforward I will refer to A.C. Hamilton's edition of Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*.

[3] According to the Letter to Ralegh, Spenser intended to present the public virtues in Books XIII-XXIV.

character[4]. The question to be posed is what this newly individualised 'consciousness' made of the role they were to play in the world[5].

Each character in the poem tries to interpret their life in a way which would make it comprehensible. The heroes usually refer to an external force, like Fate or Destiny, as the cause of a particular event. Most often, fortune, arranged by Fate, is perceived as ill-disposed towards the heroes and consciously arranging their downfall. However, some characters are able to perceive a pattern that might indicate their predestination for eventual happiness, which they are obliged to pursue. In this way, Spenser might be presenting, on the one hand, the effects of original sin and, on the other hand, the possibility of providential care working through God's grace. The heroes are deliberately presented as characters in God's 'divine allegory.' The narrator, playing the role of a magician who knows the past and the future, often provides overt interpretations of the events, especially in the first five books[6], emphasising the sense of everything that happens. Apparently unrelated elements of the loosely construed narrative become meaningful components of a transcendental reality ordained by God. In such a world hope in God's providential care and justice becomes the only remedy against the doom woven by Fate.

The front page of Spenser's poem presents an emblematic picture entitled ANCHORA SPEI, which can be translated as 'the anchor of hope.' In the middle of the picture there is an anchor entwined with two leafy branches. It is crossed horizontally towards its upper end, which makes it look like a sword. The anchor is held from above by two hands emerging from the clouds. It seems that Spenser's frontispiece illustration derives from St Paul's *Letter to the Hebrews* (Hbr 6,19), where hope is compared to a strong and safe anchor of the soul. As the anchor helps to survive storms at sea, hope sustains the individual's life. According to the picture, hope represented by the anchor is supported from above by God's hands, which stand for providential care or grace. The leaves could denote the Christian concept of new life and rebirth of the believers.

Renaissance emblem books were highly popular as universally comprehensible representations of abstract truths. A number of such volumes was published in the period, comprising emblematic pictures followed by short descriptions explaining the

[4] Epic enters the private realm when Spenser uses similes comparing heroic actions to domestic occupations (1977: VII, vi, 48). Drawing on the tradition of the romance, the legends comprise individual quests, jostles and dilemmas, which emphasise the significance of the individual. Last but not least the allegory present in the poem promotes personal virtue.

[5] In the poem, though most of the characters are apparently one-dimensional allegories, there is also some psychological insight into their minds, gaining in significance towards the end.

[6] In book six the narrator withdraws and ceases to interpret the events.

motto. In case of frontispiece emblematic pictures, however, there were no descriptions, which could indicate that the content of the volume itself would provide a grand explication of the emblem. It is certainly so in the case of Spenser's poem. Indeed, *The Faerie Queene* deals with the subject of hope and Providence, and it very often compares the heroes to ships tossed on the ocean of life, another emblem connected with the sea imagery of the frontispiece. In George Wither's *A Collection of Emblems* emblem number thirty seven presents life as sea voyage. In the explication the author claims that 'Wee to the Sea, this World may well compare; / For ev'ry Man which liveth in the same, / Is as a Pilot to some Vessell there, / Of little size, or else of larger frame.' The Renaissance mind familiar with the encoded meanings of emblematic pictures[7] was sensitive to the meaning of images and would not dismiss the frontispiece as mere illustration, especially if the imagery was sustained in the poem.

Almost all the main characters in *The Faerie Queene* are at some point compared to a vessel. Red Cross Knight escapes from the House of Pride,

> As when a ship, that flies faire under saile,
> An hidden rocke escaped hath unwares,
> That lay in waite her wrack for to bewaile,
> The Marriner yet halfe amazed stares
> At perill past, and yet in doubt ne dares
> To joy at his foole-happie oversight (86)

Also the geography of Faeryland itself resembles the sea, especially when Una is described as if she were a ship,

> Long tossed with stormes, and bet with bitter wind
> High over hills and low adown the dale
> She wandred many a wood and measured many a vale (28)

Later on, the references to a journey through mountains and through plains also remind the reader of a sea voyage, with the ship tossed up and down by the waves. In this way other characters, like Arthur (343) or Mirabella (672), are included in the grand metaphor.

The motion of the vessel at sea resembles changes in fortune. Tossed by the waves, the ship moves up and down emphasising the recurrence of prosperity and poverty,

[7] *The Faerie Queene* has always been regarded as a poem of rich imagery, full of meticulous descriptions of nature and works of art, like sculptures or tapestries.

happiness and bad luck. Unhappiness is often ascribed to inevitable change in fortune as when the narrator claims that Una might be suffering due to 'fortunes freakes unkind (55).' Later on Una explains that Fortune is the reason why the knight who has failed should be spared (92), therefore implying that his failure was caused by forces external to himself. Next to the inevitable changes of Fortune, the metaphor of the sea provides the image of contingency. Life is presented as a dangerous journey, the storms denoting all the difficulties that might happen to an individual by chance. What is important here is the fact that the weather at sea is particularly difficult to predict and unexpected storms are often fatal. Prince Arthur asserts even that it is difficult to 'devise the cause of heavenly destiny, which rules man's ways and thoughts (119),' since 'bliss may not abide in state of mortal man (116).' Thus history and life, understood as a succession of events in time, appear to be both uncontrollable and unpredictable. Such perception excludes any possibility of hope, except a fool's hope.

Fortune is preordained by 'Mighty causes wrought in heaven above' which govern the lives of men. Sometimes the forces behind the events are 'blind' like Cupid, the god of love. Sometimes, however, Fate is seen as working consciously. The characters in the poem tend to personalise the forces governing the events, and fortune is often described as actively or at least consciously arranged by Fate, which is not only harmful but even deliberately malicious. For instance, the principle governing the events is described by Duessa as 'cruel,' 'avenging' (43), 'angry' and 'false (49).' Both negative and positive characters accuse Fortune of its cruelty or blame it for their unhappiness[8]. In Canto 7, Book I, when retelling her story to Arthur, Una refers to the heavens as favourable and describes herself as the 'laughing stock of fortunes mockeries (105).' Fortune is not only cruel, but also capable of irony. At another point she argues that Fortune is her enemy:

> Fie on fortune, my avowed foe,
> Whose wrathfull wreakes them selves do now alay (116)

The evil, cruel Fate, being the cause of human suffering and death, can be related to original sin, which triggered unhappiness and mortality and subjected human beings to sin. Therefore, the characters might be complaining about their own corrupt nature, deferring responsibility for their own actions. Such interpretation complies with the allegorical aspect of the poem, which is a continuous reminder of the doctrine of the Fall. For example, Guyon in his unhappy fight with Ortgoglio is said to

[8] The allegorical aspect of the poem makes the distinction between positive and negative characters possible, although one has to bear in mind that the characters in *The Faerie Queene* are not only allegories but also epic heroes or romance heroes.

be overcome by pride, which is described by Una as a result of evil influence of the stars. Thus his pride is linked rather to the fate of corrupt mankind than to individual weakness. In the face of difficulty all heroes are tempted to disclaim any responsibility for the situation in which they find themselves.

However, some characters admit that Fortune can be 'just' even if it is simply governed by the rhythmical succession of good and evil turns. Una develops her notion of Fortune, claiming that it is capable of just retribution,

> And for these wrongs shall treble penaunce pay
> Of treble good: good growes of evil's priefe. (116)

She seems to be one of those characters in the poem who are able to perceive a broader picture of reality. She sees both evil and good, and deems the proportions just. At one point she even asserts heavenly objectivity, 'Be judge you heavens that all things right esteem (107).'[9] She seems to have great hope in what she says as she is able to yield 'herself to the extremity of time (88).' Britomart's belief enables her to perceive reality as God's message that provides her with certain tokens of hope. At the temple of Isis, she notices a slight nod of the wand held by the idol, which she interprets as a token of providential care and good Fortune in the future (574). Thus, on the one hand, the heroes are subject to cruel Fate but, on the other hand, in some cases at least, they believe in Providence, which governs blind Fate. It seems that characters who perceive Providential justice beyond apparent contingency of fortune have the ANCHORA SPEI of the frontispiece.

The metaphor of the vessel reflects not only the forces arranging human life but also the individual's pursuit of salvation. The heroes are on quest. The unstable position of being on the way reflects life subject to mutability, whereas the stable goal of a port could refer to the inertia of eternal bliss. In Canto 1, Book II, the narrator first refers to the closure of the Legend of Holiness comparing Una to a 'weather-beaten ship arriv'd on happie shore' and then commences the action of the next book with the image of Guyon as a barke,

> God guide thee, Guyon, well to end thy warke,
> And to the wished haven bring thy weary barke. (76)

[9] She might be one of those characters who experience God's grace, which allows them to overcome their sinful nature. In contrast, Duessa either deliberately manipulates the truth or is not capable of seeing goodness in life. Thus she might be wilfully rejecting God's grace or might not be offered it at all. The difference in opinion might be due to radically different perspectives.

The haven has the general associations with rest, safety and peace, whereas the 'warke' is the toilsome and dangerous voyage. Guyon's goal is to be trained in virtue and to overcome Acrasia, the temptress. In his pursuit of perfection, he follows the example of the Red Cross Knight, who, as Palmer claims, is already registered among the saints. Therefore, it can safely be assumed that the wished haven is sainthood and salvation. Even the word-play between 'haven' and 'heaven' suggests a connection. Therefore, the quest is set in a Christian context and haven denotes not only the fulfilment of the hero's quest, but also salvation, which are most conspicuously interrelated in Book I (Bulger 1993:10)[10].

As the voyage is not safe from storms, so life is not devoid of dangers. The winds, denoting forces beyond human control, may cast the ship in whatever direction or may shutter it to pieces at the least expected moment,

> Fortune, the foe of famous chevisaunce
> Seldome (said Guyon) yields to vertue aide,
> But in her way throwes mischiefe and mischaunce,
> Whereby her course is stopped and passage staid. (248)

Nevertheless, the ship may not abandon its course if it is to be preserved. Likewise, Guyon cannot resign his quest. Britomart too is 'tossed long' without compass or card but she intends to reach the desired 'haven of relief (337).' She is not wandering off her course, but her course is out of necessity wandering itself, since she does not know where she will find Arthegal. In a sense, the very nature of her quest demands trust in an external force guiding the events, without which the chance for the meeting of two 'wandering'[11] characters would have been extremely small. Although Britomart does not know exactly where she is going, she feels compelled to go forward. When Arthur and Timias divert to rescue Florimell, she 'forward fares.' In the poem there is a continual emphasis put on the necessity of progress, whereas wandering around or going astray from the once appointed course most often leads to unhappiness, like the 'perillous wandring ways' by the muddy shore of the river Nile (78).

In light of the above, Phaedria's boat, as well as her 'wandring (179)' island, suggests a deliberate extension of the metaphor of human life as a ship. Phaedria's 'barke' floats by itself, which corresponds with the idea of the Lake of Idleness. Phaedria transgresses the commandment to strive forward through toil and danger, towards

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[10] Thomas Francis Bulger argues that Book I presents sacred history, in contrast to the other books.

[11] Artegall is likewise described as 'wandering.'

the heavenly haven. She lets herself be driven by the waters, instead of being active. Admittedly, her bark listens to her silent commands (217). But in spite of this, she remains idle, not by refusing to take advantage of her free will but by her indulgence in wandering around without any 'useful' aim. Bearing in mind the Protestant emphasis on active life, Phaedria, as the embodiment of idleness, could be associated with the 'idle' monks[12] and versifiers. She uses the power of pleasant and melodious speech to lure knights into idleness on her peaceful island.[13] By means of her charms, she tries to divert others from their quests. Moreover, Phaedria excuses herself through the fact that her 'barke' is subject to the whims of weather and therefore she is not responsible for her actions,

> Faire Sir (quoth she) be not displeased at all;
> Who fares on sea, may not commaund his way,
> Ne wind and weather at his pleasure call:
> The sea is wide and easie for to stray. (218)

However, it is explicitly stressed in the poem that the 'idle' lake is always calm. Thus, she diminishes the role of free will and puts the blame for inaction and sin on external events. Her invalid justification reflects a common misinterpretation of the reformers' teaching. Of course, she is not the only character in the poem who blames the heavens for her own actions but her plea, which is evidently a lie, makes other such claims even more apparently less reliable. By analogy, Duessa's accusations of 'cruel fate' prove to be ill grounded in truth.[14] The standing lake with sluggish waters is juxtaposed to the river by which Guyon and Palmer follow the quest. The river has a direction and a strong current. The moral message implied in this image seems to be that each individual can either abide on the peaceful waters of the lake or set off by the river or through the stormy sea in order to fulfil his or her quest.

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[12] In *Historia raju: Ogród rozkoszy* Jean Delumeau argues that as Phaedria refers to the Bible for a justification of idleness, she could be associated with the idea of monastic life, which was rejected by Reformers, who emphasised the need to be active. Moreover, in the Renaissance monasteries were famous for the gardens were the monks could devote themselves to *vita contemplativa*.

[13] Phaedria's island resembles *otium*, a peaceful countryside garden, where people liked to spend time on meditation. In the 16th century, the countryside became a place of retreat for the mind. As such it was praised by Erasmus in '*Convivium Religiosum*' in 1522. For a full reference on the significance of gardens in the 16th century see Delumeau, *Historia raju*...

[14] As we shall argue further on, the rejection of blame may be due to malice, despair or the sheer impossibility of perceiving the truth because of individual limitations.

Going forward does not necessarily imply struggle. Sometimes it is enough to take advantage of the circumstances, like the wind or the current, or to choose a good guide,

> As Pilot well expert in perilous wave,
> That to a stedfast starre his course hath bent,
> When foggy mists, or cloudy tempests have,
> The faithful light of that faire lampe yblent,
> And cover'd heaven with hideous dreriment
> Upon his card and compass firmes his eye,
> The maisters of his long experiment,
> And to them does the steddy helme apply,
> Bidding his winged vessell fairly forward fly (233)

Guyon's guide, the Palmer, is a 'stedfast starre,' which diminishes the possibility of wandering off one's course. On the one hand, the image of the star suggests astrological fate ordained by the heavens and, on the other hand, it symbolizes the heaven and God's providential care. Destiny is said to be fulfilled irrespective of the fact whether the hero tries to use or overcome existing circumstances but Providence is claimed to take into account all decisions. Thus Fate excludes human endeavour, but Providence includes the most insignificant events. The Palmer[15] seems to present God's sustaining grace in the allegorical sense or the working of Providence on the narrative plane, which, next to the evil influence of the stars representing corrupt nature and evil Fate, symbolizes the forces governing history and an individual's life. The period when Guyon is separated from his faithful companion would then denote the time when Providence gives him the opportunity to test his own reason in choosing the right path and his own will in keeping to the once appointed route.

The metaphor of a ship does not wholly comply with the notion of determinism. It seems that man is not without power or free will, just as the ship has got the rudder and the sails to choose and then pursue the right direction. He or she aims at

[15] Because he controls emotions, Palmer could be seen as the faculty of reason. However, the above quotation seems to point rather to the 'card and compass' as the faculty of human reason. Robert Matz in *Defending Literature*... p. 108 presents an interesting variation in claiming that the Palmer could represent a humanist tutor or councelor-poet of the aristocratic patrons represented by Sir Guyon.

achieving salvation and eternal rest in heaven’s haven. It seems that in Faeryland it is essential to do everything one can and to trust Providence and hope for the best. The poem shows the necessity to act despite fear and danger. Although the chance of success is small, one should trust Providence and at least try to succeed. George Wither’s emblem number 13, which again incorporates the metaphor of a ship representing the individual, presents a sailor with an oar. Although the man uses his own strength to go forward, he is helped by an angelic figure in the sky, which blows air onto the sails. According to the explication, success does not depend on outward help, like oars or sails, as some succeed without good equipment. Neither does success depend on endeavour, as some are ‘cast away’ by storms despite their hard work. To conclude, one’s cause needs to be just and one should use the means one has, but even if these be lost one should ‘foster no mistrust; / But fearlessly, to God, [one’s] course commit: / For, Hee, to Faithfull Hearts, and Honest Mindes / Turnes Losse to Gaine; and Stormes, to pros’prous Windes.’ The emblem illustrates the need to take action and strive to realise the appointed course, trusting Providence to take care of events beyond human control,

> Rather let try extremities of chaunce
> Then enterprised prayse for dread to disadvaunce (405)

Thus Edmund Spenser, through the focus on the private realm, uses all the potential of the genres to present the individual struggle for salvation. Except the chosen ones, all characters in the poem are doomed to eternal death due to original sin. Those who are destined for salvation believe in Providential guidance and justice. Hope seems here not so much a virtue as necessity which keeps the vessel safe. Only firm belief and never failing hope may assure that the character reaches the port. It seems that Spenser deliberately uses the context of Calvinist teaching, though it must be remembered that especially the last book of *The Faerie Queene* successfully challenges any straightforward assumptions.

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Izabella Zatorska

De Madame de La Fayette à Marivaux, une transition précieuse guère tragique

Au croisement de la tradition et du renouveau esthétique, Marivaux (1688-1763) apparaît comme celui qui réconcilie les contraires pour les dépasser – sur le plan idéologique et esthétique – dans une synthèse composite : son originalité viendrait du « pluralisme de sa vision du monde » - à la fois aristocratique, mondaine et bourgeoise – travaillé par « sa volonté de compromis » (Bonhôte 1973 : 120). Sa « conscience critique » *(ibid.*) ne l'empêche pas de rechercher « une nouvelle positivité de l'amour », jusqu'à « une libération de la subjectivité amoureuse » (Hartmann 1998 : 49), fondée sur la confiance dans la capacité que l'homme aurait en lui-même pour se reconstruire après la défaite la plus cuisante. Même si cette « positivité » ne se manifeste pas partout avec la même évidence, même si les pièces tardives (*La Dispute*, 1744, ou *Les Acteurs de bonne foi*, 1757) en font voir les limites. L'ambiguïté de Marivaux, dont ses contemporains mêmes se plaignaient sur le plan esthétique, l'appelant *obscurité*, ne viendrait-elle pas encore de son inspiration par la réflexion morale du XVIIe siècle et par l'écriture d'analyse élaborée par les « post-précieux » - La Rochefoucauld, La Fontaine et Madame de La Fayette ? La « dette » de Marivaux envers cette dernière va retenir ici notre attention. Une relecture de *La Princesse de Clèves* nous a invitée à étudier le cheminement du dramaturge sur deux plans, esthétique et idéologique. Le premier regarde l'extinction du tragique dans la littérature du XVIIIe siècle, dont pourtant certaines conditions semblent réunies tout comme dans le récit de la romancière du Grand Siècle. Mais, comme le remarquait George Steiner dans sa *Mort de la Tragédie* (1961 ; Haac 1995 : 1), au siècle des lumières la fatalité s'éclipse au profit d'une explication psycho-physique, en accord avec la tendance « naturaliste » dominante qui mise sur un déterminisme immanent. La retraite de la métaphysique fait de l'amour « galant » et de son analyse, chez Marivaux encore plus que chez Madame de Lafayette, le « révélateur de la condition humaine » (Mesnard 1993 : 618). Tant soit peu exalté, l'Avant-propos de la monographie de Pierre Hartmann le réaffirme dans sa conclusion (1998 : 14) :

> « C'est en effet au siècle des Lumières, une fois levée l'hypothèque de leur destination religieuse, que se renouent de la manière la plus forte les réflexions sur le destin subjectif des individus et l'histoire objective des sociétés. [...] Pour tous ces auteurs [les romanciers du XVIIIe siècle français - IZ], la relation amoureuse est un aspect déterminant du commerce humain, et un moment essentiel dans la constitution d'une authentique *communauté humaine*. C'est à dire dans le projet qui résume et justifie tout l'effort des Lumières. Que la révolution de la subjectivité amoureuse puisse nourrir la réflexion politique et préluder à un projet de réappropriation du monde, c'est là le sens le plus élevé que l'on puisse donner aux *lumières de l'amour.* »

Un autre repère esthétique à établir pour les deux auteurs nous a été suggéré par l'article de Laurent Thirouin. La modalisation du savoir dans la communication galante, de la Cour des Valois aux salons parisiens mêlant les bourgeois et les aristocrates, pourrait être décrite selon la dramaturgie du « secret », moyen révélateur du relief des relations sociales. La double contrainte vécue dans cette Cour, celle de cacher et de révéler à la fois ses sentiments, rappelle de loin celle énoncée par le dramaturge pour le dialogue, appelé depuis 'marivaudage', dans l'Avertissement aux *Serments indiscrets* (1996 I : 966) :

> « Liés tous deux par la convention de ne point s'épouser, [Lucile et Damis] comment feront-ils pour cacher leur amour ? Comment feront-ils pour se l'apprendre ? car ces deux choses-là vont se trouver dans tout ce qu'ils diront. »

Puisque s'en tenir à l'un des deux signifie soit le « paroxysme de la volonté », symptôme d'une maîtrise dangeureuse si elle se met au service de la dissimulation hostile (voir Mme de Tournon), soit la dégradation de l'amour même, ce qui fait craindre au duc de Nemours « de dénaturer ses sentiments [...] en les témoignant à la femme qui en est l'objet » (Thirouin 1993 : 659). L'esthétique et la morale voient, par le biais du 'secret', leur vocation converger. Sauf que Marivaux, avec son langage à double entente – et moyennant le double registre non seulement linguistique mais aussi dramatique – a trouvé un équivalent de la structure du secret à la fois plus restreint, car limité aux couples protagonistes (maîtres plus souvent que valets), et plus démocratique, puisqu'élargi quand même aux domestiques, au prix d'un traitement burlesque, donc introduisant un mélange de tons exclus par l'esthétique du classicisme à laquelle s'en tient le premier roman d'analyse.

La possibilité d'un tel mélange interdit l'approche tragique de l'univers marivaudien, tout en y préservant le pathétique, dans le sens d'une élevation de ton et l'augmentation de la tension dramatique passagères. Nombre de procédés connus de son théâtre se trouvent déjà dans *La Princesse de Clèves*, un demi-siècle avant. La mise en relief du caractère extraordinaire des protagonistes par le narrateur (1973 :132 et 136 pour le duc de Nemours, 136-137 pour l'héroïne, p. 153 pour les deux) a son pendant dans la sélection opérée pour les couples des deux *Surprises de l'amour* et du *Jeu de l'amour et du hasard*, 1730 : tantôt les circonstances (déception amoureuse dans la « surprise italienne », 1722, et la mort réelle ou symbolique - prise de voile d'une personne proche - dans la « surprise française », 1727), tantôt le choix des pères qui converge avec les dispositions des enfants (*Le Jeu*, *Le Préjugé vaincu*, 1746), opèrent une présélection renforcée en qualité par le déroulement de l'action qui fait voir toute la valeur des partenaires à leurs propres yeux d'abord (introspection mise en scène), à ceux du spectateur ensuite, non sans faire sourire ce dernier sur tous les scrupules des protagonistes. Pour les deux auteurs, la conscience que les protagonistes ont de leur valeur a un rôle capital ; Mme de Clèves le déclare dans son entretien avec le mari (1973 : 259). Mais nous sommes loin des suites fatales qu'a connues le malheureux couple, pour qui la grandeur appelait le tragique ; le couple marivaudien, même mal assorti, a le loisir de s'en sortir allègrement, comme dans *La Double Inconstance* (parodie de *La Princesse de Clèves* ? ainsi *Arlequin poli par l'amour* aurait-il été celle de *Phèdre* ; Haac 1995 : 1). Et souvent des tiers amis arrangent tout pour garantir un dénouement heureux.

S'il y avait une fatalité, les amoureux eux-mêmes en seraient créateurs et porteurs, de cette fatalité d'une parole arrachée dans un accord initial, comme dans les deux *Surprises* et surtout dans *Les Serments indiscrets* (1732) ; un tiers doit alors intervenir (un domestique ou un parent) pour briser le mutisme dans lequel les amoureux s'enferment, substituer un geste à la parole. Car il y a toujours une issue à découvrir, toujours une ouverture à espérer. Ce ne sont pas les protagonistes qui en sont conscients mais ceux qui surveillent leurs manèges, substituts providentiels qui empêchent toute fatalité de s'installer.

Un autre trait de la prédestination bienheureuse, la surprise : chez Marivaux, elle ne sera jamais longtemps univoque, comme le fut celle, menant au malheureux mariage, de M. de Clèves devant Mlle de Chartres (138). Elle se devra toujours parallèle, à l'instar de celle entre M. de Nemours et Mme de Clèves (153-154), à cela près que les nouveaux connus seront libres, en tout cas libres à réélire leur partenaire. Les témoins d'une telle surprise, suivie d'un embarras, comme celle de la Princesse devant la reine Dauphine (154), seront toujours bienvenus, intermédiaires entre les protagonistes et le public, tels M. Orgon et son fils Mario, frère de Silvia, dans *Le Jeu de l'amour*...

Les monologues dramatiques offrent l'occasion d'introspection, Silvia aura le privilège accordé à la Princesse (1973 : 169), sauf que son soliloque sera provoqué par Lisette qui, forte de paraître en tenue de sa maîtresse, redoute d'autant moins de la supposer amoureuse d'un valet que celui-ci, en vérité le prudent Dorante, ne voit dans Silvia que sa propre servante. Le trouble jeu de conditions renversées offusque la clarté de l'analyse centrée sur la dignité de la personne de Silvia. Dans le cas de la princesse cette analyse est amenée par la présence de sa mère, Mme de Chartres : c'est son observation qui déclenche l'inquiétude de la jeune femme. Le fragment révèle en même temps que les diverses modalités selon lesquelles on peut prendre – ou refuser de prendre – la connaissance, décrites par L. Thirouin comme « stratégie du 'secret' », regardent au fait la conscience de soi de l'individu et, sur ce fond, le respect de soi que peut autoriser la relation plus ou moins ordonnée, rationnelle, envers ses affections. Selon l'éthique néostoïcienne, la volonté devrait présider au choix ; de cette éthique, la morale galante tire des exceptions temporaires pour l'amour, qui deviendrait une vertu en soi, n'était sa nature passionnelle, donc vicieuse, qui guette celui qui s'y abandonne sans précaution. Or, c'est en conjurant l'aspect passionnel de l'amour avec l'aspiration rationaliste de l'homme, réduite souvent au bon sens, c'est en procurant au désir une satisfaction graduée selon le double registre, que Marivaux parvient à neutraliser ce double danger, pour le devoir comme, pour le repos, écarté par Mme de Clèves au prix de la retraite, et que sa consécration sociale par le mariage, selon la topique de la comédie, finit par garantir de toute instabilité grave.

Les deux univers se construisent selon l'opposition entre l'être et le paraître, le leitmotive de la vie à la Cour – selon l'avertissement donnée par la mère à Mlle de Chartres (1973 : 157) – comme de la vie grand-bourgeoise (voir l'exposition du *Jeu*, où sont décrits les masques maritaux qui font peur à Silvia). Partout la clairvoyance est réservée aux amoureux : MM. De Guise et de Nemours sont les seuls à la Cour à se deviner aimer la même personne (163 et 198) ; mais cette clairvoyance est refusée au mari mal-aimé, il faut le fatal aveu de son épouse pour lui ouvrir les yeux (240), encore ignore-t-il le nom du rival. Des situations équivoques avec des propos à double entente, comme ceux entre M. de Nemours et Mme de Clèves, médiatisés par Mme la dauphine, préludent au marivaudage, la gaieté insouciante en moins (197) :

> « - Je lui disais, Madame, répondit-il [M. de Nemours], que l'on m'a prédit que je serais élevé à une si haute fortune que je n'oserais même y prétendre.
> « - Si l'on ne vous a fait que cette prédiction, repartit Mme la dauphine en souriant, et pensant à l'affaire d'Angleterre [on parlait du mariage de Nemours avec la reine Elisabeth, prévenue en sa faveur - IZ], je ne vous conseille pas de décrier l'astrologie, et vous pourriez trouver des raisons pour la soutenir.
> « Mme de Clèves comprit bien ce que voulait dire Mme la dauphine ; mais elle

> entendait bien aussi que la fortune dont M. de Nemours voulait parler, n'était pas d'être roi d'Angleterre.»

Le savoir à double piste, source d'un plaisir particulier, peut se concentrer dans un moment de prise de conscience à deux qui équivaut à un aveu anticipé (207) :

> « [...] Il connut sur son visage la pitié qu'elle avait de lui et il la regarda d'une sorte qui put lui faire juger combien il en était touché. »

Le plus troublant chez Mme de La Fayette semble ce regard miroir qui opère la double mise en abîme – ou une « analyse » à l'infini – de l'objet aimé, scène encore réécrite sur un mode badin, bien qu'engageant l'avenir des protagonistes, dans le premier tête à tête entre Silvia et Dorante (*Le Jeu* : I, 7) :

> « [Silvia] [...] Trêve de badinage, c'est un homme de condition qui m'est prédit pour époux, et je n'en rabattrai rien.
> « [Dorante] Parbleu, si j'étais tel, la prédiction me menacerait, j'aurais peur de la vérifier, je n'ai point de fois à l'astrologie, mais j'en ai beaucoup à ton visage. »

En fait, c'est surtout comme un travestissement de la scène chez la dauphine : la prédiction et la réalité sont dans une relation inversée, d'abord parce que l'initiative du jeu revient à Silvia, l'homme ne faisant que répondre à son invitation ; ensuite et surtout, parce que Dorante croit que Silvia demande au sort plus qu'elle n'en pourrait obtenir sans son intermédiaire à lui. Tandis que le duc, qui s'amuse à parler à double sens devant la dauphine, sait bien que Mme de Clèves saisit l'essentiel de cette déclaration voilée et comprend qu'il tient à elle plus qu'à la reine d'Angleterre.

Une éthique de la conscience de soi s'y ébauche : dire ses craintes, avouer ses inhibitions égale à les conjurer sinon à en triompher pour de bon, à écarter la menace d'un sous-entendu qui échappe à tout contrôle, au risque de se tourner inopinément contre le couple. Par souci de bienséance il faut le faire tout en feignant de ne pas le faire. Le marivaudage révèle ainsi son opportunité psychothérapeutique et héroïque à la fois : il permet aux protagonistes de s'affirmer, il les protège aussi contre l'effondrement dont leur passion ou le désir occulté aurait pu les faire périr, en entraînant les autres dans leur chute.

En revanche, le secours par le marivaudage ne va pas sans quelques aléas dus à l'amour-propre, le danger aussi éminent aux yeux du dramaturge qu'il le paraissat aux moralistes du XVIIe siècle, à commencer par Pascal dont Marivaux semble le lecteur particulièrement attentif dans *La Dispute* (1744). Car si le double manège, paradoxal, celui de cacher et de révéler son jeu à la fois, paraît déjà dans la lettre de Mme de Thémines (1973 : 211), elle est citée dans le roman sans référence - sinon celle, se révélant fausse piste, qui l'attribuait à la mystérieuse maîtresse du duc de Nemours – et représente pour Mme de Clèves (à qui la Dauphine, elle même sensible au charme de M. de Nemours, l'a remise) un instrument de torture à cause de son amour-propre outragé: la lecture lui fait croire à ce que le duc aime ailleurs, ce qui ne manque pas d'exciter sa jalousie à elle et, par cette jalousie inopportune, lui renvoie le signal infaillible d'être elle-même trop impliquée dans l'amour pour cet homme. Etant à l'origine d'une double humiliation pour l'héroïne, puisque la jalousie constitue le pivot de sa réflexion, la lettre – qu'on finit par attribuer à la maîtresse du vidame de Chartres, ami du duc de Nemours – constitue un véritable remous dans la narration, aspirant à la surface du moi tous ses monstres familiers.

La progression du récit par des scènes d'analyse – le discours indirect libre qui associe la troisième personne à un point de vue particulier – nous instruit autant de la part de l'implicite dans les décisions prises par les personnages que le font les *a parte* des protagonistes marivaudiens et les commentaires des parents et serviteurs, ces tiers aussi bienveillants que lucides, jusque dans les épreuves auxquelles ils se plaisent à exposer leurs enfants ou amis.

L'épreuve de Mme de Clèves, fondée dans la confiance que son mari lui accorde, fort de ses paradoxes, nous éloigne des épreuves marivaudiennes, car nous la savons a priori stérile (1973 : 248-249):

> « De l'humeur dont vous êtes, en vous laissant votre liberté, je vous donne des bornes plus étroites que je ne pourrais vous en prescrire .»

Or, même la plus cruelle et prolongée, l'épreuve de la pièce éponyme (*L'Epreuve*, 1740) préméditée par un prétendant pour éprouver si sa bien-aimée l'aime pour lui-même ou pour son argent, ne doit viser que l'épanouissement de l'héroïne, donc le bonheur du couple ; de même le (double) travestissement du *Jeu de l'amour et du hasard* doit de cette manière paradoxale dévoiler la vérité de l'autre pour se réjouir, en cas de résultat positif, de l'union bien assortie. L'aveu final, qui permet de résoudre le dit et le non-dit dans l'épiphanie de l'amour partagé, libérant le désir des entraves sociales tout en lui permettant de les respecter (la transgression que les jeunes redoutaient n'était qu'un jeu), semble loin du pardon accordé à l'avance par Mme de Clèves à M. de Nemours en tant qu'amant méritoire (1973 :303) : l'aveu réel d'un secret apparent – « Je ne vous apprends, lui répondit-elle, en souriant, que ce que vous ne saviez déjà que trop » - devient chez Marivaux l'aveu apparent d'un secret réel, celui de l'être, toujours en train de se refaire ; ce que la convention du contrat de mariage à signer au dénouement cherche à voiler. La plupart des amoureuses et des amoureux s'obstinent à biaiser sur les mots même dans leur déclaration finale. Certes, la princesse elle aussi enveloppe son réciproque d'une longue périphrase, elle est pourtant plus proche de la verbalisation complète que les gestes ou les interjections des amants marivaudiens (« Levez-vous, Monsieur Lélio », dit la Comtesse ; « Que d'amour ! » s'exclame Silvia devant Dorante ; et elle lui fait juger de ses sentiments pour lui par la délicatessse avec laquelle elle avait agi à son égard... l'ayant exposé à une épreuve de plus, celle de la jalousie à cause de Mario, en réalité son frère à elle). La conscience de partager le même sentiment, de partir des mêmes prémisses pour faire ses jeux, peut constituer un lien mais seulement lorsqu'il est permis d'en concevoir un.

Dans l'univers de la princesse de Clèves la lucidité sur l'amour empêche d'espérer un bonheur sur cette voie. La fatalité ménage une interdiction inébranlable car intérieure, elle referme toute issue. Serait-ce grâce à l'ambiguïté – auxiliaire de l'illusion et de l'artifice comique – que les protagonistes de Marivaux peuvent croire à leur bonheur avec plus de confiance que les masques qui hantent, sous un « Clair de lune », *Les Fêtes galantes* de Verlaine ? Ce qui les unit, les protagonistes des deux siècles, c'est la course à la lucidité, assumée avec toutes ses conséquences par le personnage tragique. Tandis que, chez Marivaux, même s'il arrive à certains de faire violence aux autres - le plus souvent ce sont les humbles ou les victimes qui prennent leur revanche - « faire souffrir » en faisant connaître n'a qu'une connotation salutaire, depuis le badinage amoureux instauré dans la première comédie (*Arlequin poli par l'amour*, 1720) jusqu'au dénouement sarcastique de *La Fausse Suivante* (1724) et la rééducation forcée dans *L'Ile des esclaves* (1725) ou *L'Ile de la Raison* (1727).

Seul son roman dit de maturité, *La Vie de Marianne*, nous rapprocherait de l'univers de la princesse, toujours dans une version dégradée. Exhibitionnisme avant la lettre ? Marianne écrit à la première personne, démarche que vont imiter de nombreuses jeunes filles auteurs de faux mémoires, dans les traces de non moins véhémentes épistolographes. Mais si pour l'art épistolaire féminins les modèles, fictifs et authentiques, abondent au XVIIe siècle, les (faux) mémoires au féminin y sont rares. L'ouverture structurale du texte comme celle psychologique de Marianne la narratrice nous prive d'emblée de toute référence à la tension tragique. Si *La Princesse de Clèves* représente un roman d'analyse à construction fermée, *La Vie de Marianne* en est un à construction ouverte. Le 'secret' de la jeune fille est en train de nous être révélé par elle-même devenue femme mûre. Toute l'attention devrait donc se porter sur ses manèges envers les autres, ses bienfaiteurs plus ou moins désintéressés, pour entamer l'examen de sa prétendue innocence à elle. La conscience de ses actes devient alors l'indice de la responsabilité assumée. Nous observons alors chez Marianne un procédé analogue à celui qui est à l'oeuvre dans la conversation amoureuse, sauf qu'ici c'est la conscience d'une même personne qui se dérobe à elle-même, comme le faisait celle de Silvia dans le solique du *Jeu*, outragée par l'indiscrétion de Lisette. Marianne adulte traque Marianne adolescente non pour lui faire tenir compte de ses manèges, mais plutôt pour se révéler à elle-même la vérité sur ses intentions ; se la révéler pour la cacher aussitôt, presque dans le même mouvement, crainte de ne pouvoir en soutenir la vue et de déchoir de la dignité du personnage très romanesque qu'elle avait joué devant les autres comme elle continue de le jouer, tant soit peu plus ironique et distante, devant l'amie sa destinatrice. Par exemple, quand il lui arrive de quitter le quartier où elle avait fait connaissance avec Valville, Marianne ne peut s'empêcher de soupirer (1949 : 205) :

> « Et ce quartier dont je m'éloignais, le comptez-vous pour rien ? Il me mettait dans le voisinage de Valville, de ce Valville que j'avais dit que je ne verrais plus, il est vrai ; mais il était bien rigoureux de se trouver pris au mot : je m'étais promis de ne plus le voir, et non pas de ne le pouvoir plus, ce qui est bien autrement sérieux ; et le coeur ne se mène pas avec cette rudesse-là : ce qui l'aide à être ferme, dans un cas comme le mien, c'est la liberté d'être faible ; et cette liberté, je la perdais par mon changement d'état, et j'en soupirais ; mon courage en était abattu. »

Elle a pourtant donné des marques de volonté et de constance. Un pas de plus sur le chemin des modalités du savoir, et de la connaissance de soi, Marianne marque le triomphe de l'équivoque ambiante et innocentée sur la lucidité univoque de son antécédent romanesque.*

Si les procédés du dramaturge semblent plus pertinents pour soutenir le dialogue avec l'antécédent du Grand Siècle, cela vient sans doute de l'écriture dramatique dont *La Princesse* peut se prévaloir : lettre (209) et portrait (203) interceptés, scènes charnières (aveux d'amour, adieux) et conversations à double fonds, la densité de l'action - en dépit des rétrospections qui, doubles et échos de l'acion principale, n'en font qu'augmenter la tension - tout coopère dans le roman à le rapprocher d'une tragédie comme *Phèdre* dont il est quasi contemporain (1677 et 1678, respectivement). Les deux seraient marqués par la vision pessimiste de l'amour, due peut-être à l'effondrement de l'idéal aristocratique et chevaleresque après la Fronde (Laudy 1973 : 125), peut-être à l'essoufflement du romanesque sentimental et héroïque, jugé artificiel, accompagné du dégoût pour la *séduction galante* propagée par l'éthique mondaine (Bonhôte 1973 : 114, Hartmann 1998 : 30) dans un climat d'augustinisme ambiant nourri par les religieux de Port-Royal et leur illustre disciple et ami, Pascal (Mesnard 1993 : 618). La vision de

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* Héroine sentimentale, elle essaye et refuse, tour à tour, le custome tragique.

l'homme et de l'amour en sort entamée, l'amour cesse d'être considéré comme une activité noble et libre, il est perçu comme une servitude : erreur, faiblesse ou dégradation. Toute une suite de romans et nouvelles (Mme de Villedieu, Boursault, Catherine Bernard) témoigneront bientôt de la dégradation de ce tragique qui dit les ravages de l'amour passion incapable de se vivre sans tourner à une galanterie malsaine (Hartmann 1973 : 41-42). Le premier roman de Crébillon fils, *Lettres de la marquise de*** au comte de**** (1732), devait poursuivre dans cette voie (1973 : 46-48).

Or, Marivaux dans son théâtre cherche à préserver, sous l'apparence – comble de paradoxe ! – mondaine, dite le marivaudage, l'essentiel de l'idéal aristocratique (la valeur ou le mérite interne pousse l'être humain à découvrir et à affronter sa vérité au nom de l'amour même, indissociable de la valeur, comme chez Corneille). Il arrive ainsi que l'amour tendre triomphe de l'amour libertin ('galant' à l'ancienne), comme dans *Le Petit-Maître corrigé* (1734)[1], la surprise l'emporte sur la séduction. Faudrait-il l'attribuer à la seule ambition de Marivaux, celle de « sublimer la condition encore bien roturière de l'écrivain en la vivant en aristocrate » (Bonhôte 1973 :120) ? N'y aurait-il pas derrière un autre appui sur lequel l'écrivain s'énonce avec discrétion, et pour cause, car il s'agit d'un sujet aussi délicat que la transcendance opérant dans ce monde ?[2]

Il y a une présence capitale pour comprendre les modalités du savoir essentielles pour la conscience du moi amoureux, c'est celle du tiers témoin de l'aveu et des manèges qui le précèdent. Dans l'univers de Marivaux ce tiers témoin est toujours bienveillant : même s'il fait souffrir les protagyonistes, même s'il prolonge leur souffrance refusant de mettre fin, par une révélation précoce sur l'identité voilée, à la maturation personnelle que le personnage doit accomplir dans la liberté et responsabilité croissantes.

Or, chez Mme de La Fayette, et cela est significatif, le tiers témoin est toujours celui qui s'oppose au couple présent : que ce soit le duc de Nemours qui, en cachette, entend l'aveu que Mme de Clèves fait à son époux de l'amour pour ce témoin invisible; que ce soit M. de Clèves, mort et présent – par sa mémoire que son épouse cultive en guise de remords et qui la préserve de la tentation de se remarier avec Nemours – il est hostile et / ou méfiant à l'égard de la relation dont il est témoin, et qu'un témoin finalement.

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[1] Noter qu'un conte du chevalier de Boufflers, *La Mode* (1808), développe une perspective analogue : un mari volage est corrigé par l'amour tendre de son épouse vertueuse dont l'attachement l'emporte sur la malice de la libertine Arzélie (Boufflers 1995 : 213-260).

[2] Marivaux n'a consacré aux réflexions sur Dieu et la foi, sur la prédication aussi, que quelques pages dans *Le Cabinet du Philosophe*, son troisième journal éphémère paru dans les années trente (Marivaux 2001 : 352-355). Voir sur ce sujet les travaux de J. Culpin.

Le fait que la présence de Nemours durant l'aveu fatal de la Princesse ne sera jamais révélée à aucun des deux protagonistes – ni à Mme de Clèves ni à son mari – qui se soupçonneront ainsi l'un l'autre d'avoir trahi leur secret, peut constituer une tache aveugle du récit dont les héros ne cessent de divulguer les secrets des autres. Preuve s'il en fallait du jansénisme voilé de l'auteur, ce témoin occulté pour tout le monde sauf pour lui-même. Car même s'il finit par confier le secret de l'aveu à son ami le vidame, le duc n'aura jamais avoué être celui que la confidence concerne. Mais c'est un témoin impuissant de faire son propre bonheur; tout au plus il peut dénigrer son rival, le supposant indiscret devant sa femme.

La dégradation de l'amour dans le roman « pessimiste » de Mme de Lafayette doit sa tonalité surtout à la faillite de la confiance en autorité quelconque. La Cour est belle mais truffée d'ambitions et de galanteries. Or, ce que cherche à reconstruire Marivaux dans son théâtre, c'est la confiance dans la bonté, avec M. Orgon du *Jeu* qui prétend : « il faut être trop bon pour l'être assez ». Pourtant ni bonhomme ni bonasse mais lucide et vigilant, comme le montre la suite de la comédie.

La lucidité post-moderne tourne le dos au tragique, en qui ses ancêtres contemporains de Pascal avaient vu toute la vérité de l'homme. Marianne préfère contempler son autoportrait dessiné au microscope que le reflet du miroir tendu par une main invisible. Finalement, la paternité oblige, on est fier de l'autoportrait quel qu'il paraisse, tandis que le reflet émergé du néant laisse trop de place à l'imprévu pour ne pas inquiéter.

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Marta Kozłowska

Un pays qui se cherche. La Belgique au XIX^e siècle

> « Vous régnez sur deux peuples. Il y a en Belgique des Wallons et des Flamands. Il n'y a pas de Belges ».
>
> (Jules Destrée, dans une lettre au roi)

Quand un pays se crée ou qu'il récupère sa liberté – la première chose que font ses habitants c'est chercher une identité nationale donc une base sur laquelle l'on peut tout construire, en commençant par l'économie et en finissant par la culture. Lorsqu'une nation possède une identité nationale, elle possède à la fois de forts liens qui l'unissent. Par cela même, elle est NATION. Un des liens fondamentaux, c'est une langue commune ou plusieurs langues reconnues comme officielles et acceptées par les habitants.

Le 9 juin 1815, le Congrès de Vienne finit ses débats. Par suite de ses décisions, apparaît le Royaume des Pays-Bas, un état-tampon entre les puissances européennes. C'est un amalgame peu heureux composé de la Belgique et de la Hollande qui enferme dans son sein deux nations – une bourgeoisie francophone, majoritairement catholique et une bourgeoisie flamande, protestante – que tout partage: la tradition, la religion et enfin la langue.

Les années 1815-1830 se caractérisent par de vives polémiques, menées dans la presse, qui concernent la légitimation de l'une de ces deux langues, à savoir le flamand et le français, en tant que langue nationale. Cependant, il faut tout d'abord en formuler une définition. Les premiers essais mènent les chercheurs à constater que ce n'est guère le cas du royaume :

> Une langue nationale proprement dite, est celle, que la généralité des habitants d'un état quelconque est dans le cas de comprendre et de parler. Or, les faits suffisent pour convaincre les plus incrédules, qu'il n'existe rien de semblable chez nous, où l'embarras est tel, qu'on ne sait comment baptiser la langue qu'on nous impose. (J. Defrenne, « Quelques idées sur l'usage obligé de la langue nationale au Royaume des Pays-Bas, par un Belge ami de la justice et de la vérité », Bruxelles, 1829 : 5, S. Gross et J. Thomas, *Les concepts*

nationaux de la littérature: l'exemple de la Belgique francophone : une documentation en deux tomes, Aachen, t. I, 1989 : 32)

Même si une définition commune était établie, il y aurait toujours une opposition entre les partisans de la langue flamande, autrement dit la langue belge, et ceux de la langue française. Jan Frans Willems dans son livre *De la langue belge* observe qu'il y a sans aucun doute une langue belge comme il y a des mœurs belges et, enfin, comme il y a des Belges qui se montrent flamands en français. D'ailleurs durant cette période hollandaise Willems déploie une activité intense en faveur de la langue néerlandaise qui d'une part lui attire l'estime des milieux littéraires et gouvernementaux et de l'autre lui vaut d'être rallié dans l'opinion publique comme « le plat valet du pouvoir » (*Dictionnaire d'histoire de Belgique*, sous la direction de Hervé Hasquin, Bruxelles, 1988 : 508). Certains, comme L. de Fœre, mettent en jeu d'autres arguments. Ils affirment qu' « une nation, qui a une langue sonore, riche, expressive, semble se mépriser elle-même en adoptant une langue étrangère pour sa langue judiciaire et administrative » (L. de Fœre, « Coup d'oeil rapide sur quelques questions de politique, relatives à la situation présente et future de la Belgique », *Le Spectateur belge*, 1815, 6 : 178, Gross, Thomas, t. I, 1989 : 4). Dans la suite de cet article, il constate que cette légitimation comporterait « une idée de vasselage indirect envers la France » (1989 : 5), ce qui est d'ailleurs peu honorable envers le Royaume des Pays-Bas. Dans une autre publication, en s'engageant dans une vive polémique avec un certain Mr Donny, membre du camp opposé, il met en doute la capacité de se servir correctement par son adversaire et ses partisans, de la langue française.

À part une lutte fervente, des tentatives de conciliation apparaissent. En 1817, *Le Spectateur belge* publie un compte rendu de « Esquisse historique sur les langues conside rées dans leur rapport avec la civilisation et la liberté des peuples, par un Belge ». Le journal adopte les opinions présentées dans cet article. Son auteur défend la cause de la classe moyenne qui constitue la force de l'État et qui est à la fois en grande partie composée des personnes ne comprennant pas le français. Afin de ne pas favoriser ni l'une ni l'autre, il opte pour le traitement respectif de ces deux langues : « Il nous paraît qu'il serait aussi injuste de priver les Flamands de l'usage de la langue flamande dans les actes publics, qu'il la serait de priver les Wallons dans les mêmes actes de l'usage de la langue française » (L. de Fœre, « Langue nationale, (Compte rendu de : *Esquisse historique sur les langues considérées dans leurs rapport avec la civilisation et la liberté des peuples, par un Belge*) », *Le Spectateur belge*, 1817, 5 : 175, 1989 : 7). Faire du français et du flamand les langues officielles du Gouvernement s'avère plus difficile à réaliser que l'on ne le pensait. C'est en même temps une prise de position significative qui aurait mis fin à l'hostilité régnante dans le Royaume et qui aurait fait un pas en avant vers une cohabitation pacifique des Wallons et des Flamands.

Guillaume Ier d'Orange-Nassau ne réussit donc pas à unir ces deux nations. Des rancunes croissantes conduisent aux événements du 25 août 1830. Lors de la représentation de la *Muette de Portici* au Théâtre de la Monnaie, le public sort dans les rues pour manifester son mécontentement. Cette révolte est sans aucun doute due aux événements parisiens de juillet. La France n'en est guère contente car elle se voit forcée de prendre une position dans ce conflit. Conformément au principe de non-intervention, elle ne réagit point. Aux appels du roi Guillaume, seule la Russie répond. Effectivement, elle s'armait. Cependant, c'est l'Angleterre qui convoque à Londres, le 4 novembre 1830, la France et les puissances du Nord pour résoudre la question belge et pour conserver la paix en Europe. Suite à cette conférence, le 20 juin 1831, la Belgique apparaît en tant que pays indépendant et neutre, que garantissent les cinq puissances. Cependant cette indépendance est encore relative car c'est seulement le 11 mars 1838 que Guillaume Ier adhère au traité de XXIV Articles. Le prince Saxe-Cobourg-Gotha devient le premier roi des Belges et prend le nom de Léopold Ier.

Après les événements de 1830, la Belgique se trouve dans une situation, intellectuellement et matériellement, précaire. L'enseignement public tombe aussi bas que possible. Elle ne possède alors rien : ni l'économie ni la culture. Elle doit se les créer. Avec l'économie, c'est facile. Le développement industriel dans ces années est rapide. Vu que les Hollandais ont coupé la communication fluviale, les Belges se voient acculés à développer un moyen de liaison plus efficace et plus rapide. Ainsi ils construisent le premier réseau ferroviaire qui contribue largement à la prospérité de l'industrie, basée avant tout sur l'exportation de la majorité de sa production – du charbon, de la laine, du lin et du fer. La Belgique profite encore de l'industrialisation des pays voisins et des événements mondiaux tels que les guerres de Crimée, du Danemark et de la construction du chemin de fer américain qui revitalisent son industrie armurière.

Ce développement prompt de l'industrie conduit à un déséquilibre croissant entre les classes dirigeantes et les ouvriers aussi bien dans les questions du travail que dans le domaine de la législation sociale. Son absence autorise tous les abus. Les conditions de vie de la classe ouvrière sont désastreuses. Même si la production ne cesse de croître, les ouvriers ne voient pas leurs salaires augmenter ni leurs conditions de travail s'améliorer.

Cependant les États-Unis et l'Allemagne commencent à concurrencer sérieusement l'industrie belge. La situation, déjà grave, devient catastrophique. L'année 1886 est une année terrible. La crise économique et sociale conduit les ouvriers à la révolte qui a des conséquences salutaires pour cette classe. Enfin, des lois protégeant les ouvriers sont votées et Le Parti Ouvrier Belge qui vise la défense de leurs intérêts voit le jour.

Dans cette situation, la culture est reléguée à l'arrière-plan. La direction des lettres ressort du ministère de l'Agriculture. La bourgeoisie préfère vivre de bonne soupe et non du beau langage. Même si dans le domaine industriel les Belges peuvent se reconnaître maîtres, dans le domaine culturel, ils se sentent tributaires des pays voisins, c'est-à-dire de l'Allemagne et de la France. Dans la question langagière, c'est Paris qui décide.

> Chaque langue a son génie propre. Celui de la langue française est la clarté et la régularité. Y introduire des dialectes, des expressions locales, des tours de phrase qui appartiennent exclusivement à des idiomes, ce serait lui faire perdre son plus beau caractère, la rendre obscure et inintelligible. [...] Paris est non seulement la capitale de la France, c'est encore la capitale de la langue française. C'est elle qui, du consentement unanime des hommes de lettres et des savants, donne la règle et le ton.
> (Th. Weustenraad, « [Compte rendu] : Voyages et aventures de Monsieur Alfred Nicolas au Royaume de Belgique, par Justin*** [Grandgagnage] », *Revue belge*, 1835, t. I : 364-365, 1989 : 61-62).

Les contrefaçons foissonnent, empêchant les Belges à lire leur littérature qui est d'ailleurs une reproduction de la littérature française. Les écrivains belges sont repoussés car la création n'existe qu'à Paris et la Belgique est un pays où l'on reproduit.

Toutefois, une discussion qui porte sur l'identité littéraire des écrivains belges commence. Le problème posé concerne encore une fois la définition de cette identité. Comment la caractériser ? Par l'appartenance linguistique ou bien nationale ? Bien sûr, par l'appartenance linguistique car le français devient la langue de la promotion sociale. Dans les maisons bourgeoises, même celles des Flamands, l'on ne parle que cette langue. Le flamand est repoussé à la cuisine, au marché ou dans la rue. Les écrivains d'origine flamande se trouvent obligés de choisir leur langue de création artistique ce qui consitue en même temps une prise de position. Il est nécessaire d'ajouter que ce choix est déterminé par avance parce que s'ils veulent être aperçus et lus, ils doivent créer dans une langue qui leur en donne la possibilité, c'est-à-dire en français.

Une fois la langue choisie, les artistes belges se voient dépourvus de l'héritage culturel. La devise – « Nous-mêmes ou périr ! » – lancée par Camille Lemonnier en 1869 dans *Nos Flamands* provoque des débats. « Nous », c'est-à-dire qui ? D'où puiser et où trouver les sources ? La réponse est déjà venue avec le chef-d'œuvre de la littérature belge de cette période de recherche. C'est dans la *Légende d'Ulenspiegel* que Charles de Coster trouve le moyen d'unir les deux nations et de leur montrer les sources. Grâce à son lieu de naissance, l'Allemagne, il connaît ce pays et en est fasciné à ce point qu'il fait une fusion courageuse dans son œuvre du germanique et du roman. Le personnage principal, d'origine allemande, est replanté en Flandre. L'action se déroule à la fois en Wallonie et en Flandre. C'est donc une épopée belge telle que l'auteur la veut qu'elle soit : « un composé d'esprit latin et de sensibilité germanique » (A.-M. Gunnesson, *Les écrivains flamands et le champ littéraire en Belgique francophone*, Gœteborg, 2001 : 46). Bien que le personnage de Tyl soit puisé dans la tradition et qu'une partie de ses aventures se passe en Flandre, les Flamands refusent cette histoire exactement à cause de la langue dont le choix leur paraît partial. C'est aussi en raison de la langue que les Français n'admettent pas l'œuvre. Ils reprochent à de Coster sa spécificité linguistique, à savoir l'archaïsme conscient de la langue. Même si elle fait référence à Rabelais, elle date de la seconde moitié du XIXe siècle. Elle fait donc tort à la langue que l'on utilise et que l'on perçoit comme la plus parfaite.

L'œuvre de Charles de Coster ou d'Henri Conscience peut être traitée en tant qu'une tentative de créer le mythe du Nord. Il se caractérise par la suspension entre la langue des Français et son enracinement mythique dans l'esprit et l'imagination collective des Flamands qui servirait à construire l'identité belge de ces deux nations et à sceller ces deux groupes linguistiques. Une tentative qui réussit, mais autrement que l'on ne voulait : elle apporte la prise de conscience et l'émancipation culturelle des Flamands[1].

Dans les années soixante-dix, l'on observe un certain réveil de l'intérêt pour les choses de l'art. L'importance des périodiques dans la création de la vie littéraire belge doit être mise en valeur. Quatre revues se succèdent qui assurent la reconnaissance d'une littérature nationale et aussi la transition du réalisme vers la nouvelle esthétique. Cependant, le milieu des académiciens ne voit aucune possibilité de créer une littérature nationale :

> Cette situation, qui n'est pas, après tout, aussi mauvaise qu'on la proclame, tient à la nature même de notre pays, à sa position géographique. Formée de deux races diverses et qui parlent deux idiomes différents, possédant une population restreinte, notre patrie ne saurait ni produire, ni faire vivre une littérature nationale homogène. [...]
> Pour qu'il existe vraiment une littérature telle qu'on la désire, il faudrait que nous eussions une langue nationale et la Belgique, pas plus que la Suisse, ne possède cette unité de langage[2].

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[1] Cf. Ryszard Siwek, *Od De Costera do Vaesa. Pisarze belgijscy wobec niezwykłości*, Kraków, Wydawnictwo Naukowe Akademii Pedagogicznej, 2001.

[2] Communication de Jules Carlier faite pendant le Congrès littéraire belge, organisé sous le patronage de S.M. le Roi, par la section de littérature française du Cercle artistique, littéraire et scientifique d'Anvers, 17-18 août 1877

(J. L.Hasse, « Compte rendu des travaux du congrès », Anvers, 1878 : 18, Gross, Thomas 1989 : 190)

La réalité prouve quand même l'inverse. Bien que *L'Art libre* et *L'Art universel* traitent plutôt la thématique picturale, elles ont le mérite de rassembler les écrivains belges qui peuvent ainsi se faire entendre. C'est d'ailleurs une de leurs particularités de commencer la carrière par la critique artistique. Tel était le cas de Camille Lemonnier et d'Émile Verhaeren, par exemple.

L'Actualité et *L'Artiste*, deux revues auxquelles collabore intensivement Lemonnier, consacrent plus de place à la littérature et ouvrent ses pages à Joris-Karl Huysmans et à Henri Céard. Ils publient les études sur les romans des frères Goncourt, notamment *La Fille Élisa* et sur *L'Assommoir* de Zola ce qui est alors impossible en France. Le jeune millieu littéraire belge s'avère très favorable au nouveau courant. Dans une lettre à Lemonnier, Céard déplore l'hostilité de la critique française envers le naturalisme :

> Vous êtes bien heureux là-bas d'avoir ainsi des journaux à votre disposition : cela n'arrivera ici qu'après le décès du dernier des romantiques. Imagineriez-vous que les choses en sont à ce point qu'à Paris certains journaux de la paroisse de 1830 ne disent jamais un mot de Zola ou de Goncourt ? Voilà où nous en sommes[3].
> (C. Burns, « Céard épistolier. Lettres inédites à Camille Lemonnier, à Théodore Hannon et à Joris-Karl Huysmans », *Les Cahiers naturalistes*, 1994, 68 : 156)

C'est seulement vers l'année 1880 que commence la vraie renaissance des lettres belges. La publication d'*Un Mâle* de Lemonnier attire l'attention de la critique française sur la Belgique. La thématique et surtout la langue de l'écrivain – langue de terroir – choquent aussi bien le public français que belge. C'est une réalisation parfaite du postulat de libérer l'écriture littéraire, postulat formulé par Iwan Gilkin, dans *La Semaine des Étudiants*, le 10 janvier 1880 :

> Pour la langue, plus n'est besoin qu'elle soit correcte, lyrique, gothique ou même parisienne. Pourvu qu'elle ait une saine odeur de terroir, il lui est permis d'être sauvage, échevelée, voire assassine à l'égard de la syntaxe ; qu'elle se torde dans les orgies du solécisme, qu'elle se débauche avec les plus vulgaires expressions de province, qu'importe si elle est énergique, vivante, si elle saute à la gorge de la réalité et la jette d'un bloc sur sa toile.
> (P. Delsemme, « Le style coruscant, mouture belge de l'écriture artiste des Goncourt », *www.bon-a-tirer.com* (revue littéraire en ligne), 2004, 11 : 1)

[3] Lettre à Camille Lemonnier, avril 1877.

Une telle attitude envers la langue peut avoir ses sources dans « le style bourguignon » qui était un mélange de l'esprit nordique avec la langue française. C'était un style « fleuri, emphatique et alambiqué, riche en hyperboles et en figurations allégoriques » (Gunnesson 2001 : 37).

Fondés en 1881, *L'Art moderne* et *La Jeune Belgique* continuent de régénérer la littérature belge. La première revue, sous la direction d'Edmond Picard, attribue à l'art une fonction sociale. L'art devient donc l'auxiliaire nécessaire aux bouleversements sociaux. *La Jeune Belgique* cependant prend pour devise « Soyons nous ! » ce qui signifie être personnels. C'est la réponse à l'invitation de Georges Eekhoud, lancée dans *La Revue artistique d'Anvers* : « *être soi-même* : telle devrait être la devise de quiconque veut entrer dans la carrière artistique et surtout y demeurer » (J. Hanse, *La Naissance d'une littérature*, Bruxelles, 1992 : 123). Les Jeune-Belgique prônent l'autonomie de la littérature qu'ils veulent libérer aussi bien du joug de la mission sociale que du joug étranger, c'est-à-dire du joug français. Ils se préoccupent avant tout de la forme, ils exploitent la richesse lexicale de la langue, cherchent des métaphores suggestives tout en sauvegardant une nécessaire fidélité au réel. L'incarnation parfaite de ces postulats est, selon eux, Camille Lemonnier qui devient leur maître et qui est nommé par Georges Rodenbach « maréchal des lettres belges ». Cette revue représente en ce temps une attitude créatrice envers la langue. C'est une façon de prouver l'originalité de la littérature des jeunes écrivains belges et de montrer que l'on produit et non pas re-produit. Cependant, lorsque Max Waller devient rédacteur en chef, *La Jeune Belgique* se fait le champion d'une langue correcte, d'un style original et d'une versification impeccable. Elle n'a envie ni de s'opposer aux Français ni de secouer le joug dont elle ne sent plus le poids. Elle vise « à rendre sa littérature aussi parfaitement française et aussi peu provinciale qu'il sera possible » (« La Jeune Belgique », *La Jeune Belgique, revue hebdomadaire d'Art et de Critique*, 1896, t. I : 1, Gross, Thomas, t. II, 1989 : 19). Ce qui était jusque-là original, devient désormais un défaut – « le macaque flamboyant ».

Cette appellation sert à définir tout d'abord la langue de Lemonnier et d'Eekhoud, enfin à caractériser ce qui constituait l'originalité de la littérature belge par rapport à la littérature française :

> Le macaque flamboyant est fondé sur l'ignorance absolue de la grammaire, de la syntaxe et de la langue, sur le culte du barbarisme, du flandricisme, du wallonisme, du contre-sens, du non-sens et du pataquès. Le nouvel idiome est appelé Macaque parce qu'il singe les défauts des mauvais écrivains français, et Flamboyant parce qu'il revêt ces défauts d'une manière éblouissante.
>
> (H. Braet, *L'accueil fait au Symbolisme en Belgique. 1885-1900. Contribution à l'étude du mouvement et de la critique symbolistes*, Bruxelles, 1967 : 58-59)

En réaction, un peu tardive, à cette déclaration, en mai 1895, paraît le premier numéro de la nouvelle revue – *Le Coq rouge*. Dirigée par les anciens collaborateurs de *La Jeune Belgique*, parmi lesquels se trouvent Louis Delattre, Eugène Demolder, Georges Eekhoud, Émile Verhaeren et Maurice Maeterlinck, elle refuse la dictature des trois G, à savoir de Gilkin, Giraud et de Gille, et proclame un individualisme intransigeant :

> Jouant des ailes comme d'un soufflet auxiliaire des ardents marteleurs du Verbe ; éperonnant, attisant la fournaise à violents coups d'ergot, prolongeant sa crête turbulente en cordillières volcaniques, *Le Coq rouge* domine le bûcher où s'entassent les préjugés, les conventions, les rengaines, les clichés, les poncifs, les morales sordides, les vertus rances, tous les instruments et les moyens de servitude et d'abjection. (Hanse 1992 : 136)

En 1892, la publication de *Bruges-la-Morte* de Georges Rodenbach est vivement applaudie par la critique française. *Le Voile*, pièce dont l'action est située, connaît un succès immense après les représentations à la Comédie française, en 1894. Avec son roman, Rodenbach contribue à l'identification et la légitimation d'un champ littéraire périphérique. Représentant une spécificité qui se caractérise par l'exotisme flamand et une mélancolie nordique et qui s'inscrit parfaitement dans le cadre du mouvement alors en vogue, il réussit dans un genre jugé moins prestigieux. En plus, grâce entre autres à *Bruges-la-Morte*, les critiques français commencent à appeler « brumes du Nord » tout ce qui est créé en Belgique et ce qui sort du commun. Ainsi, la tradition française se voit incapable de classer ce phénomène exprimé d'ailleurs dans la même langue.

Le 24 juillet 1897, *La Revue encyclopédique de Paris* consacre un numéro spécial à la Belgique intellectuelle. Elle s'adresse donc à Camille Lemonnier qui, avec Edmond Picard et les collaborateurs de *L'Art moderne*, entreprend un portrait de la Belgique. *La Jeune Belgique*, jadis novatrice et ouverte aux nouveautés, se moque du jargon bizarre des gens de lettres belges, de leur goût du néerlandais et du mot rare, de leur ignorance de la langue exacte et correcte. Elle constate enfin que la croyance de Lemonnier et de ses collaborateurs à l'existence d'une âme belge n'est rien d'autre qu' « un mythe » (Hanse 1992 : 139).

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Monika Kulesza

Les portraits romanesques de Madame de Sévigné

> SOPHRONIE est une jeune veuve de qualité. Le mérite de cette précieuse est égal à sa naissance. Son esprit est vif et enjoué, et elle est plus propre à la joie qu'au chagrin; cependant il est aisé de juger par sa conduite que la joie, chez elle, ne produit pas l'amour: car elle n'en a que pour celles de son sexe, et se contente de donner son estime aux hommes, encore ne la donne t'elle pas aisément. Elle a une promptitude d'esprit la plus grande du monde à connaître les choses et à en juger. Elle est blonde, et a une blancheur qui répond admirablement à la beauté de ses cheveux. Les traits de son visage sont déliés, son teint est uni, et tout cela ensemble compose une des plus agréables femmes d'Athènes [Paris]; mais si son visage attire les regards, son esprit charme les oreilles, et engage tous ceux qui l'entendent ou qui lisent ce qu'elle écrit. Les plus habiles font vanité d'avoir son approbation. Menandre [Ménage] a chanté dans ses vers les louanges de cette illustre personne; Crisante [Chapelain] est aussi un de ceux qui la visitent souvent. Elle aime la musique et hait mortellement la satire, elle loge au quartier de Leolie [le marais du Temple].

C'est ainsi qu'Antoine de Somaize décrit Mme de Sévigné dans le premier volume de son *Dictionnaire des Précieuses* (1856: 221). On y retrouve toutes les caractéristiques du portrait mondain: les qualités de l'esprit y sont soulignées en premier lieu, suivent ensuite la conduite irréprochable, l'éloge de la beauté physique qui reflète ses mérites et enfin ses fréquentations mondaines.

La mode du portrait s'est manifestée en France, dans la «belle société», entre 1656 et 1666 environ. Genre mineur, tout comme l'aphorisme, la lettre ou le roman, le portrait constitue un passe-temps mondain destiné avant tout aux femmes et largement pratiqué par elles. C'est pendant les conversations menées dans les salons que l'on aimait s'amuser à dépeindre oralement les membres du cercle, à raconter les histoires réelles ou fantastiques pour donner libre cours à son imagination, faire preuve d'esprit, amuser les autres et les pousser à en faire de même. A l'origine de la vogue du portrait en tant que genre littéraire il y a donc un jeu de société pratiqué entre amis, tout comme c'est le cas de maximes.

Ce sont surtout Georges et Madeleine de Scudéry qui «avaient l'un et l'autre le goût de la peinture et une grande curiosité, sensible en tous leurs ouvrages, à l'égard des questions morales et littéraires. [...] *Le Grand Cyrus*, avec *Clélie* qui le suit, était le seul roman capable de provoquer d'abord la curiosité pour les portraits, d'éveiller ensuite chez les lecteurs l'instinct d'imitation» (Plantié, 1994: 81, 90). C'est aussi la volonté de rivaliser avec la peinture et le désir d'animer la vie de société qui sont à l'origine du goût du portrait. A l'époque, tout le monde en faisait: Mlle de Montpensier, Bussy-Rabutin, La Rochefoucauld, Mme de La Fayette, le cardinal de Retz, parmi les plus grands, mais aussi une quantité d'autres mondains, moins connus. Somaize, par exemple, en parlant de Corbulon (Corbinelli) dit qu'il «est illustre dans l'empire des précieuses pour avoir fait le portrait de Sophronie, où il a parfaitement réussi» (60). Mme de Sévigné confirme l'existence «des infinités de portraits» (1. XII. 1675, II, 176)[1], elle envoie à sa fille le portrait du Cardinal de Retz dressé par La Rochefoucauld (19. VI. 1675, I, 737) et ne cache pas le plaisir que cette lecture lui a donné.

La marquise devient un personnage romanesque grâce aux auteurs qui ont décidé de peindre son portrait dans leurs romans. Il en existe trois célèbres de l'épistolière, deux élogieux dont le premier, datant de 1657, est dressé par Mlle de Scudéry dans la troisième partie de *Clélie* où Mme de Sévigné porte le nom de Clarinte, princesse d'Erice, et le deuxième, paru en 1659 dans *Divers portraits*, intitulé *Portrait de Madame de Sévigné par Madame de La Fayette sous le nom de l'Inconnu*. Le troisième portrait, celui-ci satirique, est tracé par Bussy-Rabutin dans son *Histoire amoureuse des Gaules* (1665) où Mme de Sévigné porte le nom de Madame de Cheneville. Dans les deux portraits élogieux, la marquise est dotée, comme chez Somaize, de toutes les qualités: beauté physique, vivacité de l'esprit, vertus morales et conduite irréprochable. Bussy, par contre, fâché à cette époque -là avec sa cousine, ironise et la décrit de manière parfaitement défavorable.

Nous ne nous proposons pas de comparer les trois portraits[2], mais, d'en relever les traits caractéristiques en examinant dans quelle mesure ils répondent aux exigences du portrait «romanesque» tel qu'on le trouve habituellement dans les romans de l'époque.

Prenons pour modèle la présentation de Mlle de Chartres dans *La Princesse de Clèves*. Ainsi que la majeure partie des héros de romans écrits au Grand Siècle, elle est d'origine

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[1] Mme de Sévigné, *Correspondance*, texte établi, présenté et annoté par Roger Duchêne, Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, Gallimard, Paris,1972-1978, 3 vol. Toutes les lettres sont citées d'après cette édition et les citations sont suivies entre parenthèses de la date (sauf quand elle est indiquée dans le texte), du numéro du volume et de la page.

[2] Cette étude comparative a été réalisée par Roger Duchêne dans *Madame de Sévigné ou la chance d'être femme* p. 133-145.

noble, «une des plus grandes héritières de France»(1972 : 137). La marquise de Sévigné, quant à elle, appartient par son père à une très ancienne aristocratie bourguignonne, les Rabutin-Chantal et elle a épousé en 1644 le baron Henri de Sévigné, issu d'une noble famille bretonne. Bussy-Rabutin dit dans son *Histoire amoureuse des Gaules* qu'il «était son plus proche parent du côté le plus honorable» (1993: 161) et il suggère ainsi que du côté maternel, Mme de Sévigné n'était pas d'une haute naissance.

Vient ensuite l'aspect physique du personnage. Mme de La Fayette décrit Mlle de Chartres comme «une grande beauté [...]. La blancheur de son teint et ses cheveux blonds lui donnaient un éclat que l'on a jamais vu qu'à elle; tous ses traits étaient réguliers, et son visage et sa personne étaient pleins de grâce et de charmes» (138). Dans le portrait tracé par le même auteur, Mme de Sévigné a «une taille admirable, le teint a une beauté et une fleur qui assure qu'elle n'a que vingt ans»(Mayer, 1973: 73). Cette image de la blonde au teint éclatant revient chez Mlle de Scudéry qui dit de Clarinte qu'elle «est blonde, mais c'est de ce blond qui n'a rien de fade, et qui sied bien à la beauté. Pour le teint, elle l'a si admirable qu'il n'est pas au pouvoir des plus rigoureux hivers d'effacer le bel incarnat qui le rend si beau, et qui donne un si grand éclat à sa merveilleuse blancheur, qu'on y voit en toute saison cette fraîcheur qu'on ne voit qu'au lever de l'aurore sur les plus belles roses du printemps»(1660: 1325). Et Bussy, tout en ajoutant quelques détails péjoratifs, de confirmer qu'elle «a les cheveux blonds, déliés et épais» et «a d'ordinaire le plus beau teint du monde»(1993: 152). Mme de Sévigné correspond donc au modèle idéal de la beauté féminine au XVIIe siècle, comme une digne héroïne de roman.

Ces détails physiques, toutefois, prennent peu de place dans les portraits qui émaillent dans les romans de ce siècle. Ce qui compte davantage ce sont les qualités spirituelles et morales, inséparables d'une beauté parfaite. Ainsi Mme de Chartres «ne travailla pas seulement à cultiver l'esprit et la beauté de sa fille, elle songea aussi à lui donner de la vertu et à la lui rendre aimable» (137) et surtout elle lui apprit à fuir toute galanterie. Mme de La Fayette qualifie le cœur de son héroïne de «très noble et très bien fait» (148) et son attitude envers des louanges d'une «modestie noble» (140). Toute la vie de Mlle de Chartres, devenue Mme de Clèves, va prouver la primauté de ces valeurs, et le combat entre la passion et la vertu sera finalement gagné par cette dernière.

Dans les deux portraits élogieux de Mme de Sévigné, les romancières soulignent qu'elle «agit avec une telle conduite, que la médisance a toujours respecté sa vertu et ne l'a pas fait soupçonner de la moindre galanterie, quoiqu'elle soit la plus galante personne du monde. [...] Elle aime la gloire plus qu'elle même [...] et elle a trouvé le moyen [...] de conserver la plus belle réputation du monde» (Mlle de Scudéry: 1331-1332). Mme de La Fayette ajoute que «son âme est grande, noble, propre à dispenser des trésors, et incapable de s'abaisser aux soins d'en amasser» (74). En effet, Mme de Sévigné, jeune veuve de vingt-six ans, était un excellent parti et les adorateurs ne lui manquaient pas. Son cousin Bussy, Foucquet, le comte de Lude, le vicomte de Turenne, , le prince de Conti ou Gilles Ménage, poète et érudit, admiraient et estimaient la marquise qui a pourtant choisi de ne pas céder aux hommages masculins. Elle a préféré garder son statut de veuve qui lui assurait une entière indépendance sans l'empêcher de s'instruire et de cultiver son esprit. *L'Inconnu* explique: «Vous êtes naturellement tendre et passionnée, mais à la honte de notre sexe, cette tendresse vous a été inutile, et vous l'avez renfermée dans le vôtre en la donnant à Mme de La Fayette. Madame, s'il y avait quelqu'un au monde assez heureux pour que vous ne l'eussiez pas trouvé indigne de ce trésor dont elle jouit et qu'il n'eût pas tout mis en usage pour le posséder, il mériterait toutes les disgrâces dont l'amour peut accabler ceux qui vivent sous son empire» (74).

C'est du portrait de la marquise telle qu'elle apparaît dans *Clélie* que ressort le mieux l'image de la belle insensible: «Il est vrai qu'elle n'a jamais donné d'espérance à pas un de ceux qui l'aiment, mais elle a un si grand mérite, que le désespoir qui est le remède le plus infaillible de cette passion, ne guérit point ceux qui soupirent pour elle. Cependant Clarinte ne les regarde pas comme ses adorateurs et ce même enjouement qui lui sied si bien, et qui la divertit en divertissant les autres, lui sert encore à faire agréablement passer pour ses amis beaucoup de gens qui voudraient, s'ils osaient, passer pour ses amants» (1331). L'auteur a bien compris la tactique amoureuse, si on peut l'appeler ainsi, de Mme de Sévigné. Quand on songe au ton des lettres échangées entre Bussy et sa cousine dans leur jeunesse, il est évident que la marquise provoque, badine, mais reste néanmoins sur ses gardes, tandis que le cousin, tout en s'amusant, cherche à la séduire. «Il faut avouer qu'étant aussi prude que vous l'êtes, vous m'avez grande obligation que je ne vous aime pas plus que je fais. Ma foi, j'ai bien de la peine à me retenir. Tantôt je condamne votre insensibilité, tantôt je l'excuse, mais je vous estime toujours [...] Quoi! vous me flattez, ma cousine, vous me dites des douceurs, et vous ne voulez pas que j'aie les dernières tendresses pour vous! Eh bien, je ne les aurai pas; il faut bien vouloir ce que vous voulez, et vous aimer à votre mode. Mais vous répondrez un jour devant Dieu de la violence que je me fais et des maux qui s'en suivront» (de Bussy, 30. VII. 1654, I, 25).

Dans cette lettre, ainsi que dans la façon qu'a Clarinte de traiter les hommes, on retrouve les caractéristiques de l'amour précieux: la femme insensible règne sans partage sur l'homme qui la courtise sans obtenir une quelconque faveur. La réputation doit rester intacte.

Bussy se soucie de l'honneur de sa cousine d'une manière assez particulière. D'une part, il adopte l'attitude du défenseur de l'honneur de sa cousine en tant que représentante de la famille Rabutin-Chantal et il soutient que «ce qu'il avait écrit dans le fameux portrait […] visait le caractère et non la conduite de la marquise» (Craveri 2002: 286); d'autre part, il badine, provoque et s'adonne dans ses lettres à des stratagèmes amoureux. Il lui disait, le 16 juin 1654: «Je vous vois entêtée de la vertu, comme si c'était une chose solide [...]. Nous vous verrons un jour regretter le temps que vous aurez perdu; nous vous verrons repentir d'avoir mal employé votre jeunesse et d'avoir voulu, avec tant de peines, acquérir et conserver une réputation qu'un médisant peut vous ôter et qui dépend plus du hasard que de votre conduite» (I, 24). Dix ans après, il revient sur sa réputation. Dans le portrait tracé dans son *Histoire amoureuse des Gaules*, il en parle longuement, en détail et sans lui épargner la moindre critique: «Cette belle, qui veut être à tous les plaisirs, a trouvé un moyen sûr, à ce qui lui semble, pour se réjouir sans qu'il en coûte à sa réputation. Elle s'est faite amie de quatre ou cinq demi-prudes, avec lesquelles elle va dans tous les lieux du monde. Elle ne regarde pas tant ce qu'elle fait qu'avec qui elle est. En ce faisant, elle se persuade que la compagnie rectifie ses actions» (154). Il n'y a dans ce portrait aucune précision concernant ses «actions», aucun nom, tout se passe dans une pseudo-discrétion. L'auteur évoque juste quelques «parties de promenades particulières». Il ne faut pas cependant oublier que les règles de la bienséance étaient beaucoup plus rigoureuses qu'aujourd'hui et la conduite d'une «honnête femme» ne supportait aucun soupçon. Ainsi quand on a arrêté Foucquet, Mme de Sévigné a remué ciel et terre pour savoir ce que l'on pensait de ses lettres trouvées dans les cassettes du Surintendant. Elle assure Ménage «que ce n'était ni la galanterie, ni l'intérêt qui [l'] avaient obligée d'avoir un commerce avec lui [...] que ce n'était que pour les affaires de M. de La Trousse». Et, contrariée, elle ajoute: «Mais cela n'empêche pas que je n'aie été fort touchée de voir qu'il les avait mises dans la cassette de ses poulets, et de me voir nommée parmi celles qui n'ont pas eu des sentiments si purs que moi». Elle avait besoin de tous ses amis (Ménage, Costar, Chapelain, Pomponne, Bussy...) pour instruire «ceux qui ne le sont pas» (9. X. 1661, I, 49-50) et pas un ne lui a fait défaut pour prendre son parti et la soutenir auprès du roi et du monde. La crainte que son image ne soit compromise fissure le marbre de la belle insensible et ses émois font écho aux tourments des héroïnes de roman, quasiment toutes exposées au danger de perdre leur réputation.

Mme de La Fayette dote Mlle de Chartres de «l'esprit et la beauté» (139), car le charme physique était indissociable du charme moral, de la bonne humeur et des qualités intellectuelles. En décrivant Mme de Sévigné, *L'Inconnu* affirme: «Le brillant de votre esprit donne un si grand éclat à votre teint, et à vos yeux, que quoi qu'il semble que l'esprit ne dût toucher que les oreilles, il est pourtant certain que le vôtre éblouit les yeux et l'on vous croit la beauté du monde la plus achevée» (73). Mlle de Scudéry parle de «toutes les petites façons qu'elle a» et qui «n'ont aucune affectation et ne sont qu'un pur effet de la vivacité de son esprit, de l'enjouement de son humeur et de l'heureuse habitude qu'elle a prise d'avoir toujours la bonne grâce» (1329). Nous voyons donc à quel point le charme de l'esprit relève la beauté physique de la marquise.

L'attitude de Bussy change en fonction de ses rapports avec l'épistolière. En 1654, il s'écrie: «Mon Dieu, que vous avez d'esprit, ma cousine! Que vous écrivez bien! Que vous êtes aimable!» (30. VII. 1654, I, 25). Un an plus tard il s'émerveille: «Vous êtes les délices du genre humain; l'antiquité vous aurait dressé des autels et vous auriez assurément été déesse de quelque chose» (7. X. 1655, I, 34). Quelques années après, il admet dans son portrait qu'il «n'y a point de femme en France qui eût plus d'esprit, et fort peu qui en aient autant», mais affirme que «son caractère est un peu trop badin [...] et elle veut être trop plaisante» (153). Il faut ajouter à cela que, selon Bussy, les yeux de la marquise, de couleurs différentes, témoignent de sa duplicité. «Mme de Cheneville est inégale jusqu'aux paupières et aux prunelles de ses yeux. Elle les a de différentes couleurs, et les yeux étant le miroir de l'âme, ces égarements sont comme un avis que donne la nature à ceux qui l'approchent de ne pas faire un grand fondement sur son amitié.» Et de préciser que «cette belle n'est amie que jusques à la bourse» (156), la brouille entre les deux cousins ayant été causée par le refus de Mme de Sévigné de prêter de l'argent à Bussy.

Mme de Sévigné n'a pas pu rester indifférente face à une telle critique venant de la part d'un proche, même si elle reconnaissait le talent d'écrivain de son cousin. Le 26 juillet 1668, indignée, elle conteste la fidélité de son portrait:

> Si les cornes me fussent venues à la tête, j'aurais été moins étonnée. Je le lus, et je le relus, ce cruel portrait; je l'aurais trouvé assez joli s'il eût été d'une autre que moi, et d'un autre que vous. [...] Je le reconnus à plusieurs choses que j'en avais ouï dire plutôt qu'à la peinture de mes sentiments que je méconnus entièrement (I, 93).

Longtemps après, en août 1684, elle prie Guitaut «de ne [la] jamais citer» et déclare: «je ne veux plus repasser sous la presse» (III, 132), faisant allusion à cet affront de Bussy.

Les contemporains de Mme de Sévigné, y compris Bussy en dehors du temps de la brouille, appréciaient sa façon de s'exprimer par écrit et son art de conversation. Selon Mlle de Scudéry, «sa conversation est aisée, divertissante et naturelle; elle parle juste, elle parle bien et [...] elle écrit comme elle parle, c'est-à-dire le plus agréablement et le plus galamment qu'il est possible» (1328). Quant à Mme de La Fayette, elle s'émerveille sur le talent de son amie: «votre esprit pare et embellit si fort votre personne, qu'il n'y en a point au monde de si agréable. Lors que vous êtes animée dans une conversation dont la crainte est bannie, tout ce que vous dites a un tel charme et vous sied si bien que vos paroles attirent les ris et les grâces autour de vous» (73).

On ne trouve guère dans les *Lettres* de remarques de la marquise sur ses portraits élogieux. Cela s'explique peut-être par le fait qu'il reste très peu de lettres de Mme de Sévigné de cette époque de sa vie. Le 1er décembre 1675 elle fait allusion à son portrait dressé par Mme de La Fayette:

> Nous trouvâmes [dans des paperasses de Mme de La Trémouille] des infinités de portraits, entre autres celui que Mme de La Fayette fit de moi sous le nom d'un inconnu: il vaut mieux que moi, mais ceux qui m'eussent aimée, il y a seize ans, l'auraient pu trouver ressemblant (II, 176).

Est-ce la modestie propre aux héroïnes romanesques qui a poussé la marquise à être si peu bavarde sur ce point? Ou peut-être évoquer, seize ans après, la beauté d'antan lui fut pénible?

Mme de Sévigné incarnait, au moins selon ses portraits élogieux, l'idéal de la femme mondaine, belle, intelligente, spirituelle et vertueuse. Est-on sûr que ses deux amies aient relevé les véritables traits du caractère de la marquise, mais en tout état de cause leur vision correspondait aux souhaits de l'épistolière et aux exigences du milieu mondain. Citons Costar qui en décembre 1658 écrit: «J'oubliais à vous dire, Madame, que *l'Inconnu* ne vous connaît pas assez. Je ne suis pas trop mal satisfait de ce qu'il dit de votre visage et de votre taille. Mais, bon Dieu! s'il était entré bien avant dans votre âme, il y aurait bien découvert d'autres trésors que ceux dont il parle» (I, 47).

Sur l'exemple de ces trois portraits on remarque bien que la diversité était possible même dans une forme aussi fixée que celle-ci. Cela ne dépendait pas du modèle, mais de l'habileté du portraitiste. Romanesques et mondains, les portraits dressés par Mlle de Scudéry et par Bussy font partie de romans et tous les deux sont glissés dans la conversation: le premier dans celle d'Amilcar et d'Emilie, le deuxième dans la conversation entre Bussy et le comte Marcel (le duc de Vivonne). Le plus ancien des trois, le portrait de Clarinte est peu original et il ressemble le plus à celui fait par Somaize. Tous deux s'inscrivent dans la tradition du portrait précieux et confirment l'idée que l'on se fait de ce courant esthétique (Avigdor, 1975: 61-62). Mlle de Scudéry ne manque pas de remarquer que Clarinte aime lire, chante, danse et «entend admirablement toutes les belles choses» (1329-1330). Mme de Sévigné possède dans la vie et dans le roman toutes les qualités qui, comme le souligne Roger Duchêne, lui ont permis de se trouver au centre d'un cercle que Mlle de Scudéry a représenté dans son roman. «Le roman donne à Clarinte une place à l'image de son rôle dans le cercle mondain; elle y brille grâce à son savoir-faire dans le difficile exercice de la conversation de salon; et cette habileté s'explique à son tour par d'exceptionnelles qualités d'intelligence et de tact» (1992: 133). Même si la personnalité de Mme de Sévigné réelle constitue son fondement, ce portrait est romanesque par excellence.

Sous la plume de Mme de La Fayette, déguisée en *Inconnu*, «le portrait devient badinage. [...] Ecrit par un amoureux véritable ou feint, il contient déclarations d'amour, prières, protestations de fidélité»(Plantié, 370). En effet l'homme inconnu se plaint que Mme de Sévigné ait donné toute sa tendresse à Mme de La Fayette et qu'il n'y ait pas d'homme digne de posséder son cœur. Le portrait est romanesque dans la mesure où son auteur est une femme déguisée en homme, romancière et parce qu'il est conçu comme si c'était un amant mystérieux, à l'image de celui d'un roman, qui s'adresserait à sa bien-aimée: «Vous pouvez juger [...] que si je vous suis Inconnu, vous ne m'êtes pas inconnue, et qu'il faut que j'aie eu plus d'une fois l'honneur de vous voir et de vous entretenir pour avoir démêlé ce qui fait en vous cet agrément dont tout le monde est surpris» (73-74).

Autant dans *Clélie* la présence du portraitiste n'est pas sensible, autant dans les deux autres portraits les auteurs sont présents et se mettent en scène. Bussy veut paraître objectif pour augmenter la force de ses formules ironiques. Son portrait est romanesque parce qu'il s'inscrit dans la parodie, dans le courant des romans satiriques. Charles Sorel dans *Le Berger extravagant* trouve qu'on se moque des dames et on leur fait «injure» quand on leur dit que «leur visage est de neige, de roses, de cristal et d'ivoire, parce que cette matière n'est pas si noble que celle dont il est composé» (89-90). D'ailleurs, dans son livre, il y a le portrait de Charite dessiné par Crispin de Pass où la description de la femme est prise à la lettre et on y voit les yeux en vrais soleils, aux cheveux de vrais hameçons pour attraper les cœurs ou les lèvres en vraies branches de corail. Bussy va dans le même sens. Le portrait élogieux est fade, ennuyeux et de surcroît faux, car la perfection qu'il décrit n'existe que dans les livres. «Bussy a écrit la dernière grande galerie de peintures à la mode, qui est aussi la première grande satire de la dite mode. [...] Il accumule les stéréotypes, les procédés purement mondains, pour mieux déconsidérer le portrait immobile, figé, hiératique, et pour obliger ses lecteurs à préférer le portrait plus vrai de l'homme imparfait, mais vivant»(Plantier: 287).

Ainsi le portrait permet de «pénétrer le secret d'une personnalité» (Craveri 272) se souciant peu de ce que les bienséances imposaient ou imposaient d'ignorer. L'image de Mme de Sévigné qui surgit de ses lettres est bien celle d'une femme spirituelle, gaie, hardie même, mais n'oubliant jamais les aspects tangibles de la vie.

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Małgorzata Szymańska

Construction et déconstruction des mythes suisses

Dans cet article, qui se propose de présenter certains des mythes suisses ainsi que quelques exemples de leur mise en question dans la littérature helvétique, avant tout romande, le terme de mythe sera utilisé dans son acception large. Parmi les différentes définitions proposées, nous choisissons celles qui voient dans le mythe une « représentation de faits ou de personnages souvent réels déformés ou amplifiés par l'imagination collective, une longue tradition littéraire » ou bien une « image simplifiée, souvent illusoire, que des groupes humains élaborent ou acceptent au sujet d'un individu ou d'un fait et qui joue un rôle déterminant dans leur comportement ou leur appréciation » (Le Nouveau Petit Robert : 1996).

Pour comprendre un pays, son histoire et sa culture, il est indispensable d'appréhender aussi les mythes que celles-ci ont inspirés et qui les ont inspirées. Comme tous les autres pays, la Suisse a ses mythes. Et comme partout, leur importance dans la vie sociale change selon l'époque. Dans certaines périodes historiques leur vitalité, voire leur agressivité, s'accroît, dans d'autres, ils continuent une existence pour ainsi dire latente. En Suisse, le recours aux mythes fut particulièrement fréquent pendant la période de gestation et de consolidation de l'Etat moderne, c'est-à-dire au XIXe siècle. A cette époque, on voyait dans les mythes une sorte de dénominateur commun, un facteur d'intégration, le moyen de réunir autour des mêmes valeurs, dans un même Etat, des populations de langues, de confessions et de traditions différentes. Les mythes suisses s'y prêtaient mieux que l'histoire commune des cantons formant la Confédération laquelle fut, jusqu'à 1848, un ensemble flou, une alliance lâche de petits Etats et de leurs territoires-sujets. Les mythes ont d'ailleurs un tel pouvoir et une telle force d'attraction que les tentatives de leur instrumentalisation sont universels. Ainsi, au XXe s., les mythes suisses, en particulier les mythes fondateurs, furent souvent récupérés, notamment à des fins politiques, parfois d'ailleurs pour défendre des idées opposées.

Entre les mythes et le sentiment d'identité nationale il y a un lien direct. La connaissance des mythes est donc nécessaire pour pouvoir approcher l'identité des habitants de tout pays. Il est évident que, sans les mythes, cette dernière serait sensiblement appauvrie. On pourrait citer de nombreux exemples prouvant que les crises identitaires s'accompagnent de tentatives de démystification dont l'ampleur et la violence sont directement proportionnelles à l'ampleur de la crise elle-même.

Tout porte à croire que la Suisse traverse de nos jours une telle crise. Celle-ci résulte à la fois des transformations politiques qui se sont opérées depuis quinze dernières années en Europe, en particulier en ce qui concerne la chute du communisme et l'élargissement de l'Union Européenne (dont la Suisse ne fait pas partie), de certaines révélations concernant son passé pendant la seconde guerre mondiale, de la crise de ses institutions politiques, de la mise en question de sa neutralité ou, enfin, d'événements d'ordre économique qui ont ébranlé la société suisse, tels que, par exemple, la récente faillite de la compagnie aérienne Swissair. Avant de voir comment cette crise identitaire engendre des tentatives de démystification dans la littérature suisse, nous rappellerons les principaux mythes ainsi que les étapes de leur construction.

Nous commencerons par celui qui est connu dans la culture européenne sous le nom de « mythe suisse ». Son rayonnement dans l'Europe du XVIIIe et du XIXe siècles fut universel. A l'origine de ce mythe, il y a quelques textes d'auteurs suisses, dont le plus célèbre, le poème didactico-lyrique d'Albrecht von Haller intitulé *Les Alpes* paraît en 1732 et sera traduit en français dès 1749. Cette oeuvre, qui est à la base de la perception de la Suisse comme du pays de l'idylle alpestre, non corrompu par le progrès de la civilisation, synonyme de tous les maux, connut une renommée européenne et contribua à l'accroissement de l'intérêt pour ce pays. De très nombreux auteurs, d'origine suisse, comme Jean-Jacques Rousseau ou Mme de Staël, mais aussi française, allemande ou anglaise développèrent dans leurs textes, le plus souvent dans les récits de leurs voyages en Suisse, élément incontournable de toute biographie intellectuelle dès le début du XIXe siècle, une image idéalisée de ce pays. Ils virent dans la Suisse un paradis sur terre habité par un peuple doté de toutes les vertus, libre, simple, travailleur, vivant en symbiose avec une nature splendide (que l'on limitait d'ordinaire aux régions de montagne), fidèle à ses traditions ancestrales et par là même capable de résister à la corruption du monde moderne. Selon Claude Reichler (1998 : 8), *La Suisse* [...] *fut constituée comme un des espaces de projection destinés à recevoir et à préserver les représentations du monde que les sociétés avancées de l'âge des Lumières voyaient disparaître. Le cosmopolitisme des voyageurs européens y donna refuge à la représentation inversée de lui-même ; la culture moderne en gestation y fixa sa contre-image.* A leur tour, les Suisses, en particulier les adeptes du mouvement intellectuel appelé « helvétisme », chercheront à démontrer l'antériorité des traditions autochtones sur la représentation faite par les voyageurs étrangers : *En somme, fonder le caractère national et, si l'on peut dire, ontologique, du mythe suisse* [...] *Le mythe devient une contrainte mentale et sociale par la volonté d'appropriation des Suisses eux-mêmes, qui se sont d'autant plus efforcés de ressembler à l'image que leur tendait la culture européenne qu'ils lui ont dénié son caractère de représentation construite. Ce redoublement de l'identité produisit à la fois l'assurance et l'anxiété.* (18) Ainsi, le plus célèbre des mythes suisses, où il n'est pas difficile de retrouver des éléments du mythe de l'Âge d'or, est en grande partie l'oeuvre d'écrivains étrangers. La contribution étrangère à l'élaboration des mythes suisses semble être leur trait distinctif. Elle fera dire à l'écrivain suisse d'expression allemande Peter Bichsel (1970 :16-17*): L'image que nous nous faisons de notre pays est un produit importé. Nous vivons dans la légende que l'on a créée autour de nous.*

A mesure que l'on avance dans le XIXe s., un autre mythe suisse prend le devant de la scène, celui de Guillaume Tell. Il incarne les deux thèmes chers au Romantisme, celui de la liberté et celui de l'individu exceptionnel. Il a d'ailleurs des éléments communs au mythe précédent, en particulier le décor des Alpes, vrai lieu mythique. Le mythe de Tell trouvera sa plus pleine expression dans le drame de Frédéric Schiller, *Guillaume Tell* , mis en scène par Goethe au théâtre de Weimar en 1804.

La fortune littéraire du mythe de Tell dure depuis la fin du XVIe siècle, c'est-à-dire depuis le moment où il fut raconté pour la première fois dans une chronique anonyme, *Le Livre blanc de Sarnen*. Avant et après Schiller, Tell sera le héros de très nombreuses oeuvres littéraires comme nous l'indiquent par exemple Manfred Gsteiger (1998) et Alfred Berchtold (2004). Le mythe de Tell est souvent présenté comme la partie essentielle du mythe du Grütli, mythe fondateur de la Confédération helvétique. Ce qui semble intéressant, c'est l'origine étrangère probable du mythe de Tell. Le point culminant des discussions sur ce sujet sera atteint en 1760 avec la publication anonyme du pamphlet intitulé *Guillaume Tell – une fable danoise*, bientôt brûlé à Altdorf par le bourreau du canton d'Uri dont Tell serait originaire. Mais indépendamment de son origine, suisse ou scandinave, le mythe de Tell connut une carrière universelle : *Avec la Révolution française,* [ce] *mythe helvétique devient un mythe européen* (Gsteiger 1998 :691). Cependant, au cours de toute sa longue histoire littéraire, le personnage de Tell conservera un statut ambigu, devenant, à tour de rôle, l'incontestable chef de la révolte qui aboutira à la libération des Waldstätten, un homme de la nature individualiste, un sage des Alpes, un solitaire, ou même un marginal.

Dans son livre intitulé *Mythes et identité de la Suisse* (1986 : 66), André Reszler énumère trois autres mythes suisses qui continuent de sous-tendre la mentalité collective suisse. Il s'agit du « Sonderfall Schweiz » (destin particulier de la Suisse), du « consensus helvétique » et du mythe de la Suisse-terre de refuge. Il faut chercher les origines du premier au Moyen Age, c'est-à-dire dans les origines historiques de la Confédération suisse. *Son existence* [de la CH] *apparaît comme un défi permanent à l'esprit des temps*, constate Reszler (68). En effet, les tendances unificatrices, présentes par exemple dans l'Allemagne voisine, ne se sont pas affirmées en Suisse, tout comme l'opposition entre les villes et les campagnes. Citant Edgar Fasel (1983 : 26), il rappelle en outre que la Suisse est le seul Etat formé *par le consentement mutuel des peuples divers, sans l'aide d'aucun facteur d'identification, langue et culture communes, détermination géographique historique partagée, identité ethnique, religion, dogme politique, ambition d'une dynastie.* Pour Reszler, *Sonderfall Schweiz* n'est rien d'autre qu'une variante, en partie laïcisée, du mythe du peuple élu. Tout au long de son histoire, la Suisse a conservé ce statut de pays particulier. Il se manifeste dans de nombreux domaines, en commençant par ses institutions politiques. Et comme le montre son histoire récente, elle continue de vouloir rester une exception.

Le mythe du consensus tire, lui aussi, son origine du Moyen-Age. La concordance est déjà présente dans le Pacte de 1291 où elle est qualifiée du plus grand bien. De nos jours, la Suisse est un exemple classique de démocratie de concordance. Celle-ci est à la base de ses institutions politiques (« la formule magique ») mais elle commande aussi à la vie sociale comme le prouve la « paix du travail », engagement des partenaires sociaux à résoudre tous les problèmes par la voie de la conciliation.

Le troisième mythe, celui de la Suisse-terre de refuge, est, lui aussi, historiquement fondé. Comme les précédents, il a sa source au Moyen Age. Mais c'est au XVIe siècle, avec la vague des réfugiés protestants, que la Suisse mérite vraiment ce nom. Aux réfugiés religieux s'ajouteront, dès le début du XIXe s., de nombreux réfugiés politiques, des Allemands et des Italiens, des républicains français fuyant Napoléon III, des Russes et des Polonais et bien d'autres exilés encore. Ils furent bien accueillis et disposaient en général d'une assez grande liberté. Ainsi, dans une Europe secouée par les révolutions et les guerres, ils diffusèrent une image positive de la Suisse, terre d'asile et pays de la liberté et de la démocratie.

En guise de conclusion de cet historique nécessairement sommaire de certains mythes helvétiques, nous pouvons donc dire qu'à la base de l'identité suisse et du sentiment national suisse, il y a un certain nombre de représentations mythiques, se référant le plus souvent au Moyen-Age, qui ont marqué et qui marquent toujours de façon très forte la culture politique, le débat intellectuel ainsi que les littératures de ce pays. Comme nous l'avons vu, l'importance de la contribution étrangère à la construction et l'affermissement de ces mythes n'est pas négligeable et décide de leur spécificité.

Selon Etienne Barilier, tout Suisse, et surtout tout écrivain suisse, se voit obligé *(...) de conquérir son identité, et même son existence, en secouant l'emprise des mythes* *qui ne seraient pas si paralysants s'ils n'étaient bâtis sur certaines réalités incontestables, comme la diversité de l'Helvétie, sa prospérité, son activité économique, sa position marginale dans l'Histoire contemporaine* (1982 : 2). Selon Barilier, l'abondance des mythes, loin d'« enrichir » l'écrivain suisse, crée chez lui, au contraire, une incertitude quant à son identité, un doute quant à sa légitimité et, par conséquent, *(...) un certain pouvoir d'interrogation* (14). Qui est évidemment un enrichissement d'une autre espèce.

La littérature suisse est aux prises avec les mythes helvétiques depuis la fin de la seconde guerre mondiale. Dans la littérature alémanique, ils seront mis en question dès les années 1950, surtout par les deux plus grands écrivains suisses d'expression allemande, Max Frisch et Friedrich Dürrenmatt dont l'oeuvre, surtout théâtrale, préoccupée de l'actualité, témoigne d'un engagement social et politique. Satirique et critique à l'égard de la société, elle s'en prend surtout aux défauts de la bourgeoisie suisse, en particulier à l'égoïsme helvétique. Dans les années suivantes, la littérature alémanique continuera de faire preuve d'une grande pertinence politico-sociale qui s'exprime souvent dans une tentative plus générale de démystification. Elle sera l'oeuvre d'auteurs de la génération ultérieure comme par exemple Peter Bichsel ou Hugo Loetscher. Nombre de textes polémiques, souvent à caractère d'essais, verront le jour dans les années soixante-dix et quatre-vingt. L'attitude ambivalente des écrivains de cette génération envers leur patrie, l'esprit critique à l'égard de l'histoire nationale et en particulier de l'isolationnisme de la Suisse, enfin la volonté de réagir aux événements politiques sont les traits caractéristiques de nombreux textes écrits à cette époque. Cette période constitue le point culminant du débat de démystification en Suisse. Nous citerons, parmi les principaux essais qui y ont contribué, publiés à l'origine en allemand mais qui ont eu aussi un très grand retentissement dans les cantons romands, *La Suisse du Suisse* (1970) de Peter Bichsel et *Si Dieu était suisse...* (1983) de Hugo Loetscher. Ce dernier, écrivain, voyageur et enseignant, constate dans son livre le décalage entre la réalité helvétique et la représentation que les Suisses en ont. Il observe en particulier la persistance du mythe de la particularité helvétique qu'il considère comme un anachronisme : né dans des conditions historiques bien déterminées, il garde son impact dans la Suisse contemporaine comme si rien n'avait changé. Loetcher met en doute la différence entre la Suisse et le reste du monde ce qui est, d'ailleurs, loin de l'attrister : *ce qu'on y perd de particulier est compensé par ce qu'on y gagne en mondial*, observe-t-il (1991 :143). Quant à Bichsel, il regrette que la Suisse ait perdu la foi en sa mission humanitaire car, à son avis, elle a perdu ainsi son identité. Désormais elle ne se distingue plus en rien des autres peuples, sinon par sa plus grande prospérité.

La littérature d'expression française a, elle aussi, ses essayistes qui s'en sont pris aux mythes suisses. Parmi les plus connus, citons Jean-Baptiste Mauroux, auteur d'une mise en question de l'histoire récente suisse, *Du bonheur d'être suisse sous Hitler* (1968). Avec cette oeuvre, dont le titre en dit long, il ouvre la voie à la discussion sur l'attitude des Suisses pendant la seconde guerre mondiale, visant du même coup le mythe de l'exception suisse (par le biais de la question de sa neutralité) et celui de la Suisse-terre de refuge. Un autre Romand, Jean Ziegler, est l'auteur de deux brûlots qui, en leur temps, ont bouleversé la société suisse, *Une Suisse au-dessus de tout soupçon* (1976) et *La Suisse lave plus blanc* (1990). Désormais Ziegler, écrivain et homme politique controversé, sera considéré comme le principal auteur du plus récent et du plus négatif des mythes suisses, celui de la Suisse occulte, de la Suisse des banques et des multinationales, devant sa prospérité actuelle à ses rapines. Le cas de Ziegler démontre comment, en s'attaquant à certains mythes, on peut contribuer à en faire naître de nouveaux.

Sur ce fond fait d'essais se distingue par son originalité l'opuscule de Max Frisch intitulé *Guillaume Tell pour les Ecoles*. L'ouvrage, dont l'original allemand a été publié en 1971, propose une version subversive du plus célèbre mythe suisse. La mise en question du mythe de Tell faite par Frisch n'est pas évidemment la première. Comme nous l'avons indiqué ci-dessus, les tentatives de démystification de la légende de Tell datent déjà du XVIIe siècle mais elles prennent de l'ampleur au XVIIIe, entre autres grâce à Voltaire pour qui *l'histoire de la pomme est suspecte [...] et tout ce qui l'accompagne ne l'est pas moins* (Gsteiger : 689). Mais le XXe siècle connaît aussi des tentatives de déboulonnage du mythe de Tell. En 1916, le Vaudois Fernand Chavannes présente à Genève son drame intitulé *Guillaume le Fou* où le héros mythique suisse est un vrai marginal, un être solitaire qui finit pas devenir incommode pour sa communauté. L'originalité et l'audace de Chavannes consistent à situer le vrai conflit entre les montagnards alliés et ensuite entre ceux-ci et Tell qui devient leur victime : il sera assassiné au dernier acte par ses compatriotes. La démarche de démystification de Max Frisch est différente. Dans son récit, il se distancie de la version canonique du mythe de Tell, pétrifiée dans la mentalité des Suisses par le drame de Schiller (il rompt ainsi, de façon indirecte, avec les versions proposées par la *Chronique helvétique* de Tschudi du XVIe s. et la synthèse de Johannes von Müller, *Histoire de la Confédération suisse*, dans lesquelles avait puisé le dramaturge allemand). Recourant à l'ironie et à la distanciation, Frisch cherche avant tout à dépoétiser le mythe, à le transformer en une histoire banale, à contester ses éléments premiers par un souci de vraisemblance. Dans un paysage claustrophobe car entouré de montagnes (le voyageur a l'impression de s'être trouvé au fond d'une citerne, la beauté de la Suisse ne sera « inventée » que cinq siècles plus tard), où souffle le foehn (ce vent sec et chaud des Alpes suisses et autrichiennes dont on connaît le pouvoir sur le psychisme humain), peuplé d'habitants goitreux et xénophobes arrive un bailli qui n'a rien de diabolique, qui est, au contraire, tolérant et ouvert. Malgré lui, il se laissera entraîner dans la confrontation avec Tell, un homme coléreux, taciturne, imprévisible, bref un « sauvage » qui ne ressemble aucunement à un héros exemplaire. Tous deux, le « fonctionnaire » des Habsbourg et Tell seront en somme victimes d'un concours de circonstances ainsi que du fils de ce dernier, un adolescent arrogant qui invente l'épreuve de la pomme. Les événements sont racontés du point de vue du bailli et accompagnés d'un vaste appareil critique, présentant différentes hypothèses historiques, des commentaires de l'écrivain, des citations d'auteurs suisses contemporains et de documents d'archives que Frisch avait soigneusement dépouillés. Selon lui, le dramaturge allemand Schiller (citoyen helvétique à titre posthume depuis 1860) est responsable d'un grave malentendu helvétique, à savoir d'une fausse estimation des Suisses par eux-mêmes : l'idéalisme allemand dont est imprégné son *Guillaume Tell* n'avait jamais motivé le comportement des Suisses.

Jean-Marie Roulin constate dans *Histoire de la littérature en Suisse romande* (1999 : 238) qu'*aucun écrivain* [romand] *ne pose de regard critique sur le passé de la Suisse, ni dans la figure de son personnage, ni dans sa parole de narrateur.* Cette opinion nous paraît trop sévère. Certes, la littérature alémanique est *plus militante socialement et plus attentive à l'encrage historique de l'individu* (238) mais force est de constater que les trente dernières années ont apporté en Suisse romande un certain nombre de textes, souvent à caractère autobiographique, où l'histoire de la Suisse, en particulier son histoire de guerre, est passée au crible et dont les conclusions portent un coup aux mythes suisses, surtout à celui qui présente ce pays comme une terre d'accueil. Nous en choisissons à titre d'exemples ceux où le problème est posé de la façon la plus ouverte.

La parution en 1967 de l'étude de l'historien allemand Alfred Häsler (dont le titre *Das Boot ist voll, La Barque est pleine,* reprend la formule, tristement célèbre, du conseiller fédéral von Steiger qui, en 1942, avait justifié en ces termes la fermeture des frontières suisses aux réfugiés juifs), précipite la réflexion littéraire sur l'attitude de la Suisse au cours de la Seconde guerre mondiale. Elle se trouvera stimulée par la traduction en 1971 du livre en français (sous le titre La *Suisse, terre d'asile ?*) et la sortie, en 1980, du film de Markus Imhoof tourné d'après le livre de Häsler. Parmi les oeuvres qui s'y réfèrent, le récit autobiographique *Les Années silencieuses* (1982) d'Yvette Z'graggen est le plus important. Dans ce texte, écrit directement sous l'influence du film d'Imhoof, la romancière genevoise, mise en accusation avec toute sa génération, essaie *de comprendre* ces *années silencieuses* (entre autres en dépouillant le quotidien *La Suisse* des années 1942 et 1943, ainsi que ses deux agendas personnels respectifs*), de* [se] *situer par rapport à cet épisode de notre histoire* (22-23). En particulier en répondant à deux questions : *Aurais-je pu, si je l'avais voulu, être in-*

formée de ce qui arrivait aux Juifs ?Aurais-je pu, si je l'avais voulu, me rendre compte que la Suisse procédait à des refoulements, envoyant ainsi des gens à la mort ? (11). Au bout de sa quête, ayant répondu affirmativement aux deux questions, elle cherche et trouve des éléments d'explication possible, sans toutefois essayer de se justifier, de se déculpabiliser en recourant à des facteurs extérieurs : C*ette histoire est très ancienne, mais elle n'est pas finie. Pour ma génération, elle ne sera jamais tout à fait finie et Markus Imhoof a eu raison d'enfoncer ce coin dans nos consciences, de venir, après quarante ans, nous déranger, nous troubler, en nous rappelant que l'indifférence, elle aussi, peut tuer.* (228)

Les rapports difficiles des Suisses avec leur passé de guerre sont le sujet de nombreux textes. Citons par exemple, parmi ceux que l'on qualifie de romans, *Peinture avec pistolet* (1993)) et *Le feu au lac* (1998) de Jean-Luc Benoziglio. Le premier, « un roman de formation et d'imagination » selon la définition qu'en donne son auteur qui ne dissimule pas son caractère autobiographique, présente des péripéties du personnage-narrateur choisies dans les années les plus importantes de sa vie. C'est l'année 1944 qui est particulièrement intéressante de notre perspective. Le contraste entre la grande Histoire qui se déroule ailleurs et la petite, vécue par le héros, encore enfant, engendre le sourire. Le ton ironique sur lequel sont présentées les péripéties héroïco-comiques du protagoniste n'empêchent pas pour autant l'auteur d'esquisser la situation de la Suisse pendant la seconde guerre mondiale, pays en dehors du temps et de l'Histoire, ainsi que d'aborder le sort des réfugiés juifs. Le fragment suivant permettra de s'en faire une idée : *Aux bonnes âmes jamais contentes, aux idéalistes en chambre, aux doux rêveurs méconnaissant les plus élémentaires principes de l'économie, qui déploraient qu'un pays neutre et relativement riche n'accueille qu'au compte-goutte les réfugiés en général et les juifs en particulier, on rétorquait d'abord, et d'une, qu'on n'était pas les seuls à agir ainsi* [...] *Et [...] nos donneurs de leçons et nos prix de vertu n'auraient-ils pas dû, au contraire, se féliciter que, chaque fois que c'était possible, on épargnât les petits et répugnât à les renvoyer barboter dans la neige profonde ou s'entasser dans les trains au départ de Drancy ?* (40). Le même leitmotiv retentit dans un autre roman de Benoziglio, lui aussi largement autobiographique, *le Feu au lac : Malgré tout, j'ai rêvé qu'un grand élan de générosité submerge ce pays. Que, tellement privilégiés jusqu'ici dans cette Europe à feu et à sang, nous ouvrions un peu plus les bras aux misérables et aux persécutés. Que nous nous serrions pour faire un peu de place à ceux qu'on entasse, privions pour donner un peu de pain à ceux qu'on affame* [...] *Et si une telle attitude devait provoquer la rage de l'autre bouffeur de tapis à Berlin, j'ai rêvé que nous faisions bloc pour lui rire au nez et succombions peut-être sous ses coups, mais au moins le front haut* (89).

Nous terminerons cette courte présentation de textes à visée démystificatrice avec trois ouvrages récents, *Même les oiseaux* (1998) de Bernard Comment, *Nains de jardins* (1996) de Jacques-Etienne Bovard et *Bleu siècle* (1996) de Daniel de Roulet. Les deux premiers écrivains se ressemblent à plusieurs égards. Ils représentent la même génération (ils sont nés respectivement en 1960 et 1961), manifestent un penchant à la satire, ce qui les rapproche des écrivains alémaniques tels que Dürrenmatt ou Loetscher et choisissent, dans les deux oeuvres citées ci-dessus, la forme de la nouvelle. Leur thématique se ressemble, elle aussi. Ils ont une prédilection pour des sujets typiquement suisses, que l'on pourrait nommer, avec Hugo Loetscher, des *helvetica*. Les sept nouvelles qui composent le recueil au titre révélateur *Nains de jardin* ont pour objet le « paradis » suisse où des situations de la vie quotidienne échappent soudainement au contrôle et tournent en catastrophe, comme par exemple dans la première nouvelle, *La fondue crée la bonne humeur*, où nous assistons à la rencontre d'un groupe de copropriétaires d'un immeuble qui en viennent aux mains pour le choix des chaînes de télévision à installer avec leur antenne parabolique. Recourant au grotesque, Bovard confronte dans *Nains de jardin* les mythes et les stéréotypes suisses avec une réalité quotidienne petite bourgeoise qui les détruit, faite de compromis, de lâchetés, de jalousies, d'agressivité et de petites perversions. Ces textes mettent à nu, de façon cruelle, la société suisse, avec ses obsessions secrètes et ses angoisses.

Bernard Comment, lui aussi, nous présente sur un mode satirique un univers quotidien et banal qui dissimule les absurdités, les angoisses et les contradictions de la Suisse contemporaine. Il présente un pays dont les habitants sont renfermés sur eux-mêmes, mesquins, préoccupés, voire obsédés par leur sécurité, hostiles aux étrangers. La nouvelle *Migrations*, met en scène une femme abandonnée à qui ses voisins font savoir, par oiseaux interposés, combien sa présence est indésirable: *On me faisait savoir que les oiseaux les plus appréciés dans ce pays n'étaient ni des étrangers, ni des immigrés, mais des saisonniers. Ils savaient repartir, eux* (154).

Dans son roman *Bleu siècle*, Daniel de Roulet confronte aussi les mythes et les réalités de la Suisse contemporaine. Comme l'avait fait Bernard Comment dans certaines des nouvelles réunies dans *Même les oiseaux*, il critique la société et la politique suisses en recourant au registre de la fable. Il nous présente un centenaire extrêmement riche qui, bien que volontairement retranché du monde sur le lac Léman, y reste attaché par un réseau informatique qui lui permet de contrôler les marchés. Il n'est pas difficile de voir dans ce personnage l'incarnation de la Suisse, d'une Suisse qui s'est volontairement mise hors de l'Histoire, d'une Suisse figée dans sa volonté de rester différente, tout en tirant profit de sa situation.

Choisissant ces quelques oeuvres romandes dont le caractère démystificateur nous paraît incontestable, nous voulions surtout qu'elles soient représentatives des générations respectives de leurs auteurs et des registres employés. Nous tenions aussi à souligner les affinités qui unissent les deux littératures suisses, la romande et l'alémanique. Et bien que cette liste puisse être prolongée, il serait sans doute exagéré de dire que la démystification est le plus grand souci des auteurs suisses d'expression française et ou qu'ils essaient ces dernières années de « rattraper le retard » qui les sépare dans ce domaine de leurs collègues suisses allemands. Force est cependant de constater que les écrivains romands d'aujourd'hui ne cessent de s'interroger sur leur histoire nationale et sur leur identité et, partant, sur leurs mythes.

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Grażyna Bystydzieńska

Recepcja Jane Austen w Polsce

Jane Austen jest powieściopisarką bardzo popularną w Anglii, w Polsce znaną może bardziej ze względu na adaptacje filmowe, które ukazały się w latach 90-tych. Jej popularność w Anglii wynika z faktu, że powieści jej uważane są za kwintesencję angielskości. Akcja powieści, związana z perypetiami miłosnymi, toczy się w posiadłościach ziemskich, na angielskiej prowincji. W akcji powieści bierze udział ograniczony krąg postaci i to pogłębione psychologicznie relacje między nimi stają się kanwą powieści. Te pogłębione relacje między postaciami prowadzą też do lepszego samopoznania bohaterek powieści. Jane Austen pisząca pod koniec XVIII wieku i w okresie romantyzmu, z jednej strony jest symptomem konserwatyzmu, pochwala dawny układ społeczny, a przede wszystkim tradycyjny układ wartości, z drugiej strony wprowadza pewne nowatorskie w owym czasie elementy. Nowatorstwo dotyczy, przede wszystkim, wprowadzenia nowych postaci kobiecych, różniących się zwłaszcza od tych wzorców kobiecości propagowanych w popularnych podręcznikach tzw. „conduct books", w których ideał kobiety to osoba łagodna, pełna poświęcenia, w rezultacie bierna. W powieściach Jane Austen bohaterki kobiece to często osoby inteligentne, dowcipne, posiadające pewną dozę niezależności, przynajmniej w sądach, które pragną kierować się głosem serca w wyborze partnera. Również zastosowanie narzędzi teoretycznoliterackich do jej powieści odkryło nowatorstwo tej pisarki zwłaszcza w zakresie użycia technik narracyjnych-ciekawe zastosowanie fokalizacji, indywidualizacja języka postaci, nowatorstwo szczególnie na poziomie składniowym.

Badając losy recepcji tej pisarki w Polsce nie sposób nie zauważyć jak bardzo skomplikowana historia Polski zaważyła na recepcji tej pisarki w naszym kraju.

Brak jest dowodów świadczących o recepcji Jane Austen w Polsce w XIX wieku. Nasuwa się pytanie jakie były tego powody, gdyż jednocześnie można zauważyć duże zainteresowanie twórczością pisarzy współczesnych Austen, zwłaszcza Byrona i Scotta; już w latach 20-tych i 30-tych pojawiają się pierwsze tłumaczenia ich utworów w Polsce. Adam Mickiewicz przetłumaczył fragmenty *Giaura* Byrona już przed

1821 rokiem, a całość tej powieści poetyckiej w 1835 roku. *Korsarz* Byrona przetłumaczony został prozą przez Bruno Kicińskiego w 1820 roku, a wierszem przez Odyńca w 1835 roku. Kazimierz Brodziński już w 1821 roku dokonał tłumaczenia *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* (*Poema ostatniego barda*) Scotta, a Karol Sienkiewicz *The Lady of the Lake* (*Pani Jeziora*) w 1822. Po 1826 roku ukazały się liczne tłumaczenia powieści Scotta, głównie w tłumaczeniu Franciszka Salezego Dmochowskiego (Słodkowska 1973). Dopiero powstanie listopadowe 1831 roku zatrzymało na pewien czas aktywność translatorską i wydawniczą.

Wydaje się, że w Polsce pod zaborami, pisarze, często przebywający na emigracji, zainteresowani byli bardziej „rewolucyjną" twórczością. Twórczością, której głównym zainteresowaniem było zdobycie niepodległości zarówno przez kraj jak i jej obywateli. To zainteresowanie przede wszystkim literaturą niepodległościową, patriotyczną widać w specyficznej recepcji Byrona w Polsce, gdzie w tłumaczeniach eksponowano „rewolucyjne" fragmenty jego dzieł, niekiedy kosztem psychologii bohatera czy egzotycznego tła (Krajewska 1980, Bystydzieńska 2004). Polityka wydawnicza, prowadzona w różnych zaborach przez arystokratyczne rodziny (w Królestwie Kongresowym działalność taką prowadzili Tadeusz Mostowski i Walerian Krasiński, pod zaborem pruskim – Edward Raczyński i Tytus i Jan Działyńscy, w Galicji – Józef Ossoliński) (Bieńkowska, Chamerska 1987: 268) była nastawiona na wydawanie książek podtrzymujących ducha narodowego, na przykład o historii Polski czy prezentujących życiorysy sławnych Polaków. W Polsce literatura angielska często była przyswajana za pośrednictwem tłumaczeń francuskich, natomiast francuskie przekłady powieści Austen nie były zbyt spektakularne (Southam 1968: 26). W Polsce, w okresie romantyzmu, stosunkowo małe było zainteresowanie powieścią jako gatunkiem, dużo większą popularnością cieszyła się poezja i dramat poetycki. Pogodne i humorystyczne powieści Jane Austen nie leżały w kręgu zainteresowań polskiego romantyzmu, wydawały się poruszać zbyt trywialne tematy, prezentowały uporządkowany, harmonijny świat.

Odmienne było też spojrzenie na postać kobiety; w romantyzmie polskim tzw. „wyzwolenie" kobiety następowało poprzez zadania patriotyczne i poświęcenie, które była skłonna ponieść wspólnie z mężczyznami (Janion 1996), np. w *Grażynie* Mickiewicza, a nie poprzez niezależność sądów, np. na temat miłości jak ma to miejsce u Jane Austen.

Większe zainteresowanie Anglią nastąpiło po odzyskaniu przez Polskę niepodległości w 1918, wtedy też powstają pierwsze Katedry Anglistyki, w Krakowie już wcześniej, w 1911, w Warszawie w 1923. W latach 30-tych można zauważyć wzrost liczby tłumaczeń z języka angielskiego, dotychczas najbardziej popularnym językiem był francuski, a po nim niemiecki. Ze względu na napiętą sytuację polityczną największe zainteresowanie wzbudzała literatura współczesna (Kurowska 1987: 40). Jednakże właśnie wtedy pojawia się pierwsze tłumaczenie Jane Austen na język polski w 1934 roku dokonane przez Janinę Sujkowską dla Warszawskiego Wydawnictwa Współczesnego, wydawnictwa specjalizującego się w wydawaniu literatury rozrywkowej, ale wzmianki o tej pisarce pojawiły się wcześniej, w pracach pierwszych znanych anglistów polskich Romana Dyboskiego z UJ i Andrzeja Tretiaka z UW (u tego ostatniego dość obszerne i interesujące nawet dla współczesnego czytelnika) (Tretiak 1928).

Janina Sujkowska dość znana tłumaczka tego okresu (oprócz Anieli Zagórskiej, tłumaczki Conrada, brak było wybitnych tłumaczy z języka angielskiego) - tłumaczyła również *Wichrowe Wzgórza* Emily Brontë, a także utwory D. H. Lawrence'a, Wellsa, Somerset Maughama, czy z literatury amerykańskiej *Moby Dick* Melville'a.

Sense and Sensibility w tłumaczeniu Sujkowskiej zostało wydane pod tytułem *Rozsądek i uczucie*. Jest to tłumaczenie średniej jakości. Tłumaczka często wyjaśnia niuanse kulturowe, na przykład, w tekście angielskim postaci kobiece występujące jako Miss Dashwood czy Miss Steele, w tekście polskim mają dodane imiona, żeby nie było wątpliwości, że chodzi o starszą z sióstr. Dodaje więcej wyjaśnień w tekście, żeby polski czytelnik miał jak najmniej wątpliwości. Jednak, na ogół, w tłumaczeniu jest więcej opuszczeń niż dodanych fragmentów. Tłumaczka bardziej koncentruje się na akcji niż na niezbyt rozbudowanych w oryginale opisach stanów emocjonalnych postaci. Sujkowska opuszcza też krótkie wzmianki o pogodzie czy o posiłkach, które także tworzą klimat tej powieści i osadzają ją w realnym kontekście. Opuszcza też wzmianki dotyczące architektury krajobrazu, mając zapewne trudności ze znalezieniem odpowiedników w języku polskim. Tłumaczce brak jest konsekwencji w tłumaczeniu imion; niektóre pozostawiła w wersji angielskiej, na przykład, Elinor, Marianne, Fanny, podczas gdy większość pozostałych imion zostało przetłumaczonych na język polski. Sujkowska niefortunnie stosuje zdrobnienia, formy „panie Edku" w odniesieniu do Edwarda Ferrarsa czy „panie Janku" do pana Willoughby brzmią humorystycznie.

Austen miała więcej szczęścia do późniejszych tłumaczek; pięć z jej powieści zostało przetłumaczonych przez znaną tłumaczkę Annę Przedpełską-Trzeciakowską, a szósta powieść *Emma* też przez znaną tłumaczkę Jadwigę Dmochowską.

Pierwsze powojenne tłumaczenie powieści Austen to *Duma i uprzedzenie* (*Pride and Prejudice*) dokonane przez Annę Przedpełską-Trzeciakowską w 1956 roku. Zwłoka spowodowana została znowu skomplikowaną historią Polski, wybuch drugiej wojny światowej przerwał działalność wydawniczą w Polsce, a następujący po Jałcie okres stalinowski, nie sprzyjał promocji literatury obcej. Badając, którzy pisarze byli wydawani i tłumaczeni w Polsce w tym okresie można zauważyć, że byli to przede wszystkim pisarze o zacięciu satyrycznym i dużym ładunku krytyki społecznej w swych utworach, jak, na przykład, Defoe, Dickens, Fielding, Galsworthy, G. B. Shaw, Swift, Oscar Wilde, kilka powieści Conrada ze względu na jego polskie pochodzenie. Nie wydawano, na przykład, pisarzy eksperymentalnych jak Joyce czy Virginia Woolf, poetów Yeatsa czy T. S. Eliota, a także z powodów cenzury obyczajowej *Kochanka Lady Chatterley* Lawrence'a. Prawie niewidoczna jest powieść obyczajowa o tematyce miłosnej co tłumaczy brak powieści Jane Austen w tym okresie aż do politycznej odwilży w 1956 roku, kiedy to ukazała się *Duma i uprzedzenie* w dobrym tłumaczeniu Anny Przedpełskiej-Trzeciakowskiej, z kompetentnym posłowiem Zygmunta Kubiaka. Nieco staroświecki charakter tej powieści został zachowany poprzez dobór archaicznego słownictwa np. „obiadować", podobnie postąpi Trzeciakowska w późniejszym tłumaczeniu *Opactwa Northanger (Northanger Abbey)* z 1975 roku, gdzie również od czasu do czasu używa archaicznego słownictwa, jak na przykład „inkomodować", „paltot" czy „dystrakt". W przekładzie brak jest konsekwencji w tłumaczeniu imion, cecha ta utrzymuje się aż do czasów zupełnie współczesnych, wówczas imiona pozostawia się w wersji oryginalnej. Następne tłumaczenia powieści Austen to *Perswazje* (*Persuasion*), powieść przetłumaczona w 1962 roku przez Annę Przedpełską-Trzeciakowską, *Emma* w tłumaczeniu Jadwigi Dmochowskiej w 1963 roku, *Opactwo Northanger* w 1975, z dużą liczbą przypisów, w których Przedpełska-Trzeciakowska wyjaśnia tło kulturowe powieści i zawiłości intertekstualne tej powieści. Przedpełska-Trzeciakowska przetłumaczyła ponownie *Sense and Sensibility* jako *Rozważna i romantyczna* w 1977 roku. Najpóźniej Przedpełska-Trzeciakowska przełożyła *Mansfield Park*, bo dopiero w 1995 roku. Jest to jedyna powieść Jane Austen, którą tłumaczka opatrzyła wstępem, uważając, że może to być najtrudniejsza powieść dla polskiego czytelnika. We wstępie wyjaśnia skomplikowaną sytuację w kościele anglikańskim w owym czasie i podsuwa możliwość symbolicznej interpretacji tej powieści. Liczne wznowienia powieści Jane Austen ukazały się w latach 90-tych pod wpływem adaptacji filmowych. W recenzjach filmowych przeważa opinia, że adaptacje uatrakcyjniają powieści Jane Austen. Tytuły recenzji sugerują, że powieści Austen są traktowane jak miłosne romanse adresowane do kobiet. Są to przykładowo takie tytuły jak „Kobiety zakochane" (Kałużyński, Raczek 1996: 86-87), „Rok kobiet w kapeluszach", (Królikowska 1996: 116), „Szczęśliwe związki" (Wertenstein 1996: 13), „Manewry miłosne" (Szczerba 1996: 15), „Portrety uczuć" (Terlecka-Recknis 1997: 89). W tym czasie powieści Austen wydawano często w okładkach zbliżonych do okładek popularnej serii Harlequinów co sugerowało ich recepcję jako literaturę rozrywkową dla kobiet.

W recepcji powieści Jane Austen można zauważyć dwa trendy: jeden traktuje jej powieści jako staroświeckie romansidła, drugi, reprezentowany przez krytyków z kręgów uniwersyteckich, jako subtelne, po mistrzowsku napisane powieści. Do pierwszego nurtu należą liczne recenzje, również te wczesne, jak na przykład, recenzja *Dumy i uprzedzenia* Hieronima Michalskiego w *Nowych Książkach* z 1957 roku pod znamiennym tytułem „Klasyka zniesiona ze strychu", w której kwestionuje on wielkość Jane Austen. Pisze on: „Egzaltacja zaś Anglików udziela się w trybie zaraźliwym anglistom, którzy przekazują ją gorliwie dalej. Stąd wyprzedzająca przekład fama o Austen jako wielkiej gwieździe na firmamencie literatury" (7). Aby zdeprecjonować Austen porównuje ją z Heleną Mniszkówną, autorką *Trędowatej*. Dużo późniejsza recenzja Piotra Kebuta z 1996 roku zamieszczona w *Wiadomościach Kulturalnych* jest wprawdzie dość pochlebna, ale też pod znamiennym tytułem „Romans po angielsku". Wśród recenzji, wyróżnia się wnikliwością i trafnością spostrzeżeń, recenzja Zdzisława Najdera z 1963 o *Emmie* „Małżeństwo i prawda o ludziach" opublikowana w *Nowych Książkach*. Pisząc o charakteryzacji postaci, pokazuje w jak subtelny sposób są one budowane (indywidualizacja dialogu, ironiczny komentarz odautorski). Najder uważa, że powinno się zbadać ewentualny związek między powieściami Austen a powieściami Józefa Korzeniowskiego, zwłaszcza *Spekulant* i *Kollokacja*.

Od lat 1970-tych recepcja twórczości Jane Austen w Polsce charakteryzuje się przewagą podejścia teoretycznoliterackiego do interpretacji jej powieści, poprzez stosowanie narzędzi teoretycznoliterackich do różnych aspektów jej utworów. W ten sposób pośrednio implikowane jest uznanie dla jej technik pisarskich a same powieści zostały poważnie potraktowane. Publikacje te wywodzą się z kręgów badaczy uniwersyteckich i idą w parze z popularnością badań teoretycznoliterackich w tym okresie w Polsce, co wynika ze wzrostu roli teorii literatury w świecie, ale też znowu ze specyficznej sytuacji filologów obcych w Polsce i ich ograniczonym dostępem do materiałów źródłowych, książek, wyjazdów zagranicznych, co spowodowało, że teoria literatury stała się w latach 1970-tych i 80-tych atrakcyjną dziedziną badań i zresztą to zainteresowanie utrzymuje się w Polsce do chwili obecnej. Od lat 70-tych do chwili obecnej powstają artykuły zajmujące się, na przykład, przestrzenią literacką w jej powieściach czy też strategiami narracji, budowaniem postaci czy porównaniem fabuły w powieści Jane Austen a fabułą jej filmowej adaptacji. (Tempska 1988, Bystydzieńska 2002, Dobosiewicz 1989, Zieja 2003).

W latach 90-tych do badań nad Jane Austen w Polsce wkroczyła krytyka feministyczna, głównie poprzez prace Ilony Dobosiewicz; książkę z 1997 roku o relacjach między postaciami kobiecymi w powieściach Austen i znaczeniu tych relacji – *Female Relationships in Jane Austen's Novels: a Critique of the Female Ideal Propagated in 18th Century Conduct Literature* czy artykuły, na przykład o relacjach między siostrami w powieściach Austen (Kolek ed. 1996, 49-69).

Obecnie, głównie za sprawą krakowskiego Wydawnictwa Zielona Sowa ukazują się nowe przekłady powieści Austen: *Rozważna i romantyczna* została ponownie przetłumaczona przez Michała Filipczuka w 2003 roku, a *Emma* przez Tomasza Tesznara w 2005 roku. O tym, że powieści Austen, a przynajmniej ich tytuły funkcjonują w polskim życiu literackim świadczą oczywiste aluzje do tytułów jej powieści we współczesnym życiu literackim, na przykład, tytuł powieści Moniki Szwaji *Stateczna i postrzelona* z 2005 roku czy tytuł recenzji filmowej o aktorze grającym w adaptacji filmowej *Władcy pierścieni* według Tolkiena –Viggo Mortensenie „Rozważny i romantyczny" (Chaciński 2005). Powoli i w specyficzny sposób Jane Austen zaczęła funkcjonować w polskiej kulturze, a także cieszy się dużym zainteresowaniem wśród studentów, świadczą o tym liczne prace magisterskie na jej temat.[1]

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[1] Artykuł ten powstał na podstawie materiałów zebranych do rozszerzonego angielskiego opracowania (w druku) na temat recepcji Jane Austen w Europie (seria „The Reception of British Authors in Europe") wydawanej przez Thoemmes Continuum.

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Małgorzata Łuczyńska

Changing Times, Changing Views: Bridget Jones's Pride and Prejudice

It is the truth openly acknowledged by Helen Fielding, the author of *Bridget Jones's Diary,* that she modelled the twists and turns of her narrative upon Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice*, the masterpiece of 19th century literature for, and about, women. In turn, *Bridget Jones's Diary* became an international best-selling title more than two hundred years later. Helen Fielding outwardly admitted having 'borrowed' many motifs from Jane Austen's novel, in one of her interviews claiming that :

> I decided to use the plot from *Pride and Prejudice* to fit it all together in a shell. Not to say I didn't craft it very carefully, but it was more organic, I guess (*Helen Fielding Is Not Bridget Jones*).

The correlations between both books are numerous, both explicit and implicit. Thus, they can be seen in the name of the main male protagonist (Mr Darcy and Mark Darcy) as well as in the mode of presentation of the mentioned hero. The implied author goes to much length so as not to let the reader overlook the correlation, since when Bridget sees Mark Darcy for the first time, she comments: "It struck me as a pretty ridiculous to be called Mr Darcy and to stand on your own looking snooty at the party. It's like being called Heathcliff and insisting on spending the entire evening in the garden, shouting 'Cathy' and banging your head against a tree" (Fielding 1997:13).

The implicit similarities are also striking as far as the plot itself is concerned: the main intrigue relies upon forming ill-judged, prejudiced opinion of two main protagonists (interestingly, the intended title for *Pride and Prejudice* was *First Impressions*). Moreover, both novels are concerned with love and courting habits as well as with relationships grounded very firmly in the society of, respectively, beginning of 19th and the end of 20th century. Furthermore, both books exhibit sparkling humour and wit and can be safely treated as a colourful and ironic social commentary, sometimes showing aspects of a comedy of manners. The question that arises is whether all the visible and traceable points of resemblance are only intertextual game meant to slightly perplex the reader at the beginning and in the end supply much enjoyment in finding out possible links, or whether *Bridget Jones's Diary* relates in more ways to *Pride and Prejudice,* and therefore correlations between these two novels point to some deeper level of correspondence.

The main aim of this paper is twofold. First of all, I would like to claim that although in both novels we encounter different narrative strategies, relying on either first person narration (in the case of *Bridget Jones's Diary*) or third person retrospective narration (in *Pride and Prejudice*) the achieved effect is the same, which I believe to be thorough identification of the reader with the main character/narrator/focaliser. What is more, such strong identification with the teller/focaliser results in influencing, and indeed even manipulation of the readers' perception of, and attitudes to, the presented world. My secondary aim is to try and trace the reason of such enormous interest and popularity of both novels to this extreme subjectivity of experience presented in Austen's and Fielding's fiction.

To enter the world of fiction, to become engrossed in it, to form an intimate contact with its inhabitants means to forget, at least partially, that what one reads has a fictional character. Only then are we able to become fully involved in the narrated events. The obvious condition for such a process, then, seems to be the loss or at least limitation of the specific distance existing between the reader and the book, based on the reader's awareness of the fact that what he is reading is fictitious. First person narration, particularly in the form of the diary, very successfully achieves what Michal Głowiński calls *formal mimesis*: creation of the illusion that the literary text is in fact non-literary, therefore "real" (Głowiński 1997:57). This is done through the use of specific narrative techniques, such as maintaining the parallelism between the time of telling and the narrated time. Hence, in the case of a diary, the action unfolds gradually and the reader is informed about the events soon after the narrator himself gets to know them. Secondly, the graphic division of the novel into diary entries serves the same purpose (Kaniowska 1997:50, 57). Finally, it is not difficult to notice that the literary form of diary is a significant factor in establishing the relationship with the reader and making him deeply involved in the text: the diary being an intimate record of introspective experiences and thoughts of a narrator/protagonist enhances a special, extremely personal bond between the narrator and the reader, which rests upon the illusion of sharing the same "secret." All these points apply to *Bridget Jones's Diary* and can account for the easy identification of a female reader with the narrator/protagonist, up to the point of accepting the narrator's point of view even against the objective facts, which I hope to prove in the course of this paper.

In the case of *Pride and Prejudice* one cannot talk of the first person narration or the parallelism between the time of narration and the narrated time, since narration is third person retrospective. Yet, there is a strong inclination towards identification with and assuming the point of view of Elisabeth Bennet, the main protagonist, although technically this is achieved by the use of different means. First of all, although the narrator is extraheterodiagetic, to follow Rimmon-Kenan's typology, the factor of focalisation is crucial. Extraheterodiagetic narrator is by definition the most objective and "on the outside" of the story; he has also prior knowledge of the events as well as the insight into the thoughts and feelings of all characters. Usually such mode of narration is rather overt, abundant in such traces of the narrator's presence as comments, direct method of characterisation, filling in temporal gaps. Surprisingly, the narrator of *Pride and Prejudice*, although having some of the features mentioned above, does not exhibit many of them: the events unfold gradually, comments relate rather to social matters than to the events themselves and can easily be treated to be "silent thoughts" of Elisabeth, the narrator does not drop any hints about his prior knowledge or judgement of the events, almost no temporal gaps are filled and indirect presentation of characters prevails. Importantly, although focalisation shifts, most of the events are presented from the point of view and as if through, the eyes of Elisabeth Bennet, who is the main lens/focaliser for the story, which leads to strong personalisation of the point of view. I would like to claim that this subjectivity is as deep as it could be if first person narration were used. Even the comments given by the narrator bear traces of Elisabeth's way of thinking, betrayed by slightly ironic, slightly detached attitude. It is helpful to consider one example to illustrate this point. Thus, the novel opens with a famous statement: "It is a truth universally acknowledged, that a single man in possession of a good fortune must be in a want of a wife" (Austen 1997:5).

This first appearance of the narrating voice points to the fact that the narrative is deeply set in a specific social microcosm and establishes the tone of the book as rather light, slightly ironic or even satirical. If we compare the above statement with some of Elisabeth's utterances, e.g. "I have always seen a great similarity in the turn of our minds. We are each of an unsocial, taciturn disposition, unwilling to speak, unless we expect to say something that will amaze the whole room, and be handed down to posterity with all the eclat of a proverb" (74), or: "That is a falling indeed! Implacable resentment is a shade of character. But you have chosen your fault well. I really cannot laugh at it. You are safe from me" (47), we will detect striking similarity to the statements made by the narrator. The examples of such similarity are quite easy to find throughout the novel. In some later fragments we can detect certain straightforwardness, realistic look, as well as slight detachment allowing subtle or less subtle irony both on Elisabeth's and the narrator's behalf. As a result, it seems justifiable to claim that equipping Elisabeth with the same mode of speaking and thinking, visible in the more or less subtle use of irony, sometimes self-directed, and satirical outlook at the surrounding microcosm – customs, beliefs, norms – contributes to the effect that the narrator sometimes blends with the main protagonist. Result is similar to the one achieved by first person narration: the loss of the status of omniscient, reliable narrator, subjectivity, and much closer bond between the reader and the main focaliser/protagonist.

In the case of both novels in question such strong identification with the narrator/focaliser leads in turn to the loss of objectivity on the reader's part, since the reader is as if drawn to see the world presented in the novel in the same way that the main protagonist does. Often this perception is slightly or seriously distorted, since subjectivity is one of the most characteristic features of first person narrative (Kaniowska 1997:77), and of, as I endeavour to show, a novel with very strong focalisation factor. As a result, the reader invariably, almost involuntarily, falls in the same traps and pits as the main heroine does, although he obviously can judge better, has some information which could change his attitude, yet he is more inclined to assume the viewpoint of either Bridget or Elisabeth. I would like to examine this claim by close reading of one, central episode in both novels, namely the change in Bridget's and Elisabeth's perception of Mark Darcy/Mr Darcy, and, consequently, exposing of Daniel Cleaver/Wickham as the villain in the novels.

When Elisabeth Bennet first sees Mr Darcy, the impression he makes on her and on all the other people gathered in the ballroom in Netherfields seems to be at first positive: "His friend Mr Darcy soon drew the attention of the room by his fine, tall person, handsome features, noble mien, and the report which was in general circulation within five minutes after his entrance, of his having ten thousand a-year." However, the opinion soon changes, since he becomes an object of social ostracism, for not having followed the social norms, that is not being polite, sociable and talkative, but rather sticking to his own company, and dancing only twice. It might not seem to be a major offence, yet the society pronounced him to be "the proudest, most disagreeable man in the world, and everybody hoped that he would never come there again" (11). This opinion seems to coincide with Elisabeth's who, after being most terribly insulted by Mr Darcy who described her as only "tolerable" and did not want to dance with her, "remained with no very cordial feelings towards him" (12) and understandably developed a sudden dislike of Darcy, which marks the beginning of her prejudice.

In the fragment that follows we are treated to an account of Darcy's character offered by the narrator and stressing the negative rather than positive aspects of his nature. Thus, we learn that although clever, he was haughty, reserved and fastidious, with uninviting, though well-bred manners (15). This opinion, although betraying the traces of "higher" knowledge, goes in accordance with the general attitude towards Mr Darcy formed by the families of Bennets and Lucases, but is perhaps a little more balanced. Still, it does not encourage the reader to form an agreeable view of Mr Darcy, and, as a result, the reader is more likely to identify with Elisabeth and to assume her side in the "conflict". What follows is that the later behaviour of Mr Darcy, such as certain gallantry and tact (showing good rather than bad manners) with which he does not let Elisabeth be left alone in the path during the walk in Netherfields or contradicts Miss Bingley when she ridicules and attacks Elisabeth is likely to be overlooked or forgotten.

What also influences the reader's (and Elisabeth's) perception of Mr Darcy is the account of Wickham, who appears as the positive hero only to be transformed into the villain at the end of the book. Telling Elisabeth how badly he was treated and hurt by Mr Darcy, he immediately gains her sympathy and trust, as his confession appeals to Elisabeth's very human need to be confided in and trusted. Probably the fact that Wickham is so handsome also helps Elisabeth believe him unconditionally. It is only later that she comprehends the impropriety of Wickham's behaviour who, claiming that for the sake of the memory of Darcy's father he would not want to expose Darcy to criticism, does precisely the opposite, and, what is more, relates such private matters to Elisabeth when he encounters her for the first time. Then she sees him differently: "She had even learnt to detect, in the very gentleness which had first delighted her, an affectation and a sameness to disgust and weary" (181).

It is fascinating to observe how the account of Mr Darcy in narration changes into gradually more and more positive after the climax of Elisabeth's prejudice, which seems to be Darcy's proposal. The first step in her perception is induced by his explanatory letter. After having read the letter for the first time, her surprise and shock is so huge precisely because it requires a total change of her attitude and perception of both him and Wickham. This is why she at first is tempted to reject it entirely: "She wished to discredit it entirely, repeatedly exclaiming, "This must be false! This cannot be! This must be the grossest falsehood!" (159). It is only after a longer while that she is able to adjust to the truth, and when she does it, she assumes a completely different view. Just as uncritical she was of Wickham at the beginning, so unquestioningly does she accept Darcy's version, which once again points to largely emotional subjectivity on her part: "How differently did everything now appear in which he was concerned! (...) She grew absolutely ashamed of herself. Of neither Darcy nor Wickham could she think without feeling that she had been blind, partial, prejudiced, absurd" (161,162).

Still, the change of Elisabeth's attitude towards Darcy is most exposed when she visits Pemberley with her aunt and uncle: her perception of the mansion greatly shows how she feels about its master. She sees the house and the surrounding area as she now would see Mr Darcy: lofty but handsome, tasteful, elegant, distinguished, noble. She feels that, as to be the mistress of Pemberley might be something (187), so being Darcy's wife could be similarly gratifying. This view is further emphasised by her silent cry of regret: "And of this place- thought she -I might have been mistress!"(188).

This process of recognition is continued when we learn from Mrs Reynolds that Mr Darcy is a good-tempered, generous, caring, considerate man. This positive picture seems to negate completely the vision of him from the beginning of the book when he was generally believed to be extremely proud, bad-tempered and ill-mannered. Elisabeth believes it unconditionally since by now she wants to see Mr Darcy in such a way. Consequently, in the course of narration now only positive things about Mr Darcy are recounted. In his next meeting with Elisabeth he treats her with utmost respect, shows himself as a very agreeable and polite man to Mr and Mrs Gardiner, he even might be called very sociable and hospitable, as if all of his vices have evaporated. It seems justifiable to claim that his presentation goes hand in hand with the change of Elisabeth's attitude towards him, and the reader also follows in Elisabeth's footsteps. This process is not complete until Elisabeth recognises Darcy as a man just right for her, "who, in disposition and talents, would most suit her" (239) which happens at the end of the book.

A very similar story of progress from dislike to love of one person, and from total fascination to almost disgust with another one is offered in *Bridget Jones's Diary*, and, as I have mentioned earlier, neither the names of the protagonists nor the structure of the episode are accidental. Here, instead of noble, rich Mr Darcy we encounter the famous lawyer, rich Mark Darcy, who likewise is rather a catch, if we are to believe the people from the establishment. Instead of Mr Wickham we have got cunning and clever Daniel Cleaver, just as charming and handsome as dishonest. Finally, instead of Elisabeth we have got Bridget, who, although probably not having self confidence of the former, falls in the same traps.

When Bridget meets Mark for the first time in the book, he is given quite a lot of publicity by her mother and Una Alconbury. He is presented as a trendy, indecently rich, divorced person who has just bought a house in Holland Park, a top London location. Just as appearance and behaviour created prejudice at the Netherfield ball, they remain a key factor at Una Alconbury's Turkey Curry Buffet. This is when Bridget forms her first impressions of Mark Darcy, and they are not positive. She sees him as unsociable, with bad manners, not being able to maintain an intelligent small talk conversation, and with terrible taste in clothes (a V-necked diamond-patterned yellow and blue sweater!).

It is perhaps meaningful that Mark Darcy is presented almost entirely through the means of indirect presentation. This is closely related to the form of narrative: writing a diary the narrator/protagonist does not need to sum up or explain the impressions or facts - the diarist writes as if for himself only. However, in literary fiction and in first person narrative the secondary effect (apart from the illusion of authenticity) achieved in this way relies upon the fact that, while the presented reality is filtered through the eyes and mind of the main protagonist, there is the unspoken assumption that the reader, accepting the diarist to be a lens, will simultaneously draw the same conclusions. Therefore, no extra recapitulation is needed. Obviously, the direct consequence of such a narrative is very often certain distortion of the pictured world, which is modelled in accordance with the narrator's system of values and bearing strong blemish of subjectivity (Kaniowska 1997:165).

Thus, Bridget forms a decisive opinion of Mark: he is snobbish, proud and conceited, and does not know how to behave. If we take a closer look at what follows, we will discover that there are no further traces of Mark's negative character. Similarly to equivalent scenes in *Pride and Prejudice* Mark appears to be thoughtful and caring. Thus, he guesses how embarrassed Bridget must be over appearing in the bunny costume at Una's party which was supposed to be a tarts-and-vicars costume party but evolved into traditional social gathering and helps her get normal clothes; he warns Bridget about possible danger of her mother getting involved with Julio and her own with Daniel. Nevertheless, despite these visible traces of his caring nature and good manners, Bridget is so prejudiced against him that she sees him as "bloody Mark Darcy (...), arrogant, ill-tempered, top-flight human-rights lawyer" (Fielding 1996:117).

In contrast, Daniel Cleaver plays the role of Mr Charming. He is handsome, witty, talkative, sexy and very sure of his own attractiveness. He is also so elusive and unpredictable that one never knows what to expect from him. These are probably main features which Bridget finds so irresistible. She is so infatuated that when finally the relationship with Daniel starts, she idealises him so much that she forgets completely his unreasonable and unreliable earlier behaviour. This is also visible in narration: although she briefly relates that all Daniel wanted to do in hot summer Sundays was watch cricket with the curtains drawn and drink beer, much longer parts are devoted to either her fantasies of their future happy times together. Bridget is so determined to maintain a positive picture of Daniel, that despite his obvious shortcomings and her own intuition and suspicions, she chooses to believe him until facts prove that her intuition was perfectly right. Here, unlike in *Pride and Prejudice*, the truth about Daniel is exposed before the reader's eyes quite early in the book: although one can see all his charm, one can also easily notice the fact that Daniel is irresponsible and unreliable, that he is an incurable womanizer with a drink problem, that his wit is very often malicious and sexist. Yet, identifying with Bridget the reader can easily understand her fascination and as if hopes, together with her, for the happy ending.

It is only later, when Mark's words come true and Bridget's relationship with Daniel is over, that she is able to look at Mark more objectively and appreciate his help in getting her the interview which her job depends on. It is also the moment when the reader starts to see him in much more positive light, which coincides with final discrediting of Daniel, as Mark confesses that he was the reason for Mark's divorce because he had slept with Mark's wife (variation on the theme of Wickham attempted eloping with Mr Darcy's sister). Now, Mark is charming at Bridget's birthday party, suddenly knows how to behave, is very tactful, and, just as Mr Darcy helped to deal with Lydia's elopement crises, so does he save the situation when Bridget's mother escapes with Julio and gets involved into fraud. At this moment Bridget gets emotionally involved with Mark, but similarly to Elisabeth Bennet, she also is scared that Mark would be discouraged by the scandal in her family:"So much wish Mark Darcy would ring. Was obviously completely put off by culinary disasters and criminal element in family, but too polite to show it at a time (277).

Finally, as all is well that ends well, both *Pride and Prejudice* and *Bridget Jones's Diary* end happily and very much according to social norms: one in marriage, the other in the start of a relationship. Also, in both cases Mr Darcy and Mark Darcy act as godsends, delivering Elisabeth and Bridget from very unsuitable family connections. Elisabeth knows that moving to Pemberley she distances herself from her mother and Wickham, now her brother-in-law, while Mark Darcy takes Bridget away from her dysfunctional family: "'Mrs Jones' said Mark firmly. 'I am taking Bridget away to celebrate what is left of the Baby Jesus's birthday.' I took a big breath and grasped Mark Darcy's proffered hand" (305).

Thus, in both novels the reader witnesses and gets emotionally involved with the ups and downs of the fortunes of main female protagonists, sympathises with their hopes and feelings. I hope to have shown that as subjectivity of the vision of the world results in identification with the narrator/focaliser and in certain suspension of disbelief on the reader's part, reader's sympathies and antipathies follow those of the main heroines and the attitudes get easily manipulated. As Kaniowska notices, narrator's comprehension and interpretation of the presented world cannot be always verified in the course of narration – the narrator is, in fact, more or less conscious master of his story. As a result, first person narrator particularly can be held under suspicion (Kaniowska 1997:206). However, very often he is not, since the involvement factor is so deep that the reader suspends, as if, his ability to judge the facts objectively, precisely because the temptation of identifying with the protagonist/focaliser is so great. The reader also enjoys having this personalised attitude towards the world presented in the book because the events are so deeply grounded in social reality: the I of the narrator/protagonist will always be seen at the foreground of social structures such as family, friendship, establishment as well as certain social norms and expectations, and it is a vision the reader can easily identify with.

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Anna Gutowska

Is *Daniel Deronda* a "Bigamy Novel"? Elements of Sensational Melodrama in the Tale of Gwendolen Harleth

Anthony Trollope in the mid-1870s wrote in his *Autobiography*: "Among English novels of the present day, and among English novelists, a great division is made. There are sensational novels and anti-sensational, sensational readers and anti-sensational. The novelists who are considered anti-sensational are generally called realistic" (Hughes,1980:38). And George Eliot is considered to be the quintessential realist. But even so, the purpose of this paper is to analyse the treatment of sensational and melodramatic elements in *Daniel Deronda*. The novel was published in parts in 1874-6, in the period when the sensational novel was an established and immensely popular literary genre. Of course, I do not mean to claim that *Daniel Deronda* is indeed a sensational melodrama. Such a statement would be inaccurate and unjust. But beyond doubt some elements of the melodramatic convention are present in the novel – just as they are present in *Hamlet* or *Macbeth* (Booth,1965:40). Shakespeare's tragedies and Eliot's novel are not melodramas – but in less gifted hands they easily might have been.

In my paper I will argue that the division between the sensational and the anti-sensational is not as great or as definite as Trollope suggested in the passage quoted above. [1]

I am going to show this using the example the tale of Gwendolen Harleth, one of the two juxtaposed and interweaving narratives that constitute *Daniel Deronda*. I am going to prove how, in her treatment of this tale, George Eliot utilised the stock-motifs of the so-called bigamy novel[2] and of the sensational melodrama in general. I aim to show how these elements, immediately identified by the first readers, were subsequently subverted to destroy their initial expectations.

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[1] The notion that sensational and fantastic plots play an important function in the realist fiction of Elizabeth Gaskell and George Eliot among others is discussed in Pyckett, 2001: pp.191-196.

[2] The term "bigamy novel" was coined by Mrs. Oliphant, a mid-nineteenth century writer and critic. It was commonly used by the Victorian reviewers of the sensational fiction. Cf. Hughes, 1980:27-33.

And before I start analysing George Eliot's treatment of melodramatic conventions in *Daniel Deronda*, I will briefly outline the stock motifs of melodrama and bigamy novel of the period. John Cawelti in his seminal work on the formulas employed in popular fiction asserts that melodrama in literature was derived from the stage melodramas of the late eighteen century (Cawelti,1976:22). He gives an example of the simplest formulaic plot:

> The central figure in the melodramatic pattern was usually a virtuous young lady of some lower or ambiguous status who was pursued by a male character of higher status and dubious intentions (…) The sorely beset heroine commonly loved a more worthy and innocent young man, who was himself enmeshed in status difficulties, often because his true parentage was concealed. This primary triangle was the essence of melodrama and was capable of two major permutations (…) In the first case, the heroine resisted the entreaties and threats of the villain and was ultimately united with the noble young man. In the tragic melodrama, the heroine succumbed to the villain's plots and when this happened repentance, madness and death were all that awaited her. (Cawelti,1976:268)

It is interesting to analyse the plot of *Daniel Deronda* bearing in mind the melodramatic formula outlined by Cawelti. Apparently, in the nineteenth century popular literature was widely read by all social classes – and presumably also by Eliot's highbrow audience. This fact was often seen as humorous by the Victorians – in a Punch cartoon from 1868 a following dialogue takes place between a maid and a gentleman:

> **Mary:** Please, Sir, I've been looking everywhere for the third volume of that book you was reading.
> **Lodger:** Oh, I took it back to the library this morning, I –
> **Mary:** Oh! Then will you tell me Sir, if as how the 'Markis found out as she'd pisoned'er two fust 'usbands? (Flint, 1993:279).

The cartoon shows the wide appeal of popular fiction transgressing class and education level differences. In all probability most of Eliot's Victorian readers were well versed in popular fiction and they could identify and appreciate the author's play with the convention.

Among the favourite themes of sensational novelists bigamy occupied a special position. This fact caught the attention of both nineteenth century and modern critics of popular literature and many theories were formed to explain this curious taste. Winifred Hughes in the account of the sensational novels of the 1860s argues persuasively that it was because "bigamy has the advantage of making sexual offence into an actual crime, something for which the offender might theoretically be arrested and sent to jail" (Hughes, 1980:31). In other words, it enabled a comparatively open treatment of sexual topics because the discourse of bigamy transformed them into legal and criminal (and therefore "mentionable") issues.

In the sensational novels bigamy was usually accompanied by murder and the wrongdoers were punished with death. Two great if repressed obsessions of the Victorians, violent death and illicit sex, were merged in the bigamy novels. Punishment of the villains was a necessary part as it helped to gain the sanction for presenting their sins to the public.

The sensational novel demands cooperation on the part of the reader who is encouraged to predict the development of the plot. The readers base their guesses on their knowledge of the conventions and stock motifs (Eco, 1995: 25-35) The same play with the reader is present in *Daniel Deronda*, where Eliot presents standard sensational characters and situations and, once they are identified, handles them in an unconventional manner.

The plot outline of *Daniel Deronda* seems very similar to that of bigamy novels of the 1860s, most popular of which was Mary Elizabeth Braddon's *Lady Audley's Secret* (1862). Naturally, it is also similar to Cawelti's formula quoted above. Eliot's novel consists of juxtaposing tales of two young people. In my article I am concerned solely with the tale of Gwendolen Harleth, but, for the sake of clarity, I will now briefly outline both tales.

The first of the two is the story of Daniel Deronda, a ward of an English aristocrat. Daniel is supposed by many to be Sir Hugo's natural son. Eliot utilises here the topos of a child of unknown parentage that seems to be one of the favourite devices of melodrama and sensational novel (Booth, 1965:72-77). A foundling's quest for his/her true parents is one of the stock motifs of the genre. Quite surprisingly, Daniel does not strive to know the truth, feeling that in his circumstances curiosity would equal ingratitude. The truth is however revealed: Daniel turns out to be the son of Alcharisi, an opera singer of Jewish origin. When Daniel learns about his heritage, he becomes attracted to Jewish culture and decides to devote his life to the cause of Zionism. He marries a Jewish girl whom he had rescued from committing suicide.

Interwoven with the story of Daniel is the tale of Gwendolen Harleth, an impoverished beauty who agrees to marry Henleigh Grandcourt, a wealthy man of the world, only to discover that he has four illegitimate children by a woman who had abandoned her husband for him. Gwendolen's marriage is unhappy, but is terminated by Grandcourt's death in an yachting accident in the Mediterranean. Gwendolen is aboard when her husband falls into the sea and for one fatal moment she refuses to help him. When she overcomes her terror and rushes to his aid, it is too late. Just as within the convention of bigamy novel, the bigamist is punished with death. It should however be stressed that here the marriage is not technically bigamous. Grandcourt was not legally married to Mrs. Glasher, but Gwendolen's guilty knowledge of the existence of Mrs. Glasher and the fact that in marrying Grandcourt she breaks her promise to Lydia make the union a virtual bigamy.

The relationship between Daniel and Gwendolen is ambiguous. She loves him, but his feelings are not clear. Daniel's feelings are paralleled by author's judgement of Gwendolen. Her presentation, done with Eliot's finest psychological insight, is at the same time censorious and compassionate.

As we can see from the brief plot summary the very outlines of the tales follow the conventions of popular literature. The secret of Daniel's parentage could come from any sensational novel, with the exception of his reluctance to know the truth. Similarly, the story of a young girl who is tricked into marrying a villain is reminiscent of many sensational novels. Most notably, it strongly resembles the fate of Laura Fairlie, the heroine of *The Woman in White*. And Mr. Grandcourt himself is very much like Laura's oppressor Sir Percival Glyde.

But Gwendolen's story resembles the plot of a bigamy novel only in its outline. All the essential elements and situations are there, only they are handled by Eliot in a thoroughly unconventional way. First of all, Gwendolen, in spite of her beauty and youth hardly takes after the innocent and naive heroines of the 1860s. This is not to say that she is corrupt – but she is certainly more spirited, more egoistic and more exuberant than for instance Collins' Laura Fairlie.

As far as Gwendolen's appearance is concerned, Eliot's use of sensational and melodramatic stereotypes is ever-present. We meet the heroine as she is gambling in a casino: "The Nereid in sea-green robes and silver ornaments, with a pale sea-green feather fastened in silver falling backward over her green hat and light-brown hair, was Gwendolen Harleth" (Deronda: b.I. ch.1, p.7). Quite interestingly, the novel's opening line reads "Was she beautiful or not beautiful?" and I think this can be read as Eliot's ironic tribute to the conventions of the mind-and millinery novel, a type of fiction she skilfully dissected in her essay *Silly Novels by Lady Novelists* (1856). There are, indeed, striking similarities between the stock motifs ridiculed in the essay and the plot of *Daniel Deronda*. Thus she describes a model heroine of a "silly novel":

> Her eyes and her wit are both dazzling, her nose and her morals are alike free from any irregularity, she has a superb contralto and a superb intellect, she is perfectly well-dressed and perfectly religious, she dances like a sylph and reads the Bible in the original tongues. (…) She is the ideal woman in feelings, faculties and flounces. For all this, she as often as

> not marries the wrong person to begin with, and she suffers terribly. [But her husband] dies requesting his wife, as a particular favour to him, to marry the man she loves best… (Eliot,1992:296-297).

In fact it seems that Gwendolen's picture of herself resembles very much Eliot's sketch of "the ideal woman". It is her self-importance but also the aura of perfection that surrounds her that make the servants at Offendene nick-name Gwendolen "her Royal Highness". The readers trained on popular fiction would immediately expect a "Nereid in sea green robes" to become a heroine of a society novel.

Eliot commented harshly on "the ideal woman" also in *Middlemarch*, where she described Rosamund Vincy as a girl who acquired all kinds of showy accomplishments and became in effect "that combination of correct sentiments, music, dancing, drawing , elegant notewriting, private album for extracted verse, and perfect blond loveliness, which made the irrestible woman for the doomed man of the date" (ch. 27, p.253). The idea of performance also comes to the fore in the characterisation of Gwendolen (Flint, 2001:163-165). Her striking appearance is often stressed:

> Always she was the princess in exile, who in time of famine was to have her breakfast-roll made of the finest bolted flour (…) How was this to be accounted for? The answer may seem to lie quite on the surface – in her beauty, a certain unusualness about her (…) and even the waiters at hotels showed the more alacrity in doing away with crumbs and creases (…) if she came into a room. (ch. 4, p.32)

Like Rosamund, Gwendolen is a self-conscious performer, eager to be admired by her audience. When she prepares for the Archery Meeting, she chooses her dress with consideration: "it had been decided that as a touch of colour on her white cashmere nothing, for her complexion, was comparable to pale green" (ch.9, p. 76). Interestingly, the idea that social occasions are viewed as opportunities to perform for marriageable young ladies was earlier ridiculed by Eliot in *Silly Novels*: "The men (…) accompany the heroine on her 'starring' expedition through life. They see her at a ball, and are dazzled; at a flower show, and are fascinated; on a riding excursion, and they are witched by her noble horsemanship; at church, and they are awed by the sweet solemnity of her demeanour" (Eliot, 1992:297). This passage ironically foreshadows Gwendolen's "starring" expedition through life – her introduction into the polite society at Offendene during a soiree where she outshines all other young ladies and her first meeting with Grandcourt at the archery competition, where "everyone has to admit her surpassing charm" (ch. 10, p.82).

So far, Gwendolen seems the model heroine of a "silly novel," but more threatening elements come to the fore as early as in the casino scene in chapter one: "She has got herself as a sort of serpent now, all green and silver, and winds her neck about a little more than usual" (ch.1, p.7). Because of these allusions to danger, Gwendolen seems here more a seductress then an innocent heroine of melodrama. As Gillian Beer claims, introduction of the imagery of serpents, water-nixies, demons, poison and dreams of violence surrounds Gwendolen with the atmosphere of the uncanny and the primitive. According to her, the image of strangling returns obsessively in the discourse associated with Gwendolen and Grandcourt (Beer, 1986:220), but significantly enough it is introduced already in the first chapter: "'Do you think her pretty, Mr Vandernoodt?' / 'Very. A man might risk hanging for her – I mean, a fool might'" (ch.1, p.7).

As I said before, if we were to "class" Gwendolen according to the standards of melodrama, she does not fit the traditional image of the heroine. She is consistently portrayed as a villainess. Even her unrequited love for Deronda fits the melodramatic image of a seductress, as presented by Michael Booth: "The villain is likely to be partnered by a raven-haired villainess, or adventuress, (…) dressed gorgeously in sweeping gowns (…) whose designs on the hero are at first amorous" (Booth, 1965:20).

But the resolution of the plot goes against readers' expectations. After the decease of Mr. Grandcourt Gwendolen neither dies in grief nor marries Daniel. In fact, the scene where Gwendolen, on learning that Daniel is going to marry Mirah, sobs "'You have been very good to me (…) I will try-try to live…'" and, after he is gone, mechanically repeats to her mother "'Don't be afraid. I shall live. I am going to live. I mean to live,'" serves as a counterbalance for a stereotypic melodrama scenes, where the murderess dies repenting.

Eliot's refusal to make a conventional ending by providing a romantic reunion of Gwendolen and Daniel was very unpalatable for Victorian readers – there even existed an unauthorised American sequel to *Daniel Deronda* entitled *Gwendolen: or Reclaimed*, where "on the last page, after a series of misunderstandings, Gwendolen faints into Daniel's arms as his declaration of love rescues her from fatal illness" (Flint, 2001:174).

But perhaps the greatest breach in the tradition is the fact that Gwendolen learns about Mr. Grandcourt's dark past before the marriage and chooses to marry him nonetheless. Confronted with an unromantic choice: either marry a man with a shadowy past whom she does not love or enter the service as a governess and suffer poverty and degradation of both herself and her family, she promptly chooses the first option.

I said before that Gwendolen fits the melodramatic role of a seductress much better than she fits the role of the heroine. The same is evidently true about Grandcourt's lover Mrs. Glasher, who is characterised in the following way: "An impressive woman, whom many would turn to look at again in passing, her figure was slim and sufficiently tall, her face rather emanciated, so that its sculpturesque beauty was the more pronounced, her crisp hair perfectly black, and her large anxious eyes also what we call black" (13, p.117). Incidentally, the mention of Mrs. Glasher's black hair is an important sign within the melodramatic convention. The critics observe that black hair, or, in the case of one of Mrs. Braddon's murderesses even "dead-black" hair, is an unmistakeble mark of a fallen woman (Hughes, 1980:27).

Also, Lydia Glasher's "hate letter" to Gwendolen, sent along with the diamonds, in which she curses her for marrying Grandcourt, breaking her promise and ruining the futures of Mrs. Glasher's children, could come from any sensational melodrama. But there is a striking difference. The scenes with Mrs. Glasher are consciously "played down." When she introduces herself to Gwendolen she says: "My name is Lydia Glasher. Mr. Grandcourt ought not to marry anyone but me. I left my husband and child for him nine years ago. Those two children are his and we have two others (…). My husband is dead now, and Mr. Grandcourt ought to marry me. He ought to make the boy his heir" (14, p.124). This matter-of-fact statement is in stark contrast with the dramatic soliloquies of the bigamy novels. Likewise, the relationship between Mrs. Glasher and Grandcourt at the time of his marriage to Gwendolen is far from passionate. Lydia is disillusioned about Grandcourt and afraid of him, when she still hopes for the marriage it is only for the sake of the children.

As for Grandcourt himself, at first glimpse he fits the role of a melodramatic villain. I have signalled before that he resembles in many points Sir Percival Glyde, the villain of *The Lady in White*. Eliot, just like Collins, puts emphasis on the character's superficial gentleness and harmlessness:

> The correct Englishman, drawing himself up from his bow into rigidity, assenting severely, and seeming to be in a state of internal drill, suggests a suppressed vivacity, and may be suspected of letting go with some violence when he is released from parade; but Grandcourt's bearing had no rigidity, it inclined rather to the flaccid (11, p.89).

His true character is however metaphorically revealed before the marriage, in an episode when he caresses one dog to cause a fit of jealousy in another, "looking at it with an unchanged face" (12, p.102). The imagery of violence and psychical coercion is also introduced during the wedding scene, when one of the observers looking at the newly-weds ominously remembers "I've heard my mother say Squire Pelton used to take his dogs and a long whip into his wife's bedroom, and flog'em there to frighten her" (31, p.291).

These scenes foreshadow Grandcourt's treatment of Gwendolen. He does not harm her physically, but when they argue Gwendolen feels that "that white hand of his which was touching his whisker was capable of clinging round her neck and threatening to throttle her" (35, p.354). Just as Collins in *The Woman in White*, Eliot shrinks from depicting physical family violence. Where Collins goes for shadowy allusions and mysteries, Eliot decides to make her villain a virtual psychopath, obsessed with the sense of mastery and domination.

In my paper I wanted to show the elements of the convention of sensational melodrama and bigamy novel in one of the subplots of *Daniel Deronda*. I have discussed how these conventions work in the characterisation of the main characters, as well as in some climactic events. Generally it seems that Eliot assumed the knowledge of mechanisms of sensational melodrama on the part of the readers and confronted them with characters and events outlined in accordance with the conventions of the genre in order to finally subvert the melodramatic reading. This is usually done by playing down the emotional potential of the dramatic conflicts, as it is in the case of Grandcourt's confrontations with Lydia and Gwendolen or in the anticlimactic and open-ended resolution of the plot. In *Daniel Deronda* the story of bigamy, violent death, cruelty and hate is not an end in itself, as it is the case in sensational melodramas. The main theme of the book is moral growth and recognising one's destiny – only it is done in a melodramatic setting. And it had to be, as Eliot was writing her book featuring bigamy, murder and a hero of unknown parentage in the heyday of bigamy novel.

But this baffling refusal to conform to the conventions of popular fiction unearths readers' own conventionality. Ann Clay Beecher, the authoress of *Gwendolen: or Reclaimed*, argued that she had been motivated in writing the happy ending sequel by the "almost universal disappointment at the unanticipated conclusion of the story – a conclusion which many readers have resented as though it were a personal affront" (Flint, 2001:173-174). The subversion of the romantic formulas in *Daniel Deronda* seems to be something more than a play with the conventions. It seemed that Eliot had a moral and almost didactic purpose in doing this – she meant to show her readers how foolish it is to see one's life through the fanciful, melodramatic scripts.

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Maria Błaszkiewicz

Enter the Hobbit - The Hobbits and the Theme of Heroic Intrusion in *The Lord of the Rings*

The multigenre form of Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* results in the combination of seemingly incongruous elements as the heroic tones borrowed from such traditional and high genres as the epic, romance or saga and the introduction of the figures of the hobbits, who seem appropriate for a completely different type of genre, a combination which does not, nevertheless, make the book mock heroic as a whole. Even in his earlier and more fairy-tale like *The Hobbit* Tolkien already experimented with this idea by introducing elements of epic in the form of thematic and structural allusions to *Beowulf*, which made *The Hobbit* practically its travesty. This, however, resulted in the lavish use of the mock heroic mode, which means that the figure of the hobbit is in fact almost uniformly comic.[1] *The Lord of the Rings,* on the other hand, being a vast and complex multigenre form offers definitely more possibilities for the use of the hobbit theme in a variety of epic contexts. One of them is the formula[2] of heroic intrusion, a formalised way of the presentation of the hero's arrival into the realm where he will confront its ruler and inevitably bring about some significant change. It is present in majority of epics but in case of Tolkien it is again modelled chiefly on the version found in *Beowulf* where the initial part of the formula (the hero being greeted and asked for identification three times including the confrontation with the doubting courtier) constitutes the poem's elaborate beginning. The heroic intrusion both as a theme and as a structural element is prominent in *The Lord of the Rings,* where Tolkien, who seems especially fond of the formula, found a surprising

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[1] For the detailed discussion of the use of mock heroic in this novel see my article "The Theme of Heroic Intrusion in J.R.R.Tolkien's *The Hobbit*", *Acta Philologica* (29), 95-106. A discussion of several examples of a serious use of the formula in *The Lord of the Rings* can be found in my essay in *Approaches to Literature 2.*

[2] The use of this term, crucial in the oral formulaic theory, for a narrative segment can be found for example in Bernard Fenik's *Homer and the Nibelungenlied.*

variety of its uses. A very specific effect is achieved by the combination of heroic intrusion and the hobbit theme.

The beginning (chapters I - X of Book One) and the end (chapters VI-IX of Book Six) may be called "the hobbit frame" of *The Lord of the Rings.* The two books, *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* are parallel in structure. In both cases the tale starts in the Shire, the hobbits leave the familiar environment and go out to the wide world to finally come back, rich in experience and changed, but happy to be home again. The heroic intrusions are used also to stress the change which the heroes undergo.

Consequently, in both parts of the "hobbit frame" of *The Lord of the Rings,* the theme of heroic intrusion plays an important role. On their way out of the Shire, the four hobbits find themselves twice in a situation of intrusion - first, when they "invade" Farmer Maggot's mushroom fields and later, when they cross the Old Forest. However, the formal elements of the epic formula, like a demand for identification or a declaration of purpose, are used only in the first case, which stresses the mock-heroic character of hobbits in general. Neither do these "petty intrusions" lead to any kind of lasting disturbance or change - Farmer Maggot will forget the unwelcome visit of the Black Rider easily enough, and the Old Man Willow will soon spread again its wicked influence over the Forest. This lack of significance in the first intrusions confirms the unheroic presentation of the hobbits. It is only much, much later that their transformation begins; for the present they are still pathetically inapt for the grand purpose of safely conveying the Ring to Rivendell.

The most striking thing about the intrusion into Farmer Maggot's mushroom fields is probably its humour. The hobbits are escaping from the as yet unidentified danger of the Riders, and Frodo is aware of the gravity of the situation and the great responsibility of his mission. Just a few pages before they received a very serious warning from Gildor. That Frodo is afraid of the farmer whose mushrooms tempted him to trespassing decades ago is ridiculous. Yet, the danger represented by the fierce dogs is real enough and the presentation of the episode with the full formal apparatus of heroic intrusion is not completely unjustified. Despite his ridiculous name Farmer Maggot is not just a comic figure. Although not a king, he is a master of his lands and according to the hobbit law is entitled to exercise full power within the borders of his domain.

The comic side of the encounter is achieved not only by the contrast between the triviality of the occasion and the grand tones introduced earlier. The chief source of humour is simply the character of the actors in this scene - the hobbits, who as yet have always been associated with the mock-heroic rather than epic tone. Here the mock-heroic mode is presented in an almost pure form.

The last section of *The Lord of the Rings* when the hobbits, again alone, return to the Shire both, continues and enriches the technique Tolkien uses in the parallel opening section. Yet the effect of the circular structure of the book allows, very much like in *The Hobbit,* for a reversal of roles. The four returning hobbits who were once a part of the small world of the Shire, are now real heroes. The reader enjoyed the inadequacy of the trespassing on the mushroom field for the theme of heroic intrusion, whereas the participants of the scene, as becomes the heroes of a mock-heroic tale, took the situation seriously. Now, when the four hobbit-heroes are stopped at the new gate on the bridge, and later when they encounter the Shirriffs[3], clear amusement is obvious in their reactions.

> But as they came to the east end of the village they met a barrier with a large board saying NO ROAD; and behind it stood a large band of Shirriffs with staves in their hands and feathers in their caps, looking both important and rather scared.
> 'What's all this?' asked Frodo, feeling inclined to laugh.
> 'This is what it is, Mr. Baggins,' said the leader of the Shirriffs, a two-feather hobbit: 'You are arrested for Game-breaking, and Tearing up of Rules, and Assaulting Gate-keepers, and Trespassing, and Sleeping in Shire-building without Leave, and Bribing Guards with Food.'
> 'And what else?' said Frodo.
> 'That'll do to go on with.' Said the Shirriff-leader.
> 'I can add some more, if you like it,' said Sam. 'Calling your Chief Names, Wishing to punch his Pimply Face, and Thinking you Shirriffs look a lot of Tom-fools.'
> 'There now, Mister, that'll do. It's the Chief orders that you're to come along quiet.' [...] To the discomfiture of the Shirriffs Frodo and his companions all roared with laughter (*LotR,* 1038).

Although the participants are all hobbits, like at the beginning of the book, the heroic values are no longer alien to some of them. The comic effect of this intrusion is manifold: apart from the contrast between the form and heroic experience of Frodo and his companions on one side and the trivial and pompous hobbits, the "new order" of the Shire is confronted with the heroic and epic values the returning heroes encountered and accepted in the wide world. In *The Hobbit,* the initial scenes were based on the contrast between such values and Bilbo's nineteenth century middle-class outlook. Here, the contrast is even more vivid as the Shire suffers under the regulations

[3] A good example of Tolkien's inventiveness, this time with a doze of humour:: Shirriffs = Shire + sheriff .

closely resembling the post-war European dehumanising and mechanistic rigors. The good intruders come back to help their country to get rid of bad intruders represented at the gate by Bill Ferny and other Big People, and to replace the incompetent ruler, the hobbit Lotho Sackville Baggins. Interestingly, there are no good Big People in this scene. All friends, including Gandalf, have already left the hobbits, who no longer need external help. Moreover, all the hobbits are presented in a surprisingly positive light, even the Chief, Lotho, is a victim rather than a villain. The four companions appear therefore as saviour figures who come, like Beowulf, to get rid of the monsters pestering the land.

The rest of the book explores other possibilities offered by the combination of the characters of the hobbits and the theme of heroic intrusion in all its varieties. The mock-heroic effect resulting from the contrast between the hobbit or hobbits and other participants of the intrusion is visible in different ways in Sam's confrontation with Aragorn in Bree, Frodo and Sam's encounter with Faramir, as well as Pippin's arrival in Minas Tirith. Pippin starts his heroic transformation when he crosses the borders of Gondor. There he is questioned by the guards, like Gimli in Lórien. He, however, characteristically for a hobbit and unlike Gimli, protests against being called a hero. This profoundly unheroic attitude both serves as a foil for his future heroic behaviour, and adds a comic dimension to this serious scene. A curiously original use of mock-heroic is achieved by the fact that an obviously inappropriate person is persistently taken for a valiant and renowned warrior, even against his own vehement protests. In the first scene with the guards when Gandalf calls him "a valiant man" the dubious and laughing reaction of the guard Ingold may well be shared by the reader, as up to that moment Pippin has not exhibited exceptional prowess[4]. This view is shared by Pippin himself, who, very untypically for an intruder hero, says: "Man! indeed not! I am a hobbit and no more valiant than I am a man, save perhaps now and again by necessity. Do not let Gandalf deceive you!" (*LotR,* 779). This denial is repeated in the scene with Beregond, the soldier of Gondor, and Pippin's brother-in arms, after the pledge of fealty the hobbit gave to Denethor. The soldier wants to 'show him the ropes', and when he asks. "What would you know, Master Peregrin?" he probably expects questions about armoury, hours of duty or the expected siege. Instead, Pippin asks the most hobbit-like question in the world, even if exceptionally politely expressed:

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[4] It is Merry, not Pippin who acts quite heroically in time of their captivity. Pippin is younger and seems weaker, more childlike. He is also the troublemaker- both in Moria and in Rohan it is him who causes problems. Marion Zimmer-Bradley compares him to a naughty youngest child of a family (Zimmer Bradley 1968: 111).

> 'Er, well [...] if I may venture to say so, rather a burning question in my mind at present is, well, what about breakfast and all that? I mean, what are the meal times, if you understand me, and where is the dining room, if there is one? And the inns? I looked, but never a one could I see as we rode up, though I had been borne up by the hope of a draught of ale as soon as we came to the homes of wise and courtly men' (*LotR,* 791).

The same kind of comic effect is achieved in both scenes by the misunderstanding of Pippin's denials. What is a natural and unheroic reaction is in the first instance taken for modesty becoming a true hero -"Many a doer of great deeds might say no more"(*LotR,* 779), and in the second for a sign of his great experience: "Beregond looked at him gravely. 'An old campaigner, I see,' he said. 'They say that men who go warring afield look ever to the next hope of food and of drink; though I am not a travelled man myself'" (*LotR,* 791). The hobbit has to persuade everyone that he is not a hero, which is a complete reversal of the doubting and introductory parts of the heroic intrusion. A further comic element here is "the snowball effect"; in each scene the clash between what Pippin says or does, his mistaken reception and his attempts to deny it, grow bigger and bigger. The culmination comes in the third scene where Pippin does not have to do anything more sophisticated than be introduced to his fellow soldiers in the third Company. It appears that he is already a celebrity due to the rumour that "a Prince of the Halflings had come out of the North to offer allegiance to Gondor and five thousand swords. And some said that when the Riders came from Rohan each would bring behind him a halfling warrior small maybe, but doughty" (*LotR*,798). This rumour will linger: "Though Pippin had regretfully to destroy this hopeful tale, he could not be rid of his new rank, only fitting, men thought, to one befriended by Boromir and honoured by the Lord Denethor" (*LotR*,798).

Of all the four hobbits, it is Sam who, due to his rustic vocabulary and down-to-earth shrewdness, seems to be most suitable to be the hero of a travesty or mock-heroic tale. Tolkien exploits the possibilities inherent in the character of Sam by contrasting him with his most noble and heroic characters. The first such scene, the meeting with Aragorn in Bree is important because it changes the tone of the book by the introduction of the character of Aragorn in the full splendour of "heroic intrusion proper," just as becomes a true epic hero. Sam servers in this scene as a figure of a doubting courtier. Although Aragorn is contrasted with the hobbits in all possible ways, the comic potential of the scene is not used to the full, as the whole episode starts to grow grim and extremely serious. A scene of similar kind and potential takes place much later, when Sam and Frodo are surprised by the scouts of the Gondorian avant-garde in Ithilien at the borders of Mordor. Sam's anger and distrust are roused by what he takes as distrust and contempt of Faramir towards Frodo. He is a squire defending his master in the face of doubt, a possible variation of the theme of a doubting courtier. At the same time the contrast between the appearance and even the language of the characters creates a comic effect:

> 'See here, captain!' he planted himself squarely in front of Faramir, his hands on his hips, and a look on his face as if he was addressing a young hobbit who had offered him what he called 'sauce' [...] There was some murmuring but also some grins on the faces of the men looking on: the sight of their Captain sitting on the ground and eye to eye with a young hobbit, legs well apart, bristling with wrath, was one beyond their experience (*LotR,* 691).

On the whole, however, this episode is designed as a very serious encounter between Frodo the Ring-bearer and Faramir, who is introduced for the first time in this scene. Faramir plays a double role in this intrusion - as the scout of Gondor he is the questioning guard, but as the leader of the soldiers he is the king-figure. This episode is paralleled with the earlier failure of Boromir, who tries to take the Ring from Frodo in the hope of using it against Sauron in an open war. Where Boromir was unable to restrain his short-sighted lust for power and glory for himself and his country, Faramir demonstrates exceptional abnegation when he declares: "'But fear no more! I would not take this thing, if it lay by the highway. Not were Minas Tirith falling in ruin and I alone could save her, so using the weapon of the dark Lord *for her good and my glory.* No, I do not wish for such triumphs, Frodo, son of Drogo" (*LotR,* 698, italics mine, MB). This attitude places Faramir even higher than the order of kings. When his father accuses him of being more a wizard's pupil than his son, he is not much mistaken. Faramir in the confrontation with the Ring-bearer resembles Gandalf in his freedom from the limitations of the loyalty to particular interests of a particular country[5] (Coulombe 1999: 61).

The significance of this intrusion for the development of the presentation of the hobbits, Frodo in particular, is stressed by the parallels between this scene and the previous heroic intrusions of great structural and thematic importance such as the entering of Aragorn, Gimli and Legolas into the realm of Rohan, or earlier, the scene when the nine Companions take refuge in Lorien. The Gondorians and especially Far-

[5] In his contention with Denethor Gandalf says:

"the rule of no realm is mine, neither of Gondor nor any other, great or small. But all worthy things that are in peril as the world now stands, those are my care. And for my part, I shall not wholly fail of my task, though Gondor should perish, if anything passes through this night that can still grow fair or bear fruit and flower again in days to come. For I also am a steward, did you not know?" (*LotR,* 788-789).

amir remind the hobbits of Aragorn. The mock-heroic confrontation with Sam has its counterpart in Strider's intrusion in Bree. Although far away, Aragorn is even more vividly present in this scene as Faramir plays the part of a distrustful if not taunting courtier when he openly doubts the Dúnedain's claim. Frodo acts as his surrogate - this both strengthens the idea of the unity of the Company and prepares the ground for the future transformation of Frodo from the heroic to the royal figure. The intrusion into Lórien is evoked by the blindfolding of the hobbits.

In the long run, the consequences of this intrusion will be even more spectacular than the intrusion of Merry and Pippin into Fangorn, which leads to the destruction of Isengard. The peculiarity of the intrusion in Ithilien lies in the nature of its consequences. Normally, it is the kingdom the intruder enters that suffers from or benefits by the intrusion. Here, obviously, this element is also present - the destruction of the Ring saves Gondor and leads to the transformation of the barren Ithilien into a fertile garden of which Faramir will be the prince. But the most important consequence is the continuation of the mission of the Ring-bearer which results in the salvation of the whole Middle-earth, its present and its future. Sauron will not come back. The particular benefits for Gondor or Faramir are only collateral and insignificant in comparison.

Although Sam appears for a long time the most comical of the hobbits, the development of the plot alters his image to a surprising degree. His exceptional devotion to Frodo and his courage and determination in accompanying him show this character in a different light quite early, at least at the end of *The Fellowship of the Ring*. The transition is finalised during the events under the tower of Cirith Ungol. This transformation is presented through an interesting combination of the hobbit theme and heroic intrusion. The mock-heroic character of Sam is irrevocably transfigured.

In the fight with Shelob, which precedes the scene of intrusion, Sam is truly heroic in his act of killing the monster. However, the conversation of the Orcs he overhears brings back the mock-heroic overtones:

> It's no laughing matter. No one, *no* one has stuck a pin in Shelob before, [...] - there is someone loose hereabouts as is more dangerous than another damned rebel that ever walked since the bad old times, since the great Siege. [...] By all the signs [...] I'd say there's a large warrior loose, Elf most likely, with an elf-sword anyway, and an axe as well maybe; and he's loose in your bounds, too, and you've never spotted him (*LotR,* 767).

Invisible Sam listens to the deductions of the two Orc captains with a grim smile. The comic element in this scene seems to be a reversal of the predicament of Pippin in Gondor; there his unheroic reactions were taken for signs of his prowess, here, Sam's actual heroism is attributed to someone else, because a hobbit, like the unconscious Frodo the Orcs captured, could not, in their opinion, be equal to the situation.

Although Sam wishes very much to remain invisible, the Orcs, who are the guards of Cirith Ungol, witness the coming of a heroic figure who has announced himself through his mighty deed. The Orcs thus construct a hero-myth about Sam, totally inaccurate, yet paradoxically conveying all that he has actually done. Sam in fact is rendered even more heroic by the fact that his deed so far surpasses his abilities. This foreshadows his next exemplary feat, his renunciation of the Ring.

As becomes the true intruder hero, Sam encounters the guards three times; the second one is his duel of the minds with the Silent Watchers of the Tower of Cirith Ungol. Here, his childlike stature and comparatively little strength amount to almost nothing - the reader cannot doubt that Sam's will, courage and determination matches the greatest heroes of the Old Days the Orcs compared him to. The third time is a return of the "hero-myth" - his shadow is again mistaken for the sign of the coming of a great Elf-warrior and causes panic of the last survivor in the fortress.

The moment Sam is already in the tower full of Orcs is a very precarious narrative point. Tolkien could not resolve the situation without sheer improbability - *nec Hercules contra plures,* not to mention a hobbit. Instead of a deus-ex-machina, he uses the psychologically plausible device of turning the vices of the evil characters against themselves. It is not Sam, but, paradoxically, the unconscious Frodo, or rather his *mithril* mail which instigates the fatal quarrel among two tribes of the Orcs, which ends in their destruction. Still, this resolution does not deprive Sam of his newly acquired heroic status, as his coming prevents the only living Orc from killing Frodo.

Finally, a completely serious use of heroic intrusion of the hobbits is the very core of the plot - Frodo and Sam's journey to Mount Doom in the heart of Mordor. As C.S. Lewis noticed in his early essay[6] about *The Lord of the Rings,* the idea that it is the two hobbits who are chosen for the most important task, which is so dangerous that practically hopeless, is the principal source of both pathos and grandeur of the tale and adds greatly to its structural and thematic irony (Lewis 1968: 12-16). The pathos and irony of this invention is stressed by the words of Elrond:

> The road must be trod, but it will be very hard. And neither strength nor wisdom will carry us far upon it. This quest may be attempted by the weak with as much hope as the

[6] The essay, reprinted in the influential Anthology *Tolkien and the Critics* edited by Isaacs and Zimbardo, was originally published in the *Time and Tide* in October 22, 1955, the year when *The Return of the King* was first published. Lewis was one of the first to praise it.

> strong. Yet such is oft the course of deeds that move the wheels of the world: small hands do them because they must, while the eyes of the great are elsewhere (*LotR*. 287).

The only trace of the mock-heroic in the theme of the Ring-bearer may be the prelude to the scene of Frodo's taking the Ring in Rivendell, a scene which follows directly the quoted speech of Elrond. Before the powerful and moving declaration "I will take the Ring, though I do not know the way" (*LotR*, 288), the Council deliberates about a suitable candidate. When Bilbo gruffly volunteers, it is only Boromir, and, partially, Glóin who see any incongruity in the offer. "Boromir looked in surprise at Bilbo, but the laughter died on his lips when he saw that all the others regarded the old hobbit with grave respect. Only Glóin smiled, but his smile came from old memories" (*LotR*, 287). Glóin's smile links this scene with both the mock-heroic and the serious presentation of Bilbo's adventures from *The Hobbit*. The laughter dying on Boromir's lips and the seriousness of the rest of the Council is the moment of transition in the presentation of the hobbits in Tolkien's works. In this light, even the subsequent instances of the use of the mock-heroic mode in *The Lord of the Rings* seem different and more serious from Bilbo's comic vicissitudes.

Although the theme of Frodo and Sam's journey to the Mount Doom is in the most literal sense an intrusion, and the hobbits are heroic even in the very moment of decision to take the Ring to Mordor, the theme is used in a very specific way. The identification, which of all parts of heroic intrusion is the one most frequently used in Tolkien's works, has to be avoided in this case. In fact, the chief concern of the heroes throughout the journey is the avoidance of the situation in which their identity and even their presence could become known to the enemy. There are many guards and sentinels, including the multitudes of Orcs, the Nazgûl, the Silent Watchers of Cirith Ungol, and Shelob. The evil ruler is also aware of the existence of Frodo and his link with the Ring, and therefore constantly tries to find them, ironically he is looking for Frodo and the Ring everywhere but not in his own realm. The usual question "who are you?" is replaced with a sinister "I know you, but where are you?". The intruder hero's aim at the beginning of the intrusion is to disclose and expose himself. Frodo has to endeavour to do exactly the opposite.

The doubting courtiers are legion. Boromir laughs at Bilbo in Rivendell, Denethor calls the plan a horrible folly, Gollum cannot believe Frodo can destroy the Precious. The very landscape, not to mention the horrible disproportion between the weakness of the two hobbits and the whole dreadful might of Sauron, are the signs of doubt. Moreover, quite untypically, the hero himself does not believe in his abilities to complete the mission. The sum of all those doubts is so overwhelming, that the reader's faith in the happy ending of the story lies mostly in hope that the conventions of the novel and the romance will prevail in the end over the conventions of the epic, according to which a heroic death is a suitable conclusion of the tale[7].

The moment of recognition comes in the Cracks of Doom, where Frodo announces his presence and purpose but denies the task he has been given. This is a moment in which doubts are no longer possible; the hobbit heroes managed to enter the most forbidden place in Middle-earth. Ironically, this is the moment when the worst fear of the reader seems to materialise- Frodo announces his presence bur refuses to destroy the Ring. Neither can Sauron doubt the possibility of his downfall any longer:

> The dark Lord was suddenly aware of him, and his eye piercing all shadows looked across the plain to the door that he had made; and the magnitude of his own folly was revealed to him in a blinding flash, and all the devices of his enemies were at last laid bare. Then his wrath blazed in consuming flame, but his fear rose like a vast black smoke to choke him. For he knew his deadly peril and the thread upon which his doom now hung (*LotR,* 981).

The final victory over Sauron begins the final stage of the recognition of the heroism of the two hobbits. The long process, started by Boromir's doubts in Rivendell, in which both the world and the hobbits themselves see their worth is completed in the triumph on the fields of Cormallen and later in Frodo's elevation in his participation in the enthronement of Aragorn.

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The introduction of the hobbits into his epic world was one of the most significant of Tolkien's achievements, and it added greatly to the complexity of his literary works. The early versions of *The Lord of the Rings* show that for a surprisingly long time Tolkien considered his published and "publishable" hobbit stories as a world of their own, based vaguely on his private epic creation - the early versions of *The Silmarillion.* When asked by his publisher to write a sequel to *The Hobbit*, he set out in exactly the same, light and humorous manner. The original group of hobbits had different names, with the most significant Bingo Bolger-Baggins instead of the future Frodo (the name which belongs at this stage to someone else). Equally significantly, the mysterious figure they meet in Bree is a strange hobbit called Trotter:

[7]In his essay "A Far - Off Gleam of the Gospel: Salvation in Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings*, " Colin Gunton recalls a radio talk preceding a dramatised reading of *The Lord of the Rings,* in which a critic complained that there is no sacrificial death in the book. Gunton is very doubtful about the veracity of this observation, nevertheless this remark proves that Frodo's death at the end would not be ill received (Gunton 1999:124).

> Suddenly Bingo noticed that a queer-looking, brown-faced hobbit, sitting in the shadows behind the others, was also listening intently. He had an enormous mug (more like a jug) in front of him, and was smoking a broken-stemmed pipe right under his rather long nose. He was dressed in dark rough brown cloth, and had a hood on, in spite of the warmth, - and, very remarkably, he had wooden shoes! Bingo could see them sticking out under the table in front of him .
> 'Who is that over there?' said Bingo [...] 'Him?' said Barnabas [...] "O! that is one of the wild folk - rangers we call 'em. [...] What his right name is I never heard, but he's known round here as Trotter. You can hear him coming along the road in those shoes: clitter - clap - when he walks a path' [...] Presently the Ranger [...] invited Bingo to comer over to him [...] he threw back his hood, showing a long shaggy head of hair, some of which hung over his forehead. But it did not hide a pair of keen dark eyes (Tolkien 1994: 137-138).

This passage has its counterpart in *The Lord of the Rings.* The replacement of Trotter by Strider considerably changes the tone of the passage, although significantly many details are retained with only slight changes. The character of Trotter seems strangely inappropriate, the idea of a hobbit ranger in wooden clogs is ridiculous enough to counteract the significance of the Ring which was supposed to add to the story's seriousness. Such a character can only belong to a fairy-tale, much more so than even the wizard with a pointed blue hat and a silver scarf. The replacement of Trotter destroys the faintest traces of humour in this passage:

> Suddenly Frodo noticed that a strange-looking weather-beaten men, sitting in the shadows near the wall, was also listening intently to the hobbit-talk. He had a tall tankard in front of him, and was smoking a long - stemmed pipe curiously carved. His legs were stretched out before him, showing high boots of supple leather that fitted him well, but had seen much wear and were now caked with mud. A travel-stained cloak of heavy dark -green cloth was drawn close about him, and in spite of the heat of the room he wore a hood that overshadowed his face, but the gleam of his eyes could be seen as he watched the hobbits.
> 'Who is that?' Frodo asked [...] 'Him?' said the landlord [...] 'I don't rightly know. He is one of the wandering folk - Rangers we call them [...].What his right name is I've never heard: but he's known around here as Strider. Goes about at a great pace on his long shanks; though he don't tell nobody what cause he has to hurry [...]. Frodo found that Strider was now looking at him [...] Presently [...] he invited Frodo to come over and sit by him [...] he threw back his hood, showing a shaggy head of dark hair flecked with grey, and in a pale stern face a pair of keen grey eyes (*LotR*,172-173).

The transformation of this strange and slightly incongruous hobbit into Aragorn seems the turning point in the development of *The Lord of the Rings.* Suddenly the seemingly insurmountable gap between the two strands of Tolkien's literary activities disappeared. The grand epic world of *The Silmarillion* intruded upon the Shire. As a consequence, the comic and seemingly unheroic hobbits intruded, or were forced to intrude, (like Merry and Pippin in Fangorn), on the epic world. This literary process was probably the most significant of all heroic intrusions in the history of Tolkien's literary career. The hobbits are the reason why Tolkien is not just another William Morris or George Macdonald, interesting writers who in the epochs following the invention of the novel imitated the medieval genres, but added nothing to their development.

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Andrzej Weseliński

Peter Ackroyd's *Chatterton*: (Re)Constructing/Deconstructing the Poet's Biography

One striking feature of contemporary British fiction is the practice of rewriting earlier works of fiction. Examples here might include William Golding's rewriting of R.M.Ballantyne's *Coral Island* (1857) in his *Lord of the Flies* (1954), Brian Aldiss's reworking of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818) in his *Frankenstein Unbound* (1973), Graham Greene's rewriting of Cervantes's *Don Quixote* (1605-1616) in his *Monsignor Quixote* (1982) or the retelling of Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) in J.M.Coetzee's *Foe* (1987). As Stephen Connor has put it, in contemporary fiction telling has become "compulsorily belated, inextricably bound up with retelling, in all its idioms: reworking, translation, adaptation, displacement, imitation, forgery, plagiarism, parody, pastiche" (2001:166).

It should be added here that the practice of rewriting extends beyond the realm of fiction because many contemporary writers have found non-fiction prose or some culturally important texts equally attractive and, therefore, worthy of inclusion. This is evident in such works as Jeanette Winterson's retelling of the Biblical story of the Flood in her *Boating for Beginners* (1985), D.M.Thomas's reworking of a Freudian case-history and Anatoli Kuznetsov's book *Babi Yar* (1967) in his novel *The White Hotel* (1981), or Brian Moore's reworking of the *Relations* (i.e., the voluminous letters that the Jesuits sent back from North America to their superiors in France in the 17th century) in his novel *Black Robe* (1987). Related closely to this kind of fiction are novels which employ or incorporate quasi-historical or quasi-biographical material in a way that allows an awareness of the contrast between the past and the present-day narratives as well as the past and the present-day languages. Examples here might be furnished by Barry Unsworth's *Stone Virgin* (1985) and Peter Ackroyd's *Hawksmoor* (1985). Unsworth's novels splits into three distinctive narrative planes. Chronologically unconnected, the three stories are layered into each other to produce a sinister postmodern mystery in which a number of characters show their transhistorical connectedness. In the case of *Hawksmoor*, the story is cut between the two eras, and told in two languages, also layered into each other to create a fictionalized biography of a famous eighteenth-century architect, on the one hand, and a detective novel in which a twentieth-century detective superintendent (a fictional character called Nicholas Hawksmoor) is shown investigating a series of mysterious killings in London, on the other hand.

Writing of *Hawksmoor*, Alison Lee remarks that Ackroyd's novel induces a sense of the relativity or undecidability of historical truth, which is typical of postmodern historical fiction (1990:68-70). In a similar fashion, Linda Hutcheon writes approvingly of the novel's indeterminacy: she describes Ackroyd's work as "the enactment, as well as the theorization, of the impossibility of final meaning"(1988:15). Elsewhere, Linda Hutcheon observes that nowadays historical meaning may be seen as "unstable, contextual, relational, and provisional". And she goes on to say that postmodernism uses "novelistic representations to underline the narrative nature of much of that knowledge"(2002:64). *Hawksmoor*, which won both the Whitbread Novel of the Year Award and the *Guardian* Fiction Award, has received much critical attention (e.g. Connor 2001), whereas Ackroyd's (auto)biographical fiction has had a scant critical reception so far.

It is worth mentioning at this point that in the early phase of his career Ackroyd emerged as a leading literary critic and a splendid biographer. Literary critics attribute Ackroyd's preoccupation with layers of time in his fiction to T.S.Eliot's poetry. Ackroyd investigated Eliot's life and work in an acclaimed biography published in 1984. Encouraged by the success of Eliot's biography, which won the Whitbread Award for Biography, he also published biographies of Dickens (1990) and William Blake (1995). A striking feature of the former is a device which might be called "a shuffling of time", because in his book, against the advice of his editor, the author has interpolated passages of imagined conversations between Dickens and his characters, as well as Oscar Wilde, William Blake, and Peter Ackroyd [sic]. Soon "a shuffling of time" has become a staple device employed in Ackroyd's novels, such as *English Music* (1992), *The House of Doctor Dee* (1993), *Dan Leno and the Limehouse Golem* (1994) and, as mentioned before, *Hawksmoor*.

In the further part of this paper I will concentrate on Ackroyd's quasi-biographical novels, with particular attention to *Chatterton*. In the early 1980s Ackroyd launched into biographical fiction with *The Last Testament of Oscar Wilde* (1983). Written in the form of a memoir, the novel gives an account of the last days of Oscar Wilde living alone in exile in Paris. Alternating between biography and autobiography, the novelist allows the hero to speak to the reader in his own voice, thus blurring the boundaries between fact and fiction. In 1996 Ackroyd published *Milton in America*. As the title of the novel announces, *Milton in America* presents a counterfactual version of the great poet's life. On the eve of the restoration of Charles II, John Milton, the ardent supporter of the Puritan cause, flees England for the New World. There, he becomes the leader of New Milton, a colony founded upon strict moral and religious principles.

Both *Milton in America* and his earlier novel *Chatterton*, are illustrative of Ackroyd's attempts to write "alternative biographies" of famous English poets. Artistically, *Chatterton* is more successful than *Milton in America*. In it Ackroyd investigates the famous story of the death of Thomas Chatterton (1752-1770), poet and forger of medieval poetry, that is, author of poems ostensibly written by an imaginary fifteenth-century poet, Thomas Rowley, a monk and friend of William Canynge, a historical Bristol merchant. Like in *Milton in America*, the author intentionally blurs the boundaries between the real and the fictive or the authentic and the fake. The official biography, which occupies the first page of the novel, introduces the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century stories, that is, the life of Chatterton and the story of Henry Wallis's famous painting of the death of Chatterton. Completed in 1856, the sentimental painting by Wallis has the young George Meredith as its model for "the dead poet lying in his attic room in Brooke Street". A third line of the complicated plot is a contemporary story, also involving a poet, Charles Wychwood, who finds an unidentified painting which he believes to represent Chatterton in his middle age. The three imbricated stories create a complex novel exploring history, biography, art, forgery and plagiarism.

From the beginning, the novel tends to contradict the official biography of the eponymous hero which is given on the first page. We follow the story of Charles Wychwood, who is investigating the various historical records of the life of Chatterton. Much to his surprise, he notices that each biography describes "a quite different poet: even the simplest observation by one was contradicted by another, so that nothing seemed certain" (Ackroyd 1989:127). Wychwood claims that Chatterton did not die by suicide at the age of 18, thus becoming the stereotypical image of the "marvellous boy", the representation of the gifted and doomed genius, and that he faked his death to avoid being exposed as fraud. What is more, he is led to believe that Chatterton also wrote "in the guise of Thomas Gray, William Blake, William Cowper and many others; as a result our whole understanding of eighteenth-century poetry will have to be revised" (127).

As mentioned before, the process of investigation begins early in the novel, when Charles Wychwood comes across the unidentified portrait of the aged man at Leno Antiques in London. It is interesting to note that the name and the description of the shop establish a transhistorical link between a Victorian entertainer Dan Leno, on the one hand, and Dickensian Old Curiosity Shop, on the other hand. Equally interesting are the terms of the deal with Mr. Leno. When Charles enters Leno Antiques, he is carrying two books under his arms, which he intends to sell for a large sum. Since the anonymous painting has captured his imagination, he changes his mind, saying to Mr. Leno that he would be interested in an exchange. Under the terms of the deal, he buys the portrait in exchange for the two volumes he bought in Cambridge many years ago. Those books became part of the life which Charles carried about him from place to place. They were entitled *The Lost Art of Eighteenth Century Flute-Playing* by James Macpherson. It is a nice irony that Charles has acquired a portrait, which he believes to represent Chatterton, in exchange of the books written by James Macpherson, whose name is identical with that of a famous eighteenth-century poet and forger of medieval poetry (i.e., the Ossianic poems). The transaction is completed to the accompaniment of a brief exchange between Wychwood and Leno: “A flute for a lord. A flute for a lord. What shall it be, Mr. Leno, what shall it be?” (12). While reading this grotesque scene, one is prompted to describe the whole transaction more accurately as “Middleton for Chatterton”.

Another transhistorical connection between the contemporary and the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century stories is the fact that in the past Charles worked as a secretary for a novelist (Harriet Scrope), who is a plagiarizer. Harriet Scrope, in turn, has a friend (Sarah Tilt), who is currently writing a book on beautiful representations of death in English painting. A description of Sarah Tilt’s vast project , provisionally entitled *The Art of Death*, sounds like a postmodernist joke:

> She had examined the various images of death, from the medieval depiction of the emaciated cadaver to the theatrical richness of Baroque funerary monuments, from the lugubrious narratives of Victorian genre painting to the abstract violence of contemporary art […] the alterations in the presentation of the death-bed scene, natural or pathetic, violent or solitary. […] She studied the *artes moriendi* of the seventeenth-century; she visited museums in Greece and Italy in order to sketch reliquary urns; she documented the smallest changes in burial rites; she read manuals on dissection and embalming; she investigated the Romantic cult of the dead […] She turned death into a spectacle. (33-34).

The novel also abounds in postmodernist jokes which emphasize the theme of plagiarism and forgery. For instance, Charles’s friend, Philip Slack, experiences a moment of *déjà lu* while he is reading a nineteenth-century novel entitled *The Last Testament*:

> Philip remembered where he had read Harrison Bentley’s *The Last Testament* before: Harriet Scrope had written a novel in which a writer’s secretary is responsible for many of her employer’s ‘posthumous’ publications; she knew his style so well that she was able

> effortlessly to counterfeit it, and only the assiduous researches of a biographer had uncovered the fakery. That was very close to the late nineteenth-century novel which Philip now held in his hand (69).

It is worth noticing that the title of Miss Scrope's quasi-biographical novel echoes the title of Ackroyd's own novel *The Last Testament of Oscar Wilde*. In the same chapter (Chap. 5) Philip Slack is shown reading the publishers' catalogues in the library. One of the announcements of new books has caught his particular attention. The title of the publication is: *Thou Marvellous Boy: The Influence of Thomas Chatterton on the Writings of William Blake*. Its author, Homer Brillo, who is Professor of Advanced Information Studies at Valley Forge University [sic], examines the effect which Chatterton's "Rowley" poems had upon the vocabulary and prosody of William Blake's epic verse as well as the devices by which Blake introduced the "subliminal figure of Chatterton", the suicide, into his texts, and also discusses the influence of Chatterton's medievalism on Blake's own vision. As Homer Brillo states in his introduction, this is the subject which Blake scholars seem unwilling to address for it assumes that "Blake was influenced by the work of a forger and a plagiarist" (72).

Scattered throughout the novel are self-reflexive passages that focus on plagiarism and forging. For instance, in the eighteenth-century plot line (Chap. 6) Chatterton explains his method of "reproducing the Past" by mixing the real and the fictive, which is analogous with the technique employed by Ackroyd in his biographical novels, such as *Chatterton* and *Milton in America*:

> I composed *Trew Histories* of Bristol and of the Church itself. My Method was as follows: I had already around me, Volumes taken from my father's shelves or purchas'd from the Booksellers [...] If I took a passage from each [...] I found that in Unison they became quite a new Account and, as it were, Chatterton's Account. [...] I reproduc'd the Past and filled it with such Details that it was as if I were observing it in front of me: so the Language of ancient Dayes awoke the Reality itself for, tho' I knew that it was I who composed these Histories, I knew also that they were true ones (85).

In the nineteenth-century plot line Meredith, who poses as the dead Chatterton for Wallis, contradicts the Victorian realist painter's belief that the real exists and that the artist's task is "only to depict it". Meredith points out that Chatterton created the monk Rowley "out of thin air", yet he has more life in him than any medieval priest who actually existed. An he goes on to say that Chatterton invented an entire period and "made its imagination his own: no one had properly understood the medieval world until Chatterton summoned it into existence" (157). Separated in time, Meredith's views are strongly reminiscent of those of Chatterton's expounded earlier in Chapter Six: "Thus do we see every Line an Echo, for the truest Plagiarism is the truest Poetry" (87).

In the twentieth-century story, shortly after Charles Wychwood's death, the portrait of the unknown man is taken to the artist's studio for restoration (Chap. 15). When the dissolvent is applied, it reacts with the freshly exposed paint, so that the canvas begins to reveal successive layers of paint, possibly some other portraits painted earlier: "The face of the sitter dissolved, becoming two faces, one old and one young […] Within a few minutes nothing remained: except […] certain letters from the titles of the books which now hovered in an indeterminate space" (228). The artist, who is carrying out restoration work, and the reader alike dimly realize that they will never know the truth about the portrait. In a similar fashion, towards the end of the novel, Philip Slack realizes that the Chatterton papers were imitations and the painting a forgery. Philip recalls Charles saying repeatedly to him that "there is a charm and even a beauty in unfinished work […] the poem which is interrupted and never ended". And he asks an important cognitive question: "Why should historical research not also remain incomplete, existing as a possibility and not fading into knowledge ?" (213) Philip's final decision "to make no further efforts to prove or disprove the authenticity of the manuscripts" seems to reflect the authorial narrator's acceptance of cognitive uncertainty, that is, the instability or relativity of historical truth.

It would be an oversimplification, however, to state that Ackroyd's novel seeks to undermine the very foundations of the long tradition of (auto)biographical fiction or fictionalized (auto)biography because it challenges the conventional notions of what might constitute historical truth. Towards the end of the novel it becomes apparent that the question of historical truth has lost much of its appeal. Gradually, the reader becomes aware that the novel is primarily concerned with the powers and the limits of representation in both verbal and visual media. As Linda Hutcheon has put it, this is a postmodernist novel "self-consciously, even excessively, *about* representation […] [which] illustrates well the deconstructive potential of parody" (2002:92). The deconstructive potential of a postmodernist parody such as *Chatterton* manifests itself in a double-coded narrative that both confirms and subverts the power of the representations of history, biography, and art.

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Paulina Kupisz

Trans-Contextual Parody in A.S.Byatt's *Possession* and *The Matisse Stories*

In *A Theory of Parody* Linda Hutcheon uses the term 'trans-contextualization' to discuss one of the most important aspects of the postmodern parody, which is to recreate and repeat with a critical distance rather than to ridicule and reject. While being an 'activation of the past by giving it a new and often ironic context' (1985: 5), trans-contextualisation is an integral part of parody understood in terms of 'revising, replaying [and] inverting' (11). Taking into consideration the prefix 'trans', which means 'across', 'beyond', 'changed into another place or state' (OED), the term suggests joining different contexts, as well as selected elements from different contexts, making them overlap and intermingle so as to result in a new literary or cultural production with a new meaning. Trans-contextualisation may thus happen either within the same sort of production, for instance, in one novel the same situation is projected in two different social contexts, or it can join different means of artistic expression, such as reflecting a piece of literature in painting. Hutcheon gives examples from Umberto Eco's *The Name of the Rose*, in which he '"trans-contextualizes" characters, plot details and even verbal quotations from Conan Doyle's *The Hound of the Baskervilles* into a medieval world of monks and (literally) textual intrigue' (12). She also mentions Tom Stoppard's *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are Dead* as an example of trans-contextualising the parodied text (which is *Hamlet*) by adding scenes invented by the playwright to those 'directly taken from the Shakespearian model' (14). Expanding the scope of parody as a means of transgressing the limits of its formal structure, Hutcheon notices that this juxtaposition may take various forms, 'not necessarily even in the same medium or genre'(18), like in Peter Greenaway's film *The Draughtsman's Contract* which 'in its attention to visual and verbal detail [...] is a loving parody of eighteen-century painting and Restoration comedy' (7).

In her viewing the postmodern parody as a trans-contextualising tool for combining the past with a 'consciousness of today' (7), Hutcheon refers to Charles Jencks' idea of 'double-coding' in postmodern architecture, expanding the range of the concept to all postmodern art forms. Jencks emphasises the coexistence of the past and present 'in a way that implies both continuity with the past and the separate identity of the present' (1993: 288). The 'double-coding', which aim is to understand, interpret and attach new meanings/contexts to the past through the modern perspective and vice versa, results in 'multivalence', which 'great advantage and delight is the continual reinterpretation it prompts, a result of the multiple links between a work and its setting' (289). Thus, if a past text is a subject to trans-contextualisation resulting in parody, the meaning of both the transformed text and the transformation are modified and illuminated by each other. This observation echoes Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of parody as 'an intentional dialogised hybrid', in which 'languages and styles actively and mutually illuminate one another' (1993: 151). Although Linda Hutcheon warns against applying Bakhtin's 'unsystematic' theories directly to contemporary culture, for they are 'rooted in history, in the specificity of time and place' (74), she shares and develops some of his views on the carnivalesque nature of parody and its legitimised right to transgress the norms. Yet, what she seems to underestimate, especially within the scope of trans-contextualisation, is Bakhtin's idea of the polyphony of different voices existing simultaneously in an artistic production, which intertwine so as to acquire new meanings and create new frames for themselves.

The above extensive theoretical elaboration will be of much help while analysing the works of A.S.Byatt in the light of trans-contextualisation. It is worth bearing in mind that parody as a means of artistic expression is essential to Byatt's style. She openly admits following the modern understanding of the term, that is parody as a medium for recreating, refreshing and bringing the past alive. Byatt states that 'as a writer I know very well that a text is all the words that are in it, and not only those words, but the other words that precede it, haunt it and are echoed in it.' (2002: 46). This attitude can be traced already in her early novels. Although they are considered by some critics to be written 'according to fairly conventional methods' (Wheeler 1997: 257), they already explore the possibility of intertextual, or trans-contextual, playing with literary texts, genres and conventions. As Kuno Schuhmann notices in his essay on *The Shadow of the Sun* and *The Game*, 'their achievement is not so much in solving as in probing thematic and structural problems and the possibilities of an original approach.' (2001: 75). The need for the postmodern experimentation and at the same time the extensive use of trans-contextual parodic modes flourished in *Possession* and since then A.S. Byatt has continued to make her fiction an elaborated tissue of interwoven and juxtaposed contexts.

The works that I have chosen employ trans-contextual parody as a substantial method of artistic representation. *Possession* was the first novel that A.S. Byatt intentionally created as 'a parody in every possible form' (website). The awareness of its parodic intents becomes one of the guiding principles in understanding and interpreting the novel to its full extent. *The Matisse Stories* are a superb example of translating one sort of cultural production (i.e. painting, the visual art) into another (i.e. literature). Since the topic is broad, I shall limit my considerations to the methods that A.S. Byatt employs in the process of parodic trans-contextualisation, concentrating therefore on how she performs this task in the two works rather than analysing and interpreting their parodic aspects.

As already mentioned, *Possession* was deliberately structured to conform to 'modern parodic forms, not in a sneering or mocking way but as the representation or recreation of the past' (website). In the novel A.S. Byatt juxtaposes the nineteenth century England with the modern period. She seeks new contexts for the issues of both ages by double coding, that is projecting the Victorian era over the twentieth century so that both epochs are illuminated by each other and thus the present is read and challenged through the prism of the past inasmuch as the past is revoked and reinterpreted in terms of present issues. Byatt contrasts two pairs of the characters: the creators – the Victorian poets, R.H. Ash and Christabel La Motte, against the re-creators, that is Roland, 'an old-fashioned textual critic' (Byatt 1991: 50) and Maud, a psychoanalytic feminist scholar. At the beginning the Victorian plot is the inferior one, being an object of purely academic concerns rather than emotionally involving. However, this cold and pragmatic attitude of both scholars seems to shake with the discovery of the love letters. The Victorian affair as well as the Victorian past take possession of Roland and Maud's minds. As Jackie Buxton points out, 'The text seems to suggest that Victorian fictions are somehow dictating contemporary realities' (2001: 97). It is worth noticing that both scholars are aware of it. 'Roland thought [...] that he and Maud were being driven by a plot or fate that seemed, at least possibly, to be not their plot or fate but that of those others' (421). The fact that the modern protagonists are conscious of being a part of literary conventions contributes substantially to establishing 'multiple interactions between the cultural concerns of the late twentieth century and those of a century earlier'. (Dentith 2000:165).

In *Possession* Byatt conducts the trans-contextual repetition with a difference multi-dimentionally by finding new contexts for all literary, cultural or social aspects she touches upon. An in-depth exploration of literary genres and conventions makes the novel a perfect Bakhtinian hybrid, harmoniously conjoining the variety of voices. It is worth noticing that in terms of trans-contextual playing with literary modes Byatt comes up with a double polyphony, both at the level of the whole novel, which is a heteroglossic mixture of interwoven discourses, as well as within the frames of every single genre she exploits. Sub-titled 'a Romance', *Possession* develops various aspects of the notion of romance, ranging from high Arthurian or medieval romances through Gothic half-fictive, half-realistic bizzare tales to sentimental, melodramatic love stories. Already in the two epigraphs preceding the opening scene of the novel does Byatt point out one of the most important features of romance, namely that of presenting 'the truth under circumstances [...] of the writer's own choosing or creation'. Hence, romance enables the writer to blur the borderline between fact and fiction, to combine authentic events with figments of imagination so as to conjure up a deceitful image. It also allows to 'connect a bygone time with the very present that is flitting away from us'. Another important element of the mode of romance is the quest which becomes an organising principle of the novel. The one chosen for the search of the academic Grail is Roland Michell. Even though he has decided to steal the manuscripts of the letters, he does that 'because they were alive. [...] I felt I had to do something. It was an impulse' (50), he admits while talking to Maud Bailey for the first time. His intentions, both emotional and intellectual, are pure as opposed to Mortimer Cropper's ghoulish greed for R.H.Ash's belongings. Roland (and Maud's) search is 'the quest for knowledge' (4), both in the physical sense, for they travel substantially following in Ash and LaMotte's footsteps, as well as in the sense of a journey into one's own identity. By uncovering the relationship between Randolph and Christabel, Roland and Maud gradually discover their own fears and constraints about being close to each other. By transposing their relationship onto the Victorian love plot Byatt touches upon the question of romance as a love story and the variety of incarnations it adopts. Sometimes, it can be a silly 'Harlequin-like' tale written in the language that Fergus speaks when she wants to seduce Maud: 'You are the most beautiful thing I have ever seen or dreamed about. I want you, I need you, can't you feel it, it's irresistible' (57). It may become a melodramatic story about a passionate, fierce but unfulfilled and tragic love, like the one between the two Victorian poets. It is also the relationship of Roland and Val, initially full of juvenile energy, gradually suppressed by the complexities of life. It is, lastly, a story of deliberate avoiding of entering into close mutual relationship, longing for 'a clean empty bed in a clean empty room' (267) because of fear, of disappointment, of misunderstanding the meaning of true love.

The quest is also an academic detective investigation, pertaining to the convention of the 'whodunit' novels. 'Literary critics make natural detectives', says Maud (237); in *Possession* the trans-contextualisation of the genre is conducted at two parallel levels, transforming both the content matter and the structure of traditional detective fiction. As Jackie Buxton aptly remarks, in the novel 'the mystery resides not in the conventional detection of the perpetrators of the murder but, rather, in tracing the trajectory of the crime itself: passion' (93). Roland and Maud's aim of their academic pursuit is twofold: at one level they are interested in tracing the Victorian poets' affair for solely academic purposes, as it radically changes the scope of literary research on both Ash and La Motte. However, the case gradually makes them personally involved, shifting their attitude from a balanced, scholarly perspective towards a more emotional one. As far as the structure is concerned, all traditional constituents of detective stories, such as a mystery, suspect, investigator, helper, villain traces and clues leading to the solution, are transposed onto the academic environment. The triggers for the intrigue are the mysterious letters found by chance in the library. Roland and Maud become sleuths of contrasting academic attitudes; Leonora, Blackadder, Joan Bailey, Val and Euan turn out to be their helpers while Cropper together with Fergus and Lord Ash are villains attempting at overtaking Ash's possessions. The poems of Randolph and Christabel act as possible clues to the mystery, sometimes putting the scholars onto the right track, at other times misleading, as in the case of presupposed death of the poets' child. The mystery is the improbable (from the academic point of view) relationship between the Victorian poets and the solution is complex and revealed gradually. At first, it is about identifying the addressee of Randolph's two letters; solving this, Roland and Maud are eager to know more about other possible letters, about the course of the love affair and finally about the fate of the poet's child. As Buxton further notices, the possession of the letters is here 'arche and telos, question and solution' (93) to the mystery of Randolph and Christabel's love.

Romance and detective fiction are the most prominent literary modes that Byatt exploits. Other forms incorporated into the novel are more personal: letters, diaries, biographical notes or travel accounts, which serve as a counterbalance to the scholarly, pragmatic approach to writing. It is important to notice yet another genre that Byatt filters through modern parodic modes, namely academic fiction. While taking a closer look at the presentation of contemporary academic environment, the novel contributes to the traditional understanding of the notion of parody, which involves laughter and ridicule, even satirical overtones. Some of the scholars are presented in the light of warm, indulgent irony: dr Beatrice Nest, intellectually and academically unfulfilled editor of Ellen Ash, protecting Randolph wife's writings like 'some kind of a guardian octopus' (112); professor James Blackadder, the founder of the 'Ash factory'; or professor Leonora Stern, 'resplendent and barbaric' (401), attaching ultra-feministic meaning to every academic issue. Even more biting satire is aimed at professor Mortimer Cropper, 'a hi-tech lecturer, a magician of white screens and light-beams, sound-effects and magnifications[...] which helped him, like President Reagan, to orchestrate with impromptu naturalness a highly complicated presentation' (385) and Fergus Wolff, for they both privilege financial benefits over intellectual ones. It should also be added that *Possession* continues the tradition of the academic novel in the sense of being an intellectually demanding and highly referential literary work that needs constant rereading and reinterpreting. The process of identifying and interpreting the great variety of motifs, hints and allusions to its full extent requires a broad academic knowledge on literature and culture in general. In this respect, it is interesting to notice that the reader response and, hence, the understanding of the novel is largely dependent on his/her prior education and erudition.

In *The Matisse Stories*, the process of trans-contextualisation lies in rendering the language of art in the language of literature. As Michael Worton remarks in his essay *Of Prisms and Prose*, 'Byatt's textual inscription of paintings takes variety of forms, ranging from description and interpretation through evocation and allusion to creation and invention' (2001: 17). In all three stories the depictions of Matisse's pictures are already an act of interpretation, constituting a guiding line to the perception of the situations described. In each story Byatt employs different perspective while presenting a particular painting. In *Medusa's Ankles*, the act entitled 'The Rosy Nude' hanging at the wall of the hairdresser saloon, decorated 'like the interior of a rosy cloud' (Byatt 1994: 5) is presented through the eyes of Susannah, a middle-aged frustrated classical philologist. This 'lavish and complex creature' (3), a naked, monstrually shaped woman – "an outline of the human body", but at the same time frivolous and free, becomes a symbol of true womanhood for the heroine and a hope for confirmation and approval of her own identity, sexuality and carnality. In the two other stories, *Art Work* and *Chinese Lobster*, Byatt adopts an even more interesting narrative perspective, namely that of discussing the subsequent events in the present tense. Although such a method is usually associated with the cinematic representation, it is also characteristic for describing and interpreting a painting, or a series of paintings. It can also be read as the painter's considerations about the people, places and events he or she is about to paint, gradually sketching subsequent images, situations and people, endowing them with meanings, adding colours and lines necessary to evoke a desired scene. Byatt gives a clue to such an approach right at the beginning of *Art Work*. Surprisingly, the story starts with a short semi-critical study of Matisse's *Le silence habite des maisons*: 'Two people sit at the corner of a table. The mother, it may be, has a reflective chin propped on a hand propped on the table. [...] In front, a vase of flowers.[...] Who is the watching totem under the ceiling?' (31-32). The following story about the Dennison family and their maid Mrs Brown, who at the end turns out to be the appreciated home-made artist instead of her employer, is maintained within this half-critical, half-creative tone. It is also interesting to observe that the past tense in both stories occurs only while mentioning details from the characters' past. Those sudden changes of perspective even more increase the feeling of the omnipresence of an omniscient, god-like artist/creator breathing life into a series of images.

Transposing Matisse's paintings into the narrated events and vice versa is the mode that Byatt consequently applies throughout the stories. This results in giving new contexts to both of them. By making Matisse's pictures and ideas central points of reference and triggers for particular situations Byatt puts them in a new perspective, not only as independent, unfamiliar objects of art but as living images that can affect ordinary life. When the interior of the saloon is changed and the nude disappears giving her place to 'photographs of girls with grey faces, coal-black eyes and spiky lashes' (16), Susannah suddenly loses her object of aspirations. Paradoxically, the lack of the painting and its enlivening, rejuvenating rosy colour evokes an unexpected attack of fury, resulting in demolishing the saloon but most of all in a change, not entirely realised, in Susannah's identity. Hence, the 'Rosy Nude' is trans-contextualised here both as a trigger for making oneself free and at the same time as a restraining force, intimidating with its autonomy. In *Chinese Lobster*, Matisse's paintings and his way of perceiving female bodies are the core of an argument between a young, anorectic and probably emotionally unbalanced student Peggy Nollett and her tutor, professor Perry Diss, whom she accuses of sexual harassment. Being a dean of the Institute of Women Studies, Gerda Himmelblau has to solve the conflict; however, instead of being a simple case of a supposed affair between a student and her tutor, the whole situation has to be considered with Matisse in mind, thus making it more complex both emotionally and intellectually. The story is also a superb discussion on the differences between artistic provocation and pure ignorance, on the border between contestation and blasphemy and also on the possibilities and limits of artistic repetition with a critical difference.

Another important aspect of creating a literary parody of Matisse is the evocation of the atmosphere of his paintings. The stories are imbued with eroticism, though not with an ostentatious manifesting with sex and carnality but rather with subtle allusions and ambiguities. As Jerzy Jarniewicz points out (2000: 120), the stories are full of apparent calmness and peacefulness, which hides dramatic, even tragic tensions. Matisse's pictures are dominated with the elementariness of form; it is difficult to distinguish between the foreground and the background; the colours are bright and saturated. All those qualities serve to evoke and sustain this seeming simplicity, but there is always an element in the pictures that breaks this bucolic atmosphere, like the totem in the ceiling in *Le silence habite des maisons*. Byatt presents ordinary, though socially well-positioned, people in ordinary places doing banal things, such as having a haircut, keeping a household or eating a dinner in a restaurant. However, underneath those daily routine tasks occur serious personal tragedies. Like Matisse, who deliberately clashed single patches of colours to achieve a vibrant contrastive tint at the border between the two, A.S. Byatt juxtaposes different attitudes to disturb the false harmony of life, bringing the characters to the confrontation with their own egos.

As Linda Hutcheon aptly remarks, 'parody is one of the major forms of modern self-reflexivity; it is a form of inter-art discourse' (2). A.S. Byatt's works are rich and complex intertextual, self-reflexive mosaics of literary and cultural motifs, making the reader immerse in the carefully and intelligently woven network of intricate references and allusions. In the works discussed in this paper, trans-contextual parody is one of the most prominent literary modes that allows to elicit the multiplicity of meanings and interpretations and, at the same time putting a new perspective on both the object and the outcome of parody.

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Bartłomiej Błaszkiewicz

The Motif of the Heavenly Gate in the Lyrics of Bob Dylan

The aim of this short discussion is to briefly sketch the religious context of the work of Bob Dylan, concentrating on the image of the heavenly gate and the heavenly door, which has featured as a recurrent motif in the work of Dylan since his earliest creations until his very latest output. While it would not be possible, within this format, to give justice to the whole tangled web of religious images with which Dylan's work manifestly overflows and to trace the Biblical references these images stem from and refer back to[1], the use of the motif of the gate of heaven appears, with Dylan, to shed light on the general nature of his creative evolution[2].

Let one thus begin the discussion by looking at Dylan's early output[3]. The motif of the road and the process of living as traveling is very prominent there and it is with this motif that one must start the analysis of the topic at hand. The images employed to forward this motif vary in their character and degrees of realism and allegory. On the one hand there is thus the hardfact comic realism of the Guthie – styled *Talking New York* where the speaking persona, a cross-cut between the celebrated bard and a Chaplin-like tramp, tells a purportedly autobiographical tale of a winter visit to New York: "rambling" in and out of it, "walking around with nowhere to go", a temporary singing job ending in a disappointment and the freezing cold of the season all contribute to the pervading sense of lack of ultimate destination which the song seems to exude more than anything else.

Next *Song to Woody* unveils allegorical connotations of the image. The full absorbing of the sense of the shared living experience of succeeding generations from the previous folk song tradition, and its presentation is a concise metaphor work is

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[1] The present discussion is based on Forstner: (1990, .383 – 386) as well as Leon-Dufour: (1994, 02 – 104).

[2] On this topis see also Gilmour (2004: 11 – 20).

[3] For chronology see Heylin: (1992) and Sounes: (2002).

the key to the song's maturity and appeal, but here again there is no sense of an overriding aim in the human journey: the generations "come with the dust and are gone with the wind". Similarly, there is no sense of time or its relevance in the personal dimension of the journey: "I'm a-leavin' tomorrow, but I could leave today / Somewhere down the road someday". The lack of destination experienced in the personal experience of the flow of time obliterates the significance of any temporal sequence to the point of a complete loss of meaning. The same idea returns in *Tomorrow is a Long Time:*

Here the emotional yearning for the physical closeness of a dear person is put in the same philosophical context: since life is a meaningless stretch of time the moments of different experience bear no connection to each other, they indeed split life into parallel endless stretches of semiautonomous bubbles - from the point of view of sensory experience they can't be related in time and thus in expectation: "I can't hear the echo of my footsteps/Or can't remember the sound of my own name."

Central to our discussion of his early writings is the song called *I'd Hate to Be You on That Dreadful Day*. It presents a comment, in unrelentingly accusatory veil, on somebody failing to make it through the gate of heaven:

> Well, your clock is gonna stop
> At Saint Peter's gate.
> Ya gonna ask him what time it is,
> He's gonna say, "It is too late."
> Hey, hey!
> I'd sure hate to be you
> On that dreadful day.

The tone is unremittingly stern throughout the song. It presents the full yawning helplessness of the condemned person, the sense of wasted time: " 'Shoulda listened when you heard/the word down there", and the irrevocability of the sentence passed: "You're gonna have a nightmare/And never wake up." What makes most impression in the song is its seriousness of tone, the palpable sense of what damnation is like expressed in concise, but effective language. The echoes of the Lazarus story from Luke 16; 19 – 31 strengthen this effect. The other thing which stands out in the song is the fact that the speaking persona has somebody else in mind, at least overtly. The very serious vision, which for the first time defines an ultimate sense of time for human life, is something in which the lyric persona is not, at least not fully, involved. It explores the religious context with a deep appreciation of its meaning, but also from the most morally demanding and difficult angle. Furthermore, the tone of righteous condemnation present in the song may only have any sense if the elusive lyric persona accepts the same moral framework for himself, and Dylan is at this stage an experienced enough writer to know this. Paradoxically thus, if no overt personal humility is attempted in the song, it has to mean the "you" addressed so sternly has got to partially signify the speaker himself.

Moving on now to the *The Times They Are A-Changing* and *Another Side of Bob Dylan* collections one can notice the appearance of a new motif – one expressing vacilliation, indecision, or failure, embodied by the image of the doorway. Thus one gets: "don't stand in the doorway/don't block up the hall" from the title song of the first one, "I spied an old hobo, in a doorway he lay/his face was all grounded in the cold sidewalk floor" from the outtake *Only A Hobo*, "Far between sundown's finish an' midnight's broken toll/ we ducked inside the doorway, thunder crashing" from *Chimes of Freedom.* While each of these songs warrants a separate study, what is important for our present purpose is to see the sense of being in –between, whether at the edge of final despair, or extatic revelation, or social upheaval. This is further emphasized by songs such as *To Ramona,* where this motif is seen through a gentle and moving account of the painfulness of an unfulfilled relationship of two people torn between an offer of commitment and unfulfilled aspirations elsewhere, or *It Ain't Me, Babe* with its admission of inability to be "always strong" to "open each and every door".

The poetic method employed in *Gates of Eden* is far removed from the folk staples characteristic of Dylan's early output; the personal plane is here subordinated to the universal, no story is told. Instead one gets a sequence of similarly constructed stanzas, each one building an allegorical tableau with component parts of which many carry a symbolic connotation. The result is thus a multilayered, complex structure of dense flashes of visions. This method becomes typical of Dylan at this period – it is to considerable effect used in *Mr Tamburine Man* or *Desolation Row*. What differentiates *Gates of Eden* from these is that there is not sense of movement in the sequence of emblematic pictures, nor do they create one big allegorical whole (as is the case in either) but, somewhat similarly to *Chimes of Freedom*, they remain, as it were, sterile and frozen in time, each after each exemplifying another timeless aspect of human existence. The "gates" are to be understood metonymically, as for instance in Mt 16, 18.

The whole design of the song is to build an implicit definition of paradise – all the inadequacies of earthly existence are to be righted there. At the same time, the implicit method in which this is presented makes the reality behind the gates even more mysterious, and significantly, there is almost no direct spatial connection between the two realities, no hint at a way of getting inside the gates. The heavenly and the earthly seem to be linked in parallel but occupy two mutually exclusive, or at least unrelated planes. The first verse of the song rests on images of sidelong movement to convey the sense of deceit: "Of war and peace the truth just twists / Its curfew gull just glides".

Similarly the glow of the candle carried but the "cowboy angel" slides into blackness "all except when 'neath the trees of Eden". There is a sense here that the otherness of the reality of the garden of Paradise makes it rather a forbidding place than offers a sense of consolation. In the next verse there is no answer but silence to the grisly noise of violence: "No sound ever comes from the Gates of Eden".

The images of the following stanza centre on the notion of entanglement and escape. One has here the "savage soldier" stuck immobile, and unseeing, in the sand, the "shoeless hunter who's gone deaf" left waiting on the beach from where "ships with tattooed sails" are "heading for the Gates of Eden". What the stanza first and foremost exudes is the sense of the futility of any attempt at reaching the gates[4], not being able to see the opportunity, or not hearing the call. The hound dogs baying at the leaving ships (with the possible implicit Cerberus association) contribute to the sense of doom, and indeed the whole passage may be seen as inverting the prophesy in Iz 35, 1 – 10. This may be also seen as the link with the next verse which transforms Exodus 32 into an allegorical image of spiritual deception, with Alladin substituted for Aaron:

With a time – rusted compass blade
Alladin and his lamp
Sits with Utopian hermit monks
Side saddle on the Golden Calf

In this verses the practice of using obsolete premises for spiritual guidance, with a hint at coercion ("time-rusted compass blade") mixed with a promise of strength (Alladin's lamp), simplistic ideology dressed up as arcane ("Utopian hermit monks") and wealth ("the Golden Calf") (note the preciseness in the components of this tableau) is used to fool every one into being taken seriously: "And on their promises of paradise / You will not hear a laugh / All except the Gates of Eden".

Thus, as each image reiterated the difference between the perfection of heaven and the pathetic nature of any attempt at approximate to it, the gap between the two seems to yawn ever more acutely.

The next stanza echoes psalm 102, 7 ("And I will try to harmonize with songs/ the lonesome sparrow sings") and Luke 22, 25 – 30 to lay out another point of difference between the two worlds: "there are no kings inside the Gates of Eden".

The eight stanza is of very great significance for the present argument as one finds there the already familiar image of dislocation, this time in a fresh context:

[4] For the wider cultural implications see Delumeau: (1992, 115 – 126).

The foreign sun, it squints upon
A bed that's never mine
As friends and other strangers
From their fates try to resign
Leaving men wholly, totally free
To do anything they wish to do but die
And there are no trials inside the Gates of Eden.

One may observe here a further evolution of Dylan's treatment of the issue of freedom in the individual life: total freedom is meaningless as long as there is no escape dying, the price for the total freedom as the sublunary world knows consists in denying one's obligations in life and the price for this is always a sense of lack of attachment to places and people. Furthermore as "there are no trials inside the Gates of Eden" and there seem to be some in the earthly life then the Gates must be the ultimate destination, and the trials must apparently be about them. The overall sense of the passage appears thus to lead to a juxtaposition where there seems not doubt as to the fact that there is sense in talking about an ultimate destination in life, which has a significance beyond a moment in time.

Gates of Eden is the first in a series in this period where the gates or doors appear in the connotation of a love lyric to finally become the supreme symbol of devotion in the refrain of *Sad Eyed Lady of the Lowlands*[5].

It's All Over Now, Baby Blue is especially significant in this context. The song grows out of the conventions of the love lyric transforming them into a "rites of passage" lyric. The theme of a personal turning point is conveyed in strong images which, like in *Gates of Eden*, are complex allegorical constructions, but which this time exude the sense of drama and violence. Moreover, it combines the allegory with the intimate, vindictive dynamism of the metaphysical lyrics of John Donne: "You must leave now, take what you need, you think will last. / But whatever you wish to keep, you better grab it fast".

The simple sense of an overwhelming and unrelenting compulsion for leaving the former life provides the thematic frame for the lyric, but the use of the particular images makes for a web of subtle paradoxes – the compulsion for getting out to escape the impending doom ("the sky is folding over you" – the phrase echoes Revelation 6,14) becomes the compulsion to break through ("the saints are coming through") and to reach home. The image of the door is unveiled in the final section of the lyric and occupies the central position. It denotes transition and transforma-

[5] For a more detlaied analysis of Dylan's output at this point see Hinchey: (2002).

tion in a variety of senses: "The lover who just walked out your door / Has taken all his blankets from the floor".

If this is juxtaposed with the second line of the lyric it will become apparent that the opposition is between the temporary and the lasting. The inner space behind the door does not stand here for security, but signifies a quicksand reality of permanent instability and unease. The calling which the addressee is exhorted to heed in the final stanza becomes a travesty of Matthew 8, 22 ("follow me and let the dead bury the dead") and it adds to the sense that the urge for homegoing means actually leaving the place where one would be prepared to think of as one's permanent habitation.

It seems, however, that it would be a spurious exercise to suggest, as some have, that the next two lines of the stanza invoke Revelation 3, 20 and thus identify the "vagabond who's rapping at your door" with God. Since he "is standing in the clothes that you once wore" the vagabond on the other side of the door clearly suggests a look behind, a look at what one was before embarking on the spiritual route which now is gaining pace and urgency. This connect the song with *Ballad of a Thin Man*- another lyric of transition, which is dominated by the underlying sense of dread at what one will find behind a door leading to where one has been accustomed to think of as home.

Dylan's output of the following years, if analysed in our specific context, oscillates between two motifs. There is a strong current of statements of inertia, pointless waiting, distant and unrealized hope, and lack of the mental stamina to force a breakthrough. These elements are most prominently perceptible in *Watching the River Flow, Time Passes Slowly, Sign on the Window,* or *When I Paint My Masterpiece*[6]. The other is the gradual, if subtle, hint at a growing personal connection with the divine.

As Dylan's work progresses into the seventies two parallel motifs seem to merge. In *Knocking on Heaven's Door* the reiterated image of gathering darkness and gloom reaches a new intensity: "that long black cloud is coming down", "It's getting dark, too dark to see". The song is full of intense conviction but ends inconclusively. Like in *Gates if Eden* there seems to be no answer from behind the heaven's gates. At the same time what makes the song very different is the personal dimension which developed in Dylan's work in the following years: the poetic persona is the middle of the situation - there is a dramatic personal intensity comparable to *It's All Over Now,* but the persona is no longer the exhorter, or the detached, cynical observer of *I'd Hate To Be You*, on the contrary he delivers a first person confession.

The use of the motif reaches its climax in *Señor (Tales of Yankee Power)* – a song where the sense of extreme weariness coincides with that of impending revelation: "How long are we gonna be riding? / How long must I keep my eyes glued to the door?"

[6] For more on this see Ricks (2003: 124 – 127).

The richness of imagery in this song is the result of many and multifarious strains present in Dylan's work at various moments of his evolution. The sense of gathering doom is now no longer a separable element of the imagery, it now spreads as an underlying "background noise" throughout the lyric. The motif of traveling is now developed into an acutely personal theme, where the space covered by the spiritual seeker, however inconclusive at a given stage is always meaningful. It is now, however, the destination point, not the sense despair at the supposed aimless of an endless journey, which becomes here for the first time the primary focus of attention.

It is interesting that the motif of the door does not gain much imagerial prominence in the collections immediately following Dylan's conversion. There is, however, the new assuredness behind the mention of the "narrow gate" in *When He Returns* and the statement: "There's only one way and it leads to Calvary". In *Every Grain of Sand* one notices a hint that the menace in life's spiritual journey is not quite over: "I gaze into the doorway of temptation's angry flame / And every time I pass that way I always hear my name".

The change of spiritual geography is here quite important. While the incessant threat was earlier connected with, first, there being not definable destination, and later it was the menace of an undefined, if somehow inescapable destination, now the threat lies in a possible diversion from the defined and positive point of aim – an imagerial feature not hitherto present in Dylan's work.

The use of the motif of travelling towards a door, or gate, in the religious context the motif truly blossoms in the *Time Out Of Mind* collection[7]. Quite apart from acknowledging the depth of the lyrics and the potentiality for layers of multifold meaning contained in them it may be said that the theme of a spiritual journey can be seen as the dominant unifying motif of the whole collection. It begins with an image directly reminiscent of the gloomy imagery of *Señor*, but the sense of urgency and tension is exchanged for a being lost in time, time finite but long enough to feel like an eternity:

> I'm walking through the streets that are dead
> Walking, walking with you in my head
> My feet are so tired, my brain is so wired
> And the clouds are weeping

The song's imagery immediately brings to mind the urban gloom of the early T. S. Eliot and through him the Dantean journey and both associations are most pertinent

[7] See also Gray (2000: 785 – 834).

(indeed the similarity to *Prufrock* is striking). The prevalent mood is here once again the fatigue of long traveling, but this time the reason for the overwhelming sense of despair is not the length of the spiritual road or the lack of conviction about the final destination, but the sense of the time allotted for traveling being lost on aimless wandering, doubt, or inertia. It becomes visible that it is the sense of a mental grasp at the destination of the journey that makes the long time of traveling bearable; once this sense is lost the journey starts spreading into infinity where even tomorrow is a long time again.

Dirt Road Blues and *Million Miles* further elaborate on the problem the loss of destination:" you took a part of me that I really miss", "You left me standing out in the cold", "I keep asking myself how long it can go on like this". There is again no question of the destination, or the rightness of it – the sense of despair springs from the sense of taking too long to reach it, and the danger of losing the way: "Well I'm trying to get closer, but I'm still a million miles from you". Just like in *Highlands* and *Can't Wait,* the underlying threat is one of making no headway, of losing sight of the aim of the journey, and also of being engulfed in time itself by starting to perceive it as an end rather than a means to it, the threat of being at the mercy of time.

The lyrics of *Not Dark Yet8* revive the already familiar motif of the gathering darkness in an almost overtly religious context – the speaking persona has nearly reached the end of earthly life and feels no connection and no attachment to it anymore – yet the final spiritual transition eludes him: "I was born here and I'll die here against my will / I know it looks like I'm moving but I'm standing still".

Thus the sense of losing the precious time which is meant to be used for making the transition, and which "is running away", and the despair of spiritual inertia dominates. The persona observes the escaping time with helplessness and suffering more acute than that of *Watching the River Flow* because now there is more at stake as waiting means not just not winning but losing.

Coming finally to the question of how the motif of the heavenly door functions in this context one may look closely at two central songs in the collection. *Standing In The Doorway,* which takes up the topic of loss and doubt, resurrects the motif of the door as a symbol of spiritual transition: "You left me standing in the doorway crying / I got nothing to go back to now".

Here, despite the conviction that "the mercy of God must be near", and the permeating sense that there is nothing to come back to in his past ("I got nothing left to burn") and that turning away would be craziness, the doorway may not be finally and irrevocably passed through. The spiritual progress which once was taking place

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[8] See also the valuable discussion in Ricks: (2003, 359 – 273).

at dazzling speed (see *Señor* again) and felt as inescapable as a sweeping avalanche, has now become painfully slow. This allowed for the ghosts of the past to come back to haunt the soul of the speaker. This makes the torment of vacillation so unusually acute, even violent, in the song. The protestations of faith are interchanged with mournful predictions of a possible failure ("I know someone will be there to care"/ "I know I can't win").

The echoes of Judas in stanza 1 and Last Supper in stanza 3 both share the negative connotation – the persona feels unequal to the task of breaking through. The next stanza plays on John Donne's famous line in a very interesting context: "I can hear the church bells ringing in the yard / I wonder who they are ringing for".

The phasing possesses a double meaning which actually deepens Donne's message: once you are able to relate your intimate, personal dimension to the universal spiritual context, to feel the ultimate context of everybody's life as relating to your own, the bell will really toll for you, announcing your release from the pain of the long traveling, and your final acceptance into the universal. As long as you can't unequivocally relate to it the tolling may not actually be for you.

The passage naturally introduces one into *Trying To Get To Heaven* – the crowning achievement in the evolution of the heavenly door motif in Dylan[9]. It opens with the familiar image of a wearying travel through the hot air[10] against the gathering storm. The tone is, however, more optimistic – there has been a positive side to the numbness of the long road - "Every day your memory grows dimmer/It doesn't haunt me like it did before" – the past is being finally laid to rest, and some perspective over the whole journey emerges: "I've been walking through the middle of nowhere / Trying to get to heaven before they close the door".

The tone of this statement seems the most hopeful in the whole of the lyrics on *Time Out Of Mind*. The tone this time balances the complaint against a laconic statement implying both the humility of and the hopefulness of a whole – hearted acceptance. There is a sense of confidence emerging from the consciousness of the rightness of the destination and one's own inherent weakness – what has been humanly possible has been done – "now you can seal up the book and not write anymore". Furthermore there is the awareness of others being on the road as well – "people on the platforms / Waiting for the trains/ I can hear their hearts a –beatin'" – one is thus getting closer to realizing for whom the bell tolls. It is also important that the song uses a great amount of quotes from traditional folk songs about traveling ("When I was in Mis-

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[9] See also the remarks in Brown: (2003, 216 – 218).

[10] The motif of the journey through heat begins with *Where Are You Tonight?* and it is especially strongly present on *Time Out Of Mind*.

souri/ they would not let me be", "I'm just going down the road feeling bad", ...); there is thus a sense created that the spiritual journey is in fact not really as lonely as one would sometimes make it to be.

In its essence the song in really a reworking of *I'd Hate To Be You On That Dreadful Day.* It must be stressed that the situation is exactly the same, only the way the speaking persona positions himself in the imagery differs strikingly[11]. Whereas before the persona was observing somebody trying to reach the door of heaven from a stance of detachment and unforgiving criticism, now the person in the song is himself well advanced on the same journey, feeling both the deep personal dimension of it and the impossibility, and wrongness, of anybody trying to dissociate themselves from anybody else's spiritual road as they all lead ultimately to the same place.

Trying To Get To Heaven is thus a good illustration of the evolution of Dylan's art. It testifies to both a persistence of certain motifs and their constant enrichment. It is, one may hope, well visible that the subtle maturity of the song is the effect of years of artistic and personal development; of the study of the craft which allows to convey the unique experience of one's life by in terms of the ideas and motifs which the traditions of millenia has bequeathed to the succeeding generations, which is as much as an artist may hope to achieve to make the journey of his life meaningful.

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[11] On the relation of the notion of personal space to the context of the sacrum see Eliade: 1996, pp.16 – 54.

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Katarzyna Kociołek

Constructing the British and Their "Other": Selected Writings by Jasmin Alibhai-Brown

The way people perceive and fit themselves into a larger social framework lies at the core of the debate on national and cultural identities. As a consequence finding an answer to the questions: who do we/they identify with and why as well as how the social framework is constructed seem essential for full analysis of such debates. According to Stuart Hall and Paul du Gay "identities are constructed within, not outside discourse"(Hall et al. 2000: 4). Consequently, "what means to be 'British' or 'Russian' or 'Jamaican' cannot be entirely controlled by the British, Russians or Jamaicans, but (...) is always being negotiated, in the dialogue between these national cultures and their 'others'" (Knauer 2000: 91). Bakhtinian dialogic approach, which Krzysztof Knauer refers to in his article "Difference Does Matter: Identity, Memory and Multicultural Imagination", seems to provide a good starting point for examination of opinions voiced in the debate on multiculturalism, whose different participants contribute to different cultural representations of particular ethnic groups, and by the same token widen or narrow the gap between these groups. At this point the debate, which is no longer a mere reflection of a social situation and processes occurring in a multicultural society, performs also a myth-making function. In other words, those who voice concern of a particular group play a crucial part in both identity formation and stereotyping of this group. Particularly so if the scene of such debate happen to be mass media, i.e. one of the national papers. As Arjun Appadurai notes in his essay "Disjuncture and Difference in the Global Cultural Economy", the strips of reality presented in image-based and textual forms, what he calls "Mediascapes", easily become "metaphors by which people live as they help to constitute narratives of the 'Other'" (Appadurai 2001: 224).

It is interesting to observe to what extent the writings of the *Independent* columnist Yasmin Alibhai-Brown reflect and project white and non-white British identity constructs, as well as to trace down the elements of these identities, as they emerge from her articles. Being a non-white British citizen, in most of her columns, Brown voices serious concern over the problems of racial inequality and discrimination which Britons of colour are still facing. Although Britain has entered a path of major transformations and has become a multicultural society, much is to be done to meet new demands of such a multiethnic nation. Surprisingly, she rejects the very term 'multiculturalism' and regards it an umbrella name "for something that black folk do (…) a box of interest to 'ethnic minorities', meaning those with visibly different skins" (Alibhai-Brown 2000: 4). She seems to be right when noticing that a continuous celebration of differences does not help to ease social tensions. Yet, in most of her articles Alibhai-Brown fails to avoid 'them/us' rhetoric and presents appreciation of Muslim or Asian distinctive characteristics and ways of life, while demanding that the British should change their fallacious viewpoint and welcome ethnic diversity.

One may have an impression that she feels a solemn obligation to attest minorities, especially Muslim, values. As Carole Boyce Davies remarked of Caribbean women writing in the United States, "Migration creates the desire for home, which in turn produces the rewriting of home" (Condé 2000: 213). This seems to be also true about Yasmin Alibhai-Brown, who appears to be "rewriting" her culture of origin (she calls herself a Muslim Asian from Uganda) and strives to present it in the most favourable light possible. In "Goodbye to the Asian corner shop" she extols industrious Arab and Asian owners of the British corner shops, who thanks solely to their perseverance and hard work succeed in business and frequently secure enough means to afford thorough education for their children. The columnist emphasizes ingenuity of these shop owners who were the first to discover the niche for retail outlets which would be open till late at night. Even now, as Brown remarks, when their businesses are threatened by the emergence of 24 h shopping centres in the residential areas, these families are not suffering terrible disappointment, because, "they are canny"[1] and ready to adapt to changing circumstances. Although, as she notices, the products in such shops may not always be of the highest quality, the tribute has to paid to assiduousness of the owners. "Only four... (out of thirty)... had taken between a week and ten days off for the summer holidays, although a number had gone back to their homelands for up to two months over the previous ten years, mainly to meet their obligations to extended families there"[2]. On the whole, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown seems to present a very

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[1] Jasmin Alibhai-Brown, "Goodbye to the Asian corner shop", *Independent,*7 January 2002, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=113096, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

[2] Jasmin Alibhai-Brown, "Goodbye to the Asian corner shop", *Independent,*7 January 2002, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=113096, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

idealized view of the community, showing the shopkeepers as hard-working, family-loving, ready for self-sacrifice and patient people, who do not refrain from taking up jobs regarded as too wearisome by native Britons. Such attitude towards the minority community appears to testify to the correctness of the claim by Cornel West. In an essay "The new cultural politics of difference" he noted that critics of colour, representatives of the communities which are discriminated against, are under pressure to assert their position in the society which disfavours them.

> The widespread modern European denial of the intelligence, ability, beauty, and character of people of colour puts a tremendous burden on critics and artists of colour to 'prove' themselves in light of norms and models set by white elites whose own heritage devalued and dehumanised them. (...) It is not surprising that most intellectuals of colour (...) exerted much of their energies end efforts to gain acceptance and approval by white normative gazers. (West 2001: 266)

Being a Muslim woman and a successful journalist, acclaimed by the mainstream readership, Alibhai-Brown demonstrates avowed commitment to creating an image of Muslim female beauty, which is in line with white norms, on the one hand, and to protecting Muslim traditions on the other. In her article entitled "The beauty secrets of Asian women", she attempts to dispel popular myths and stereotypes about the attitude of Asian women to beauty and the headscarf. Referring to a study published in the International Journal of Eating Disorders and quoting the results of the research carried out among female Iranian university students, she notices that beauty and body decoration are as important for Iranian covered women as they are elsewhere in the western societies, if not more. "Women in Iran were just as obsessed with their weight as those in the West and were likely to suffer from eating disorders"[3]. Also in Afghanistan, where under the Taliban regime women used to be tortured for putting on make-up, they would not renounce ornaments, lipsticks, bangles, perfumes. Contrary to a widespread belief in the western countries, the headscarf, Brown argues, not only does not subdue feminity, but also, by protecting them from men's gazes, grants greater freedom to Muslim women. The statement made by Cherie Blair that burqa worn by women of Afghanistan symbolises utter degradation and oppression only shows, according to the columnist, that the West has failed to comprehend and accept the role the garment plays for the Muslims. Finally, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown

[3]Jasmin Alibhai-Brown, "The beauty secrets of Asian women", available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=106756, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

openly challenges a firm conviction held by non-Muslims that because of wearing hejab Muslim women are less concerned about their looks, and quotes a student from Afghanistan who said she longed to return to Kabul where women had much more time to make their skin and hair look beautiful. As "visual" has been the most frequently used adjective when describing Western culture, in which image and looks play increasingly more important role, Brown seems to strives to demonstrate that Muslims with their own traditions are not staying behind and that due to mass media preoccupation with the visual has now become a cross-cultural characteristic.

In her columns, she clearly assumes the role of what Cornel West calls a Critical Organic Catalyst (West 2001: 266), that is to say a person of colour "who stays attuned to the best of what the mainstream has to offer" and yet keeps alive "potent traditions of critique and resistance"(266). Throughout her writing she appears to advocate harmonious coexistence of different cultures within the British society, where not the renunciation of one's heritage but intermingling of values and ideas provide a guarantee against discrimination and racial violence. Yet, despite seeking to present an objective and unbiased view of both the mainstream and the minority culture members in Britain, she frequently uses the "us" and "them" rhetoric, which instead of projecting a new, more diverse British identity, stirs up old racial feuds.

The article "Could a black Briton get such a powerful job?" deals with an issue of discrimination on the job market. Brown notes that there are hardly any chances for British Muslims or British Africans to secure positions of Chancellor of the Exchequer or Home Secretary and that not only the New Labour, but also the Liberal Democrats and the Tories should be deeply embarrassed at doing so little to breach the ethnic and racial gaps. Even though, as she notices, Britain has become a multicultural society, the top ten occupations are reserved for white male employees, while professional non-whites still receive lower salaries. Had she been in the United States, Brown remarks, she would have been treated as an American, in Britain she cannot be British although she is. According to her, white Britons have failed to adjust to a new "modern, cosmopolitan, hopefully egalitarian state"[4], that Britain has become and as they do not comprehend their real history, instead of transforming their viewpoint, they demonstrate xenophobic attitudes towards minorities. "In the past three weeks some of them have made it their business to remind me (often in extremely unpleasant ways) that I have no right to appear on prestigious programmes or debate with the Ambassador of the US or write in this newspaper because I do not belong to this

[4] Jasmin Alibhai-Brown, "Could a black Briton get such a powerful job?", *Independent,* 4 October 2001, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=97553, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

nation"[5]. What the article seems to suggest is that Britain remains polarised along ethnic and racial lines and that the non-white Britons (of whom Alibhai-Brown is a representative) harbour bitter resentment against members of the mainstream culture, who in turn discriminates against the minorities.

Similar view of Britain can be found in "Stuff your British test", an article she wrote in response to Home Secretary David Blunkett's proposal of Britishness test, whose aim would be to verify that foreigners who wish to stay in Britain are suitable for becoming British citizens. As in the other article, also here Yasmin Alibhai-Brown divides the society into 'us' – 'darkies' who would have to prove their Britishness and 'them' – 'poor natives who have so long had to suffer our presence'[6]. She does not omit to note that white-English-speaking immigrants from South Africa, Zimbabwe, Australia and America would hardly be expected to sit such an exam. Defying the scheme, the columnist remarks, as if in affirmation of her own Britishness, that more Asian or Black Britons think of themselves as British than do the Scots, Welsh or English. And then moves on to reveal a striking discrepancy in the reasoning behind such test by asking whether British holiday hooligans would also have to prove their Britishness, and if not, would it mean that according to David Blankett they represent true Britishness in the way they behave. At the end of the article, Alibhai-Brown contrasts herself, an admirer of English literature and an expert on British culture, devoted to the idea of democracy and freedom, with a "chap from Yorkshire who has never read an English writer, has never voted, hates this bloody country, eats shop-bought curries and Chinese food, has convictions for violent behaviour and a basic vocabulary of about two hundreds words plus 'fucking' and 'shit' which he uses a lot"[7], and then ironically poses a question who of them two should take the test.

The image of the white Briton that the article projects seems to bear resemblance to the rough Mr Bull or a "typical Northerner" whom Andrew Adonis described in *A Class Act: the myth of Britain's classless society* as a "rugby-league watching, bitter-drinking (...) coal miner"(Adonis et al. 1997: 183). One may have an impression that by presenting white British as either hooligans or brutes, the article aims at vindi-

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[5] Jasmin Alibhai-Brown, "Could a black Briton get such a powerful job?", *Independent,* 4 October 2001, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=97553, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

[6] Jasmin Alibhai-Brown, "Staff your British test", *Independent*, 16 December 2001, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=110295, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

[7] Jasmin Alibhai-Brown, "Staff your British test", *Independent*, 16 December 2001, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown/story.jsp?story=110295, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

cating the uprightness and decency of minorities in British society, as if in order to render them worthy being treated as full-rights citizens. It also seems to provide a deep insight into cross-cultural relations in Britain; as Krzysztof Knauer notes the way one group writes about another supplies clues on the relationship between them. "(...) perceptions of one's group or culture and of other groups and cultures produce a multitude of visual and textual representations as well as they inform the way these groups relate to each other" (Knauer 2000: 90). It is only by inquiring into "how and what representations are produced and into how they carry meanings" (91) that one is able to discover what is true about the groups.

The writings of Alibhai-Brown enable to learn a lot not only about the self-perception of Muslims, Muslim perception of the British, but also about the British perception of themselves. In "The English have feelings too" the columnist reflects on the crisis of English identity. Having an English husband and a half-English daughter, she confesses, has made her feel unease and anger when others humiliate the English. Unlike in the past when she would take profound satisfaction in the English being scorned and derided, now she has strong sympathy for this "land of lost content". She feels sorry for the people, who have to accept the incontestable fact that they have not only lost their position as a superpower – "the world most exclusive club"[8] – but also ceased to be a dominant nation on the British Isles, as Englishness has become just another ethnicity within the colourful mosaic of contemporary Britishness. She ascribes this change to devolution, growth in power of the European Union, globalisation and notes that it must be hard for the English to retreat into such small space and to share their national culture now influenced by so many different tribes. Yet, she also states that the bewildered Englanders could turn the situation to their advantage if only they were ready to face the new reality and change their views on Englishness. Instead of reminiscing about what England used to be like and recalling the village green images evoked by John Major – "tea on vicarage lawns, roses in a summer twilight, people keeping themselves to themselves, well-fed cats purring on heath rugs - which are sad, wishful and pitiful"[9] the English should think of revitalising their identity, keeping pace with the changes, as "The New England will not tolerate claustrophobic ideas of

[8] Jasmin Alibhai Brown, "The English have feelings, too", *Independent*, 17 August 2001, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=89113, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

[9] Jasmin Alibhai Brown, "The English have feelings, too", *Independent*, 17 August 2001, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=89113, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

community and nation"[10]. Yasmin Alibhai-Brown tackles the long discussed British and English identity crisis form a perspective of an outside observer and yet voices concerns and draws conclusions similar to these of the native Britons and Englanders, such as Jeremy Paxman, who also necessitated for reshaping of national identity. In his book *The English: A portrait of a people* he considers national identities "neither unchanging or natural. They are invented – and reinvented – over periods of time, in response to changing demands and opportunities (...) Traditions were consciously invented or reinvented" (Paxman 1998: 52). In another article, "The countryside is a no-go area for Black Britons", Alibhai-Brown pours scorn on British countryside WASP dwellers who obstinately adhere to an outdated concept of national identity and want to keep British village to themselves as a safeguard of the idea of Britishness. "They can handle one Mr Pater in the paper shop, a Mr Khan running the local Tay, maybe a doctor or two, Mr Chou with his Chinese takeaway, but more than that you are talking cultural genocide"[11]. She does not flinch from openly criticising the widely proclaimed countryside values and the vocal representatives of British rural areas who protested in London against prejudice and discrimination they suffer, which in the eyes of the Prince of Wales are even worse than those with which Blacks or gays are confronted. Strongly identifying herself with the oppressed, Alibhai-Brown sarcastically remarks that her "heart breaks at the thought of those poor flushed apple cheeks country Brits, as they watch us Blacks (...) overtaking them in the gallop to privilege"[12]. Even though, she writes, many Asian or black Britons come from farming families, there are no Asian or black farmers in Britain, and what is more rural Fox-Hunting Societies representatives organise marches and protests to reclaim Britain for whites and to exclude the outsiders.

Following the 11th September attack on WTC, Brown notices, the mainstream media have intensified efforts to present Britain as a culturally diversified nation through offering a fair and balanced images of the Muslim community. "A whole season of BBC programmes on British Muslims assiduously avoided any dangerous stories because after 11 September they felt it was important to give the public a positive view

[10] Jasmin Alibhai Brown, "The English have feelings, too", *Independent*, 17 August 2001, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=89113, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

[11] Jasmin Alibhai Brown, "The countryside is a no-go area for Black Britons", *Independent*, 23 September 2002, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=335734, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

[12] Jasmin Alibhai Brown, "The countryside is a no-go area for Black Britons", *Independent*, 23 September 2002, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=335734, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

of diverse British Muslims"[13]. Yet she also notes that in general the TV, newspapers and the British radio seldom demonstrate any interest in this section of the British society and it is only on rare occasions that they show "the one-armed, rolling-eyed fat mullahs"[14], who are supposed to be representative of the community. It is very infrequently, too that any documentaries on Islam and modernity are commissioned, except for reality shows featuring Muslim women in headscarfs. Consequently, despite substantial transformation in the media presentation of the Muslims since the times of Rushdie controversy, when they were shown as unread, unwashed, incapable of the basics of a civilised life, the image of the Muslim community needs restoring. Emphasising strong position of Black, Asian and Muslim Britons, Yasmin Alibhai-Brown remarks that the Muslims should distance themselves from fundamentalism and strive at presenting the community as civilised and enlightened. "We can be grown up enough to be able to take criticisms that are based on evidence while demanding the right not be misjudged and misrepresented"[15].

On the whole Yasmin Alibhai-Brown demonstrates attempts to reshape the perception of British Muslim community by deconstructing it as the Other in the contemporary British society. Occupying what Homi Bhabha terms the "in-between space" (Bhabha, 2003: 7) where bordelines between different cultures blur, Alibhai-Brown in her articles deplores "calcification" (9) of colonial cultures by the mainstream discourse. Despite the fact that the relation between white and non-white population in Britain is still strained, with animosities being frequently aroused by stereotypical representations of the communities, she undertakes to reconstruct both British and Muslim consciousness in order to create new British national identity which would acknowledge and encompass the presence of non-white people in British society.

[13] Jasmin Alibhai-Brown, "Muslims are wrong to blame the British media", *Independent*, 26 August 2002, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=327585, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

[14] Jasmin Alibhai-Brown, "Muslims are wrong to blame the British media", *Independent*, 26 August 2002, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=327585, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

[15] Jasmin Alibhai-Brown, "Muslims are wrong to blame the British media", *Independent*, 26 August 2002, available at: http://argument.independent.co.uk/regular_columnists/yasmin_alibhai_brown /story.jsp?story=327585, accessed date: 12 January 2003.

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Agnieszka Jezierska

(Inter)tekstualna dekonstrukcja opozycji płci w tekstach Jelinek

Jelinek to pisarka, która bez skrępowania i świadomie korzysta z istniejących tekstów. Jak prowokacyjnie zauważa, *większość została powiedziana już wcześniej i nie ma sensu wymyślać nic nowego* (1984). Czemu służy stosowanie techniki *bricolage'u*? Jaką rolę odgrywa intertekstualność u Jelinek? Zanim podejmę próbę odpowiedzi na te pytania, chciałabym przyjrzeć się, w jaki sposób ta autorka adaptuje cudze słowo na własne potrzeby.

Cytaty Jelinek właściwie nigdy nie są dokładne. Aktywizacja cudzego słowa dokonuje się nie tylko poprzez proste powtórzenie i umieszczenie w nowym kontekście, lecz także dzięki zmianie samego tekstu źródłowego, hipotekstu (odwołuję się tu do koncepcji i terminu G. Genette'a, 1993: 18), następuje tu zawsze przesunięcie w formie.

Można zatem powiedzieć, ze strategia śmiałej transformacji u Jelinek polega na minimalnej zmianie formy, możliwie najmniejszym przesunięciu, odwróceniu ról. Ta niewielka zmiana kształtu językowego ma kolosalne konsekwencje semantyczne. Tytuł debiutanckiej sztuki Jelinek brzmi *Co się zdarzyło, gdy Nora opuściła męża albo podpory społeczeństw.* Sformułowanie to cytuje dwa utwory Ibsena: *Dom lalki (Nora)* i *Podpory społeczeństwa*, czyli po niemiecku *Stützen der Gesellschaft*. Rzeczownik *Gesellschaft* (społeczeństwo) ma dodatkowe, równie rozpowszechnione znaczenia: *spółka* w znaczeniu formy prawnej, także monopol czy kartel (por. Sugiera 2004:12, Janz 1995: 34). Zmiana minimalna (dodanie w oryginale sufiksu *–en*) odwraca uwagę od pierwszego znaczenia – rzecz rozgrywa się przecież w jednym społeczeństwie – i powoduje poszerzenie znaczenia z kwestii tylko społecznych także na ekonomiczne.

Przyjrzyjmy się tekstowi właściwemu najgłośniejszej powieści Jelinek. W *Pianistce* nie brak przekształconych cytatów z klasyki literatury pięknej W jednej z kulminacyjnych scen, Erice, powalonej na ziemię przez atrakcyjnego kuzyna, przypisane zostaje przeformułowane zdanie[1] z *Fausta* Goethego: *Niechby ta chwila trochę potrwała, bo*

[1] Narracja prowadzona jest w mowie pozornie zależnej.

tak jest piękna (2004: 54). Przeformułowany cytat z ballady *Rybak* tegoż autora pojawia się we wcześniejszym fragmencie sceny z kuzynem: *Na wpół on ją ciągnął, na wpół ona się osunęła* (2004: 50, w oryginale: *Halb zog er sie, halb sank sie hin* 2001: 43). Oryginał Goethego brzmi *Halb zog sie ihn, halb sank er hin* (1976: 38), tłumaczenie zaś: *Pół się przechylił, pół go porwała* (1968: 93). W zakończenie *Pianistki* autorka wplata zdania i frazy z finalnej sceny *Procesu* Kafki (por. Janz 1995: 42 i n.). Jednak protagonistka Jelinek to idąca samotnie kobieta, niezdolna do czynu. Podczas gdy towarzysze Josefa K. wbijają mu nóż w serce i dokonują morderstwa, przy opisie Eriki K. pojawia się wprawdzie zdanie o obróceniu noża w sercu, ale jedynie na prawach postulatu: *Niech ten nóż wejdzie jej w serce i tam się obróci!* (2004: 351). Bohaterka jedynie kaleczy się w ramię.

Zrekapitulujmy logikę, która rządzi powyższymi cytatami: w każdym z nich mamy do czynienia z zamianą ról kobiecych i męskich. W dwóch ostatnich sytuacjach kobieta okazuje się bierna bądź niedostatecznie silna.

Wróćmy na chwilę do tekstu *Co się zdarzyło, gdy Nora opuściła męża albo Podpory społeczeństw.* W sztuce tej nie brak odniesień intertekstualnych. W jednym z dialogów Nora powtarza kwestie Helmera z dramatu Ibsena. Nie jest to jednak proste odwrócenie: z Norą rozmawia Anna, niańka jej i jej dzieci. Słowa Helmera w innej sytuacji komunikacyjnej nabierają nowego znaczenia; jak twierdzi Anna, nie pasują *do delikatnej natury* Nory (2004a: 62) Jelinek bawi się tu kliszami oczekiwań, dotyczących kobiecości i męskości. Mężczyźnie także nie przystoją niektóre zachowania i sformułowania. Gdy Helmer u Jelinek wspomina, że Nora go porzuciła, ta ostatnia reaguje następująco: *Fe, jak możesz tak okropnie mówić.* (2004a: 80), kiedy zaś Helmer w kolejnej kwestii prosi o *wzgląd na […] minioną miłość* (tamże) – Nora reaguje po raz drugi niemal tymi samymi słowami oburzenia.

Mężczyzna nie może mówić o zranionych uczuciach, wolno mu w zamian wyrażać pożądanie. Wyraźnie widać to na przykładzie wypowiedzi Helmera: *Widzę, że tarantela jeszcze z ciebie nie wyparowała, jeszcze pulsuje w twojej krwi. Jesteś przez to jeszcze bardziej ponętna* (Ibsen 1985: 99-100). W *Domu lalki* Helmer sugeruje przy pomocy tego zdania, że chciałby zbliżenia ze swą żoną. Gdy w *Co się zdarzyło…* ta fraza (*Masz jeszcze tarantelę we krwi. Czuję to. I to czyni cię jeszcze bardziej uwodzicielską.* (2004a: 44 – różnice wynikają z tłumaczenia) pada z ust męskiego protagonisty, Weyganga, nie wywołuje sprzeciwu. Kiedy zaś wypowiada te słowa Nora w tekście Jelinek, napotyka na oburzenie Helmera: *Noro, jak tobie, kobiecie, potrafi przejść coś takiego przez usta?* (2004a: 80-81). To mężczyzna ma prawo formułować i wypowiadać swoje oczekiwania erotyczne. Oczywiście w granicach przyjętych norm: Helmer u Jelinek w scenie sadomasochistycznych zabaw z Norą wspomina o wstydliwych żądaniach, o których nie chce mówić wprost. Postanawia napisać list: *Następnym razem* *dam ci list, w którym opiszę, jak sobie życzę, żebyś mnie traktowała i uprzedzam, że będę pisał w nim bardzo ordynarnie […]* – zapewnia (2004a: 78) Nie zapominajmy ani na moment, jak kluczową rolę odgrywają listy, weksle, gazety – a więc słowo pisane – w tekście Ibsena. W dramacie Jelinek nie może być zatem mowy o żadnej przypadkowości. Propozycja Helmera pozostaje bez komentarza, pisemna instrukcja autorstwa mężczyzny, jego rozkaz – to zjawisko mieszczące się w oczekiwaniach.

Motyw tego listu pojawia się jednak w innym tekście Jelinek, mianowicie w *Pianistce*. I znów mamy do czynienia z pozornie niewielkimi przesunięciami: tu list zostaje napisany (powtarzają się sformułowania Helmera z wersji Jelinek), ale nie przez mężczyznę. Ibsenowska Nora dokładała wszelkich starań, by jej mąż nie przeczytał tekstu Krogstada – Erice niezmiernie zależy, by odbiorca poznał treść. Adresata komunikatu, Waltera Klemmera, dziwią dwie rzeczy: że pisze coś takiego artystka, a także śmieszy go fakt, że to nie mężczyzna wydaje rozkazy. Jak zatem przedstawia się konfiguracja ról płciowych w *Pianistce*? Czy zostaje tu powtórzony pomysł z debiutanckiej sztuki Jelinek?

Przyjrzyjmy się jednak od początku relacji kobieta-mężczyzna w *Pianistce*. Prototypem jest relacja matki i ojca: mężczyzna zostaje brutalnie wykluczony, matka pełni podwójną funkcję rodzica. Sceny ukazujące eliminację ojca wydają się symptomatyczne jeśli chodzi o symbolikę kobiecości i męskości. Jelinek nawiązuje do baśni o Królewnie Śnieżce, która wygnana przez niedobrą macochę szuka schronienia u krasnoludków. W *Pianistce* to mężczyźni, odrzuceni z powodu domniemanej choroby, trafiają do zakładu zamkniętego, do Śnieżki. Autorka dokonuje tu zatem kolejnej zmiany minimalnej:

A po drugiej stronie gór czeka przecież Królewna Śnieżka! Delikatnej urody i roześmiana z czystej radości, że znowu ktoś zajeżdża do jej krainy. (2004 b: 117)

Często pojawia się powód, by postawić pytanie, kto spał w moim łóżeczku, kto jadł z mojego talerzyka czy grzebał w mojej skrzyneczce. Ach, te krasnoludki! Gdy rozlegnie się gong, ten wytęskniony, na obiad, krasnoludki chaotycznymi stadami, przepychając się i tłocząc, zmierzają w stronę sali, gdzie ich Królewna Śnieżka czeka na każdego w swej zwiewnej obecności. Każdego lubi, każdego przyciska do serca, ta dawno zapomniana kobiecość o skórze białej jak śnieg i włosach czarnych jak heban. (2004b: 119)

To kobieta przygarnia mężczyzn-krasnoludków, wygnanych ze świata zdrowych. Opisanie ojca i jemu podobnych właśnie w poetyce baśni sugeruje, że chory i słaby mężczyzna to zjawisko niepoważne i niezasługujące na obiektywny opis. Można go zatem włożyć między bajki, nie przynależy on do świata realnego. Erika konfrontowana jest z zupełnie innymi typami męskości.

Pierwszym istotnym mężczyzną w jej życiu okazuje się kuzyn: młody, wysportowany student medycyny. Bawi się z wiejskimi dziewczynami, ocenia ich wygląd: *Wraz* *z przyjaciółmi przykłada centymetr do tego, co dziewczyna ma do zaoferowania, i szydzi z tego, czego nie oferuje.* (2004b: 49) sam pozostając obiektem westchnień. Jego ulubiona zabawa to powalanie dziewcząt chwytem zapaśniczym na ziemię, ofiara musi błagać o łaskę, niekiedy – aby się wykupić – całuje stopy:

Zna też kilka co bardziej skomplikowanych chwytów judo. Często prezentuje nowe sztuczki. Laik niemający pojęcia o tej dyscyplinie sportu nie oprze się tym chwytom i szybko ląduje na ziemi. Z ust widzów wyrywa się ryczący śmiech, a powalony dobrotliwie śmieje się razem ze wszystkimi, aby nie narazić się na kpiny. Dziewczęta turlają się wokół Urwisa jak dojrzałe owoce spadłe z drzewa. […] Młodzieniec stoi nad nimi i triumfuje. Ujmuje dziewczynę, która zgadza się na taką próbę, za nadgarstki i ściska, mocno ściska. Stosuje sekretną dźwignię, nie można dobrze zobaczyć jaką, ale poddana takiemu doświadczeniu osoba zmuszona przewagą jego siły i nieczystym trikiem osuwa się na kolana u stóp Urwisa. Na wpół on ją ciągnął, na wpół ona się osunęła. Któż zdołałby się oprzeć młodemu studentowi? Kiedy jest w szczególnie dobrym humorze, pozwala wijącej się przed nim na ziemi dziewczynie całować się w stopy, bo inaczej jej nie puści. (2004b: 50)

Mężczyzna stanowi centrum, ustala reguły gry, przysługuje mu prawo oceny, tryumfuje, imponuje siłą i żąda ofiary. Kobieta zgadza się na podporządkowaną rolę. Trik Urwisa jest wprawdzie *nieczysty*, ale skuteczny.

Erika, podczas zabaw młodzieży, ćwiczy na pianinie. Gdy wychodzi, kuzyn zaczepia ją i także przewraca na ziemię. Jednak Erika nie musi prosić o łaskę, uwalnia ją krzyk matki.

Mogłoby się wydawać, że mamy tu do czynienia z kliszą: mężczyzna jako siła witalna, kobieta przynależna do świata sztuki. Mężczyźnie przypada również rola instruktora:

Urwis kieruje na NIĄ spojrzenie i radzi jej, żeby się uśmiechnęła. Dlaczego jest taka poważna? Doradza jej zajęcie się sportem, który daje okazję do śmiechu i w ogóle wpływa pozytywnie. (2004b: 53)

Kolejne próby zbliżenia się do przedstawicieli przeciwnej płci zawodzą. Po latach pojawia się w jej życiu nowy mężczyzna, właściwie sobowtór kuzyna: student (wprawdzie politechniki), czyli zbliżony wiekiem do Urwisa, zafascynowany sportem, daje Erice podobne rady:

Zaleca wizytę w saunie. Zaleca parę porządnych długości basenu. Zaleca sport w ogólności, a w szczególności jego bodaj najbardziej ekscytującą dyscyplinę: kajakarstwo górskie. Teraz, zimą, na przeszkodzie stoi lód, trzeba więc chwilowo przerzucić się na inne dyscypliny. Ale już wkrótce, na wiosnę, będzie najpiękniej, ponieważ strumienie wypełnione są wodą z topniejących śniegów i porywają ze sobą wszystko, co się tam znajdzie. Na koniec Klemmer po raz kolejny zaleca wizytę w saunie. Zaleca wszelkiego rodzaju biegi na wytrzymałość, biegi leśne i jogging. (2004b: 99)

Seria absurdalnych porad Klemmera powoduje, że można odczytać go jako karykaturę i tak dalece wyidealizowanego kuzyna. Młody medyk proponuje ogólnie sport, jego następca zaś udziela aż nadto szczegółowych rad. Podobnie jak prototyp, także on przykłada miarę do kobiecych kształtów, także w tym opisie nie brak przesady. Oto jak ocenia Erikę:

Przykłada górę do dołu. Góra: z kolei odrobinę za chuda. Dół: tu trzeba postawić plus. Całościowy obraz Eriki mu się podoba. Osobiście uważa, że panna Kohut to całkiem smakowita kobieta. Gdyby jeszcze trochę z tego, czego u dołu jest za dużo, pacnęła na górę, przypuszczalnie wszystko by grało. Mogłoby też oczywiście stać się odwrotnie, ale tego mniej by sobie życzył. Gdyby zheblowała nieco u dołu, też by to dosyć współgrało. Ale wtedy z kolei byłaby za chuda! (2004b: 81)

Powtarza zachowania kuzyna, z tym, że jego poczynania zostały opisane bardziej szczegółowo: mechanistyczny wydźwięk tego opisu czyni z Klemmera postać groteskową.

Mężczyzna jest właściwie powtórzeniem, jednak sytuacja zdążyła się zmienić minęło wiele lat. Także nastawienie młodego człowieka jest inne, dla kuzyna Erika nie odgrywała istotnej roli, Klemmer jest zdeterminowany, by zdobyć tę kobietę. Liczne próby zbliżeń kończą się niepowodzeniem, zwłaszcza gwałt, którego w końcu Klemmer dopuszcza się na Erice. I znów historia się powtarza: Klemmer używa swej przewagi fizycznej, podobnie jak wcześniej kuzyn.

Mężczyzna jest silniejszy. Erika jazgocze, że on jest w stanie panować tylko dzięki swojej czysto fizycznej przewadze, i zostaje za to podwójnie i potrójnie sprana. (2004b: 335)

Ukoronowaniem relacji damsko-męskich może być scena zbliżenia erotycznego, którą Erika podgląda na jednej ze swych wypraw:

Przy wtórze obco brzmiących okrzyków jakiś mężczyzna wwierca się w kobietę. Kobieta nie jest głośna, lecz wydaje półgłosem burkliwe niemal komendy i polecenia, których mężczyzna pewnie nie rozumie, bo dalej zagrzewa się po turecku czy w jakimś innym rzadkim języku i wcale nie kieruje się okrzykami kobiety. Kobieta warczy gdzieś z głębi krtani jak sprężony do skoku pies, żeby klient stulił pysk. Turek dalej jednak wydobywa z siebie poszumy i świsty jak wiosenny wietrzyk, tyle że głośniej. Wydaje przeciągłe, długie pokrzykiwania, które stanowią dla Eriki doskonały punkt orientacyjny, pozwalający podkraść się jeszcze bliżej, chociaż i tak jest już bardzo blisko. […] Kobieta instruuje mężczyznę, co i gdzie ma robić. Nie sposób stwierdzić, czy on jej słucha, bo idzie za głosem swoich własnych wewnętrznych rozkazów, a wtedy nie da się uniknąć sytuacji, że od czasu do czasu koliduje to z życzeniami partnerki. Erika jest świadkiem, jak to się dzieje. Kobieta mówi hetta, mężczyzna wiśta. […] Mężczyzna wyrzuca z siebie zdyszane fanfary w języku tureckim, pochodzące gdzieś głęboko z jego trzewi. Strzela *z obu stron naraz. Język i odczucia zdają się u niego zbliżać do siebie. Piłuje po niemiecku: Baba! Baba! Kobieta po raz ostatni próbuje ze swoim: wolniej!*

[…] Tak się składa, że obydwie płcie zawsze chcą czegoś zupełnie przeciwnego. (2004b: 176)

Mężczyzna i kobieta posługują się różnymi językami, komunikacja zatem nie jest możliwa. Ostatnie zdanie zacytowanego fragmentu stanowi samodzielny akapit, co dodatkowo ma podkreślać jego sentencjonalność.

Wszystkie powyższe obrazy ukazują przewagę mężczyzny i słabość kobiety.

Czy jednak tylko konfiguracja kobiety i mężczyzny opiera się na przemocy? Takie stwierdzenie byłoby nazbyt upraszczające. Przyjrzyjmy się podstawowej relacji między kobietami w tekście *Pianistki*. Oto jeden z charakterystycznych cytatów: *W nocy, kiedy wszyscy śpią i tylko ona czuwa samotnie, podczas gdy luba część tej skutej więzami krwi pary, pani mamusia, w niebiańskim spokoju śni o nowych metodach tortur* […] (2004b: 14) Matka i córka są skute *więzami krwi* (w oryginale chodzi o *Leibesbäbnde* – więzy ciała, por. 2001: 14), co nawiązuje do ich pokrewieństwa, a motyw *skucia* pośrednio pępowiny, symbolu istotnego w dyskursie feministycznym. Między innymi Luce Irigaray ukazuje szczególną więź między matką a córką (2000a,b). W powyższym fragmencie nie brak też intertekstualnych odniesień i przemieszczeń. Niewiele pozostaje ze scenariusza kolędy: dziecko nie śpi, za to matka – bez ojca – śni *w niebiańskim spokoju o nowych metodach tortur*. Ostatnie słowa niszczą obraz bożonarodzeniowej idylli, rodzic okazuje się istotą pełną okrucieństwa.

Jelinek nie oszczędza kobiet, rozprawia się z jednym z najgłębiej zakorzenionych mitów naszej kultury: miłością macierzyńską. Jak zauważa Alice Miller:

Tabu, które przetrwało wszystkie tendencje demistyfikacji naszych czasów – to idealizowanie miłości matczynej. (1979: 17, tł. A.J.)

W *Pianistce* nie pojawia się kwestia rodzicielskiej miłości. Wręcz przeciwnie: dziecko potraktowane zostaje jako własność. Warto przyjrzeć się czasownikom, które towarzyszą wypowiedziom poszczególnych protagonistów: Kuzyn i Klemmer *zalecają* i *doradzają*. Zostawiają zatem przestrzeń na sprzeciw. Matka despotycznie określa powinności Eriki *Wybór podsuwa matka – szeroki wachlarz strzyków na wymieniu krowy muzyki.* (2004b: 20); *Matka dba o dobre nastrojenie instrumentu, bezustannie majstruje też przy kołkach naciągu u córki, nie dlatego, by martwiła się o jej nastrojenie, lecz tylko i wyłącznie, by wywierać matczyny wpływ na ten uparty, łatwy do wypaczenia, żywy instrument.* (2004b: 45)

Liczne są też metafory, w których punkt odniesienia stanowią zwierzęta: dziewczynka żyje *w rezerwacie z nieprzerwanym okresem ochronnym* (2004b: 42) jest wynaturzonym insektem, owadem, który utracił samodzielność. *Jastrząb matka i myszołów babka zabraniają powierzonemu sobie dziecku opuszczania gniazda*. (2004b: 44).

Kulminację tych zestawień stanowi przypowieść o zwierzęciu i jego treserze. Zostaje ona umiejscowiona na zakończenie części pierwszej (powieść składa się z dwóch części).

Czy dawny zwierz z dziczy, a obecnie z areny kocha swego tresera? Jest to możliwe, ale niekonieczne. Jeden jak najbardziej wymaga drugiego. Jeden potrzebuje drugiego, aby za pomocą jego sztuczek w świetle reflektorów i z towarzyszeniem muzycznego tuszu nadymać się jak ropucha gigant, drugi potrzebuje pierwszego, aby mieć jakiś punkt oparcia w ogólnym chaosie, który go oślepia. (2004b: 137)

Dawne zwierzę z dziczy zostaje wtłoczone w rolę posłusznego poddanego. Tutaj najwyraźniej widać relacje dominacji, konfigurację: pan – niewolnik. Ta opowieść ukazuje mechanizm kształtowania się jakichkolwiek relacji: zawsze są to zależności hierarchiczne, w których ktoś musi się podporządkować. Relacja wiążąca zwierzę i tresera jest wzajemna. Dlatego nie pozostawia słabych punktów i nie grozi jej koniec.

Kobiety nie tworzą relacji matriarchatu, opartej na równości, ale odtwarzają schemat patriarchalnych zależności, jedyny możliwy układ. Parabola o zwierzęciu i jego treserze to ukoronowanie takiego myślenia.

Odwracanie konfiguracji kobieta-mężczyzna z jednej strony obnaża ograniczenia tych ról kulturowych, z drugiej zaś strony pokazuje ich ekwiwalencję.

Jelinek ukazuje losy Ibsenowskiej Nory w patriarchalnym i kapitalistycznym świecie, by doprowadzić protagonistkę do punktu wyjścia. Podobnie dzieje się w historii Eriki: próba ucieczki spod matczynego wpływu okazuje się niemożliwa. Ostatnie i pierwsze zdanie tworzą klamrę kompozycyjną, domknięcie okręgu, jakby zaklętego słownymi formułami, rytuałami interpersonalnych zależności, kręgu bez wyjścia, nie pozostawiającego dróg ucieczki.

Stosowanie cudzego słowa czy też własnego tekstu jako cytatu uruchamiają u Jelinek machinę przemieszczeń. Wymiana jednego z elementów nie jest pustą zabawą, ale nową konfiguracją, przesunięciem w sieci substytucji. Mężczyzna, kobieta, zwierzę – nieważne jak obsadzimy poszczególne role. Scenariusz pozostaje ten sam.

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Anna Kalewska

O tchiloli – uma metamorfose do discurso dramatúrgico lusófono. Algumas propostas de abordagem

> At some point in human history people began performing their dreams and elaborating on them. These were not facts nor were they imaginary. They were performances of events between fact and imagination. These virtual actualities, staged as rituals, shared the authority of recollection with the play imagination. (…) The future of ritual is the continued encounter between imagination and memory translated into doable acts of the body. Ritual´ s conservatorism may restrain humans enough to prevent our extinction, while its magmatic creative core demands that human life – social, individual, maybe even biological – keep changing.
>
> R. Schechner: *The Future of Ritual…*, London and New York 1993, p. 263.

O teatro, como todo o domínio mais geral da performance, constitui-se como objecto de estudo da antropologia. Com os propósitos interculturais e interdisciplinares que movem as pesquisas modernas sobre os fenómenos cénicos, o seu espaço, o seu discurso e os protagonistas, é preciso cruzar os diferentes saberes – teatral, antropológico, histórico, histórico-literário. Seria de propósito, também, tentar uma conjugação destas investigações com a constituição e o reconhecimento social, político e cultural do espaço lusófono de oito países onde se usa a língua de Camões, com especial incidência – no nosso olhar – sobre Portugal e São Tomé e Príncipe onde surgiu e se metamorfoseou a gesta carolínguia como uma das formas do discurso dramatúrgico lusófono. Tendo em conta a quase ausência de bibliográfia em língua portuguesa sobre antropologia de teatro, seguimos as pistas trilhadas pela Cena Lusófona[1], programaticamente multicultural e incentivadora de várias acções interdisciplinares.

A Cena Lusófona começou a tradução ea publicação de textos paradigmáticos dessa área de conhecimento, tendo como mestres o antropólogo Victor Turner e o encenador e investigador Richard Schechner. Pela iniciativa da Cena, foi dada à estampa a revista *Setepalcos*, publicada desde Novembro de 1995, que deixa uma ideia-mestra do que se pode passar entre a antropologia, seu conhecimento e as práticas performativas: a criação de um futuro centro de pesquisa teatral luso-afro-brasileiro, também chamado sete-, ou – incluindo hoje Timor Leste – oitopalcos.

Desde 1990, o tchiloi tem interessado Rosa Clara Neves, devido à sua riquíssima componente musical e à especificidade no processo de criação da identidade santomense, diferente dos aspectos políticos, sociais e culturais identitários no continente africano. Foi no número zero desta revista, da mesma data, que apareceu o importante estudo desta especialista em musicologia: *Tchiloli de São Tomé: proposta de abordagem;* seguido, em 1998, por *Tchiloli de S. Tomé. A viagem dos sons/The journey of sounds*, com textos, gravações e um disco de música da elaboração da mesma autora. Uma das primeiras bibliografias da manifestação teatral em causa foi feita por João David Pinto Correia[2], que cita as mais importantes contribuições de Fernando Reis, Tomás Ribaz , Carlos Wallenstein, Christian Valbert, António Ambrósio, Gerald Moser e Manuel Ferreira . Enquanto António Ambrósio abordou o tchiloli em termos de uma manifestação folclórica, reparando no processo de inculturação[3], os

[1] Cena Lusófona – A Associação Portuguesa para o Intercâmbio Teatral (com sede em Coimbra) tornou-se numa estrutura organizada e com autonomia em 1996. Nasceu em Moçambique com o objectivo prioritário de dinamizar a comunicação teatral entre os países de língua oficial portuguesa; engloba participações do Teatro Trindade de Lisboa, do Teatro Académico de Gil Vicente de Coimbra e do Centro Dramático de Évora. «É antes uma organização que encara a problemática e intervenção no espaço lusófono a razão principal da sua existência». C. Maia Caetano: *Conhecer o Teatro em Moçambique*, Pinhel Editora, Pinhel 2004, p. 83.

[2] J. D. Pinto Correia: *Os Romances Carolíngios da Tradição Oral Portuguesa*, Instituto Nacional de Investigação Científica, Lisboa 1993, vol. I, nota 150 na p. 171. Cf. Idem: ´´O Tchiloli de São Tomé e Príncipe´´, in: ´´Significado cultural duma história carolíngia: a «Tragédia do Marquês de Mântua» de Baltazar Dias´´, in: *Cadernos Baltasar Dias*, nº 1, Teatro Municipal de Baltasar Dias, Funchal 1994, pp. 10-13.

[3] «O folclore constitui, talvez, a maior riqueza cultural e artística da República Democrática de S. Tomé e Príncipe. Importa estudá-lo bem, defendê-lo e torná-lo conhecido. Os estudos até agora feitos são muito superficiais e parcelares, pelo que perdem valor na sua identidade e divulgação. Capítulos importantes e pontos fulcrais são ainda completamente inéditos, tais como: o enquadramento socio-económico das ilhas e a cultura são-tomense em geral, a língua portuguesa e a música popular africana; o teatro europeu e a sua inculturação local; a história do folclore são-tomense; das principais formas da sua expressão, da sua origem e fixação actual, etc.» A. Ambrósio: *Para a história do folclore são-tomense*, in: *História*, nº 81, Julho 1985, p. 60.

dois últimos autores mencionaram o tchiloli na *Bibliografia das Literaturas Africanas de Expressão Portuguesa*, 1983.

O trabalho mais importante e recente sobre o tchiloli é, sem dúvida, *Das Tchiloli von São Tomé, Die Wege des karolingischen Universums* (*O Tchiloli de São Tomé – Os Caminhos do Universo Carolíngio*, 2002) de Pedro Paulo Alves Pereira. Ao mesmo tempo, é preciso dar o justo valor aos trabalhos do falecido antropólogo Paulo Valverde, baseados numa investigação de campo realizada durante dezoito meses (de Abril 1994 até Julho de 1995), cujos resultados foram publicados em 1998 e 2000. Hoje, no rescaldo dos estudos realizados por estes dois estudiosos, podemos dizer que o tchiloli na sua essência é uma performance multimedial, com características ritualísticas, cujo conteúdo performativo é derivado de uma raiz tradicional, dificilmente adaptável a um espectáculo teatral europeu.

Considerámos os aspectos relacionados com a gesta carolíngia e a sua representação santomense: o texto baltasariano, o domínio ideológico da literatura, a constituição de um novo discurso dramatúrgico como objecto de estudo histórico-literário. Perguntaremos, depois, qual a importância e a contribuição da história literária conjugada com a antropologia para a compreensão do discurso dramatúrgico luso-africano. Richard Schechner irá mais longe, pensando que há pontos de contacto entre o pensamento antropológico e e a acção performativa, derivada de um ritual, abrindo uma perspectiva mais vasta de confluência e interacção de métodos e práticas, pois «existe uma convergência dos métodos antropológicos e teatrais» e «em ambas as disciplinas, um número crescente de pessoas estão a cruzar as fronteiras. Grotowski, Brook, Barba, Turner, Turnbull e outros estão a trabalhar de formas que são específica e concretamente interculturais e interdisciplinares»[4].

O primeiro número da revista da Cena Lusófona *Setepalcos* anunciou o prosseguimento do trabalho de investigação de Paulo Valverde, realizado *in loco* sobre práticas relacionadas com as actividades performativas nas práticas teatrais santomenses. Em 1995, Valverde iniciou a sua colaboração com o programa Cena Lusófona com uma estadia de três meses na cidade de São Tomé, para o estudo do tchiloi, forma mista de cerimónia, teatro, música e dança. O estudioso em causa, antropólogo social e docente do ISCTE, faleceu tragicamente, aos trinta e sete anos, na madrugada de 4 de Abril de 1999, realizando em São Tomé a sua tese de doutoramento. Cumpriu, até a última consequência, a metodologia tradicional da antropologia (a etnografia cul-

[4] R. Schechner: *Between Theater and Anthropology.* University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia 1985, p. 26, ap. ´´Teatro e performance como domínios da investigação antropológica´´, in: *Setepalcos* – Antropologia, Performance, Teatro, no 1, Coimbra Dezembro 1996, p. 63. Cf. também: S. Shepard, M. Wallis: ´´Theatre Anthropology´´, in: *Drama/Theatre/Performance*, Routledge, London – New York 2004, pp. 127 – 130.

tural) que presume um contacto directo e intenso entre o cientista e as pessoas cuja vida e concepção do mundo quer compreender. O jovem antropólogo questionou os lugares-comuns e as falsas evidências em que assenta o debate sobre o tchiloli. Mostrou um método para perceber a complexidade deste certame artístico e ideológico. O tchiloli, ainda há trinta anos, foi concebido como um exemplo de teatro popular tradicional, produto do ´´feiticismo´´ dos santomenses (Fernando Reis), ´´perigoso´´ ou mesmo ´´subversivo´´ (também no sentido da interpelação da colonização) para um público sem preparação cultural, antropológica e etnográfica. Hoje, pertence a um dos fenómenos que singularizaram o espaço do imaginário luso-africano face ao fundo arquetípico comum: europeu, carolíngio e cristão. É um ´´mitolusismo´´[5], factor aglutinador da cultura lusófona.

Estamos perante um ritual levado ao palco, descrito por antropólogos do teatro e baseado num discurso dramatúrgico que mostra a longevidade dos processos histórico-literários da cultura lusófona. Um ritual luso-africano cuja base foi o texto quinhentista da *Tragédia do Marquês de Mântua e do Imperador Carloto Magno* de Baltasar Dias, um dos elementos unificadores mais importantes do tchiloli, uma vez que serve de ponto de partida para a acção dramática que é apresentada em São Tomé[6]. O tchiloli define-se então na charneira da história da literatura e da antropologia, como uma tragédia, anualmente repetida, de morte e de traição, fortemente moralizadora. Fundem-se nela tradição ficcional e europeia da morte, segundo os princípios cosmológicos locais, com a ´´presença´´ de defuntos seduzidos pela música, da batucada, pelas ofertas alimentares e convocados pelos actores e espectadores através de modos plurais de representação. Há mais de trinta anos a sua importância foi percebida e assinalada por Carlos Wallenstein em termos de um «ritual permanente da hierarquia e da justiça», o que marca já um certo avanço em relação ao estudo atrás mencionado de Fernando Reis, que considerou o tchiloli como fruto da confusão da realidade com a fantasia ou a imaginação santomense, um produto folclórico do trinómio «cristianismo-paganismo-feiticismo». Segundo Françoise Gründ, a *Tragédia do Marquês de Mântua*... teria tido a sua origem no autos sacramentais espanhóis, que, por sua vez, tomariam o tema dos dramas provençais franceses e seriam, como teatro popular, improvisados[7] .

[5] ´´Mitolusismo´´ - expressão do pintor contemporâneo Lima de Freitas. Cf. G. Durand: ´´Atlântico longínquo e telurismo próximo: imaginário lusitano e imaginário brasieliro´´, in: *Imagens e Reflexos do Imaginário Português*, Hugin, Lisboa 2000, p. 54.

[6] Cf. M. Clara Neves: *Tchiloli de S. Tomé. A viagem dos sons/The journey of sounds*, Tradisom, Vila Verde 1998, p. 12. O título: *Tragédia do Marquês de Mântua e do Emperador Carlos Magno* vai segundo a edição de Baltasar Dias: *Autos, romances e trovas*, Introdução, fixação de texto, notas e glossário por Alberto Figueira Gomes, Imprensa Nacional – Casa da Moeda, Lisboa 1985 (a versão abreviada do mesmo título encontra-se na edição do Funchal, 1961).

[7] F. Gründ: ´´Le Tchiloli´´, in: *Notre Librairie*, nº 112, Pairs, Clef, pp. 118-123.

Os estudos de Paulo Valverde relacionaram o fenómeno em causa com as questões da hermenêutica e com os princípios ontológicos locais santomenses, consagrando o uso dos termos ´´performance´´ e ´´ritual´´. Um ritual cujo ´´palco´´ é o terreiro duma vila, uma clareira da mata tropical (uma peculiar ´´floresta de enganos´´ da tradição cavalheiresca), um espaço muito mais vasto do que no teatro europeu – do tamanho duma aldeia africana. Na primeira tentativa de interpetação, socialmente conotada, o espaço do tchiloli remete-nos aos mais variados palcos de acontecimentos e espectáculos ´´de culto´´ no Mundo - reclamando sempre o direito do homem à justiça, à segurança, à condição da liberdade. Do nosso ponto de vista – congénere ao de Francisco Salinas – seria justificado relacionarmos a ´´tragédia´´ luso-africana com o teatro vicentino português, em paralelo com o teatro de cordel do Nordeste brasileiro, mais do que com os autos sacramentais espanhóis[8].

Existem, pois, outras pistas interpretativas do tchiloli; Paulo Valverde apercebeu-se do perigo das «leituras politizadas do *Tchiloli* que, ao sabor dos alinhamentos ideológicos dos autores, o fazem colonial, anti-colonial ou nem por isso»[9] e, tomando em conta os dados empíricos como factores demonstrativos, avançou a hipótese duma leitura localizada «sobretudo num plano moral fracamente politizado»[10], que nos parece viável e digno de seguimento. A antropologia do teatro derivada da obra de Richard Schechner *Between Theatre and Anthropology* (1985) perimitir-nos-á a aproximação ao fenómeno em causa em termos de contingência entre teatro e outros espectáculos ritualísticos e culturais. Na época pós-colonial, o tchiloli continua a ser utilizado como um dos fenómenos folclóricos mais importantes e persuasivos para consolidar a ideia de uma cultura e de uma identidade são-tomenses autónomas[11]. Mais do que isso, o tchiloli é também um drama universal sobre os problemas da finitude humana, a volubilidade moral dos seres humanos que torna a sociedade num exercício turbulento do poder e mesmo alheio às virtudes cavalheirescas e cristãs. Por isso, as palavras

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[8] F. Salinas Portugal: *Entre Próspero e Caliban. Literaturas Africanas de Língua Portuguesa*, Laiovento, Santiago de Compostela 1999, n. 161 na p.105.

[9] P. Valverde: ´´Carlos Magno e as artes da morte: estudo sobre o *Tchiloli* da Ilha de São Tomé´´, in: *Etnográfica*, vol. II (2), 1998, p. 225; este estudo baseia-se numa investigação de campo levada a cabo entre Abril de 1994 até Julho de 1995; a Cena Lusófona, que distribuiu informalmente essa versão, patrocionou a estadia de três meses (1996) do Autor falecido a 4 de Abril de 1999, em consequência de malária contraída em São Tomé e Príncipe. Achamos os seus estudos muito importantes para a interpretação antropológica do teatro santomense.

[10] Ibid., p. 239.

[11] «Tal é evidente na sua presença regular nas manifestações de afirmação do Estado são-tomense, desde as recepções a visitantes estrangeiros ilustres até às tomadas de posse dos governantes locais e às comemorações estatais como o Dia da Criança, a 1 de Junho». Ibid., pp. 225-226.

do Marquês de Mântua, dirigidas ao Imperador e à Imperatriz e proferidas na última cena do espectáculo, antes do que o algoz traga a cabeça de Dom Carloto

Porque vos, senhor sois tal,
Que com rezão e verdade
Sustentaes a christandade
Em justiça universal
A qual para salvação
Vos he muito necessária[12]

constituem uma voz contra a reapropriação do discurso dramatúrgico com um sentido político ou ideológico.

O duplo relacionamento contextual manifesta-se nos episódios da *Tragédia do Marquês de Mântua e do Imperador Carloto Magno* que actualizam conteúdos e formas de «romances velhos» difundidos em Portugal, em complexa combinação com os factos históricos que unem a história da antiga metrópole aos da ex-colónia, numa dialéctica às vezes difícil mas importante do ponto de vista da função epistemológica das práticas discursivas[13]. A assimilação ou a aculturação das mais variadas tradições católicas, desde a esfera do antigo direito do padroado português[14], até às representações religiosas, teatrais e musicais decorreu de uma forma positivamente espontânea no contacto cultural, aliás inserida mefistofelicamente nas tramitações institucionais vindas de Lisboa ou num fenómeno de ´´luso-tropicalismo´´ definido com uma positividade idealista por Gilberto Freyre e retomado por Fernando Reis, ou dentro de uma ´´estratégia colonial´´ incriminada por Paulo Alves Pereira.

Meritórias iniciativas em relação ao tchiloli foram retomadas em Portugal pelas actividades da Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian e da Cena Lusófona. Muito recentemente, apareceram os pensadores da santomensidade, isto é, da ´´densidade´´ e especificida-

[12] B. Dias: ´´Tragédia do Marquez de Mântua´´, in: *Autos e Trovas de...*, s.e., Funchal 1961, p. 47.

[13] «Il y a des savoirs qui sont independents des sciences (qui n´ent sont ni l´esquisse historique ni l´envers vécu), mais il n´y a pas de savoir sans une pratique discursive définie; et tout pratique discursive peut se définir par le savoir qu´elle forme». M. Foucault: *L´archeologie ....*, op. cit., pp. 238-239.

[14] Padroado português no Oriente – direito de jurisdição que a igreja concedeu a Portugal em terras do Oriente, tanto portuguesas como estranhas à soberania de Lisboa. Cf. J. Serrão (dir.): S. v.: ´´Padroado do Oriente´´, in: *Dicionário de História de Portugal*, Livraria Figueirinhas, Porto s.d. (1999), pp. 508 - 511.

[15] Cf. I. Mata: *Diálogo com as Ilhas. Sobre cultura e Literatura de São Tomé e Príncipe*, Colibri, Lisboa 1998 e Idem: *A Suave Pátria. Reflexões político-culturais sobre a sociedade são-tomense*, Colibri, Lisboa 2004. Cf. também: P. Laranjeira: ´´Inocência Mata: Cidadania e Cultura´´, in: *JL – Jornal de letras, artes e ideias*, no 889, de 27 de Outubro a 9 de Novembro de 2004, p. 22.

[16] Cf. O. Silva: *Cores e Sombras de S. Tomé e Príncipe*, Colibri, Lisboa 2001 e idem: *São Tomé e Príncipe – Ecos da Terra do Ossobó*, Colibri, Lisboa 2004.

de cultural santomense. Neste número, contam-se os trabalhos de Inocência Mata (natural do Príncipe)[15] e de Otilina Silva[16], ricos em reflexões político-culturais e estéticas, em que o conceito da Lusofonia compreende também a ´´mátria´´ africana e os mais variados problemas relacionados com o hibridismo, a aculturação, a transculturação e a mestiçagem[17].

Percebemos o discurso dramatúrgico lusófono como um fenómeno situado na charneira de uma história de literatura e da antropologia de teatro (forças-chave da articulação metodológica do nosso livro *Baltasar Dias e as metamorfoses do discurso dramatúrgico em Portugal e nas Ilhas de São Tomé e Príncipe. Ensaio histórico-literário e antropológico*, Editoras Universitárias de Varsóvia, Varsóvia 2005). O discurso dramatúrgico pode ser considerado como um denominador comum das culturas de expressão portuguesa e, em alguns países lusófonos, com especial inciência em São Tomé e Príncipe, um portentoso dispositivo de resistência contra à homogeneização pós-colonial, tornando-se uma das vertentes construtoras da incipiente identidade nacional santomense. O discurso dramatúrgico lusófono inscreve-se no contexto literário e ideológico de ´´antes e depois da Independência´´, i. e., da época colonial e pós-colonial na África Lusófona e no Brasil. Noção-rival, talvez, da saudade, do sebastianismo e de outros ´´mitolusismos´´ ou marcadores imagéticos da consciência colectiva dos povos lusófonos, o discurso dramatúrgico proferido em português enveredou de Portugal para as ilhas no Oceano Atlântico e para o Novo Mundo, salvaguardando a matriz cultural lusófona; testemunhou a espantosa longevidade e veiculou um germe particularmente original de Lusofonia.

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[17] Cf. H. Garmes: ´´Entre o mármore e a murta´´, conferência proferida aquando do VIII Congresso da Associação Internacional de Lusitanistas, Santiago de Compostela, 17-24 de Julho de 2005. Agradeço ao Colega Hélder Garmes da USP por ter apontado os problemas em questão e por me ter cedido um exemplar do texto da conferência.

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Hanna Serkowska

La decostruzione della storia in grande a partire dalle microstorie di Marta Morazzoni

Autrice di prosa sostenuta, elegante. Lessico raffinato, onomastica nordeuropea (Haakon, Agnes, Benedict, Margot, Alphonse), ambientazioni spazio-temporali possibilmente remote e transnazionali. Tutto ciò si può dire certo seguendo il percorso romanzesco di Marta Morazzoni sin dall'esordio in letteratura nel 1986. Invano si cercherebbero modelli di ispirazione fra gli autori italiani di quella prosa che, per usare la vieta espressione bloomiana, non sembra risentire di alcuna angoscia dell'influenza nell'area nazionale.[1] Nel presente articolo mi propongo di analizzare una serie di microstorie, di storie in piccolo (nell' accezione comune nella storiografia – v. C. Ginzburg e P. Burke), costruite di volta in volta nelle opere morazzoniane in cui prevale, come si è detto, il cronotopo che costantemente ci estrapola su epoche e paesi lontani, ma che frequentano costantemente ambienti privati e familiari. E` dalle microstorie che può emergere qualche volta la storia in grande. Dalla solitudine individuale si passa a quella storica, all'isolamento nella storia.

Si potrebbe supporre che tale ambientazione serva ad impedire di slittare verso il facile sentimentalismo e l'indesiderato autobiografismo (che pare tuttavia manifestarsi nei momenti della più insistita ripresa tematica di alcune, identiche situazioni esistenziali in cui vengono posti i protagonisti). Invece è tipica, come una radice immanente costitutiva dei rapporti interumani, la sensazione della dolorosa solitudine che accomuna i personaggi condannati all'isolamento psichico ed emotivo proprio in mezzo alle persone care, spesso membri della stessa famiglia, tra genitori, tra amici

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[1] Morazzoni stessa dice in un'intervista:" Sicuramente ci sono influssi, e mi rendo conto che ho assorbito in anni e anni di letture suoni, parole, vicende di altri romanzi. Ma le cose che mi hanno segnata son tante e talmente diverse, che credo abbiano lasciato emergere qualcosa di mio. Spero perciò di non avere alcuna traccia di stili altrui. [...] Francamente non saprei inquadrarmi. Mi piacerebbe di più riuscire a capire se posso avere una collocazione su scala europea: sono questi i miei maggiori riferimenti. Per esempio, della letteratura della Scandinavia..." *Scrivere fuori dalla mischia*, in *Corriere del Ticino*, il 20-21.sett.1997.

intimi, tra i coniugi che si lasciano nei momenti più difficili della loro vita (vecchiaia, malattia, parto, morte); o si scatenano in atti di notevole crudeltà e insensatezza (come il padre di Haakon che profana l'adorata aiuola delle rose materne). Non essendo maturato tra di loro nulla più di un'inerte abitudine, un vezzo perverso e isterilito, o addirittura una mera estraneità e indifferenza, come è il caso di Alphonse Courrier che, non avendo mai amato la moglie (scelta vagliando, come quando si conclude un affare) si suicida dopo la morte dell'amante a cui egli si rende conto di essere tragicamente affezionato solo quando è venuta a mancare. L'isolamento è come l'acqua gelata dell'estuario del romanzo eponimo, estuario che tiene separati i due individui, amici apparenti, Antonio e Benedict, ormai rassegnati alla vita il cui ritmo scandiscono le abitudini più grette, intere serie di azioni quotidiane iterate senza un senso, senza un significato. Amici apparenti, in quanto il loro rapporto risulta intessuto di atti mancati: del non detto e del non scritto. Quando si parlano, scelgono con cura gli argomenti, e finiscono sempre per discorrere del più e del meno. E quando appare un terzo o terza che porta ad infrangere lo stereotipo, tale altro o altra, anziché ripristinare l'ordine o aiutare a ricomporre i rapporti scompigliati, sancisce definitivamente la separazione e la solitudine insinuata prima. A partire dalla venuta di Margot, Antonio dell'*Estuario* smette di competere e cede l'amico alla nuova rivale che presto glielo sottrae irreparabilmente. L'avvento della giardiniera Felice in *Casa materna* interrompe le visite estive che Haakon faceva d'abitudine a Bergen. La terza persona (Margot, Felice) rapina l'affetto che avrebbe potuto nascere, che sarebbe spettato all'altro.[2] Certi segni, certe confidenze e le infrequenti effusioni affettive (poiché la narrativa morazzoniana è fatta prevalentemente di silenzi dei personaggi) nei romanzi della "nostra signora del gelo" (così l'hanno definita i giornalisti) verso l'unica beneficiaria, Felice, fanno decidere a Haakon di non tornare più a Bergen. Alla solitudine non si sostituisce mai un appagamento, o un rapporto affiatato, armonioso. Dopotutto "nel mondo c'è un tot di solitudini, se termina quella mia, se ne deve generare un'altra che la compensi" (*Casa materna*: 84).

Se nei romanzi appena citati si ripete la presenza dell'importuna catalizzatrice del rapporto mancato, procedendo in ordine tematico andrebbe lumeggiato un altro elemento in parte legato alla condizione solitaria dei personaggi, ma più segnatamente relativo all'estrapolazione dalla vita della comunità, all'esclusione dalla storia in grande, chiaramente decostruita o assente. Intendo la percezione costante

[2] La rapina dell'affetto v'è quindi solo nella misura in cui l'affetto materno viene suscitato, anziché dal figlio, da una donna estranea che - dice la madre di Haakon - sarebbe dovuta essere sua figlia. *Casa materna*. P. 93. Si veda a proposito *Rapina d'affetto. Il maschio escluso dal cerchio delle donne* di E. Siciliano che parla della delusione affettiva. In *Corriere della sera*, 9 febbraio 1992.

nella narrativa morazzoniana della monumentale storia umana come un percorso che esclude gli eventi ritenuti piccoli, per cui "si può nutrire l'illusione che mai una cosa del genere sia capitata ad altri, nel bene o nel male" (*Il caso Courrier*: 48). Mentre invece la storia umana non è fatta di grandi eventi, di vittorie, battaglie, guerre, testimoniate dai manuali di storia e dall'iconografia universale. La vera storia è quella sommersa, adombrata o sottaciuta, la storia degli individui e degli avvenimenti indivuduali, quella che traluce dalle opere in oggetto.

E' rivelatrice sotto tale aspetto la storia raccontata nel romanzo secondogenito della Morazzoni, *L'invenzione della verità*, in cui la scrittrice riprende il motivo dell'isolamento e del silenzio (Ruskin è "l'inutile sposo" di Miss Grey, la regina Matilde è la sposa "devota ma non innamorata" del marito assente, Maria Elisabetta ha abbandonato il fastidioso marito per poter partecipare alla stesura del ricamo), e lo volge ad altri fini. Qui la vita solitaria dell'individuo impronta il quadro della storia ufficiale in maniera sottile eppur percepibile, se se ne leggono adeguatamente le testimonianze impresse sulla tela. Le trecento Penelopi, abbandonati i loro Ulissi (avviati forse verso imprese grandiose e pericolose conquiste), convengono ad Amiens, versando le loro solitudini in un'impresa affatto insignificante, da cui nascerà la celebre Tapisserie de Bayeux con raffigurate le immagini di un viaggio marino, di una nave e il mare mosso, del regale esercito di Guglielmo, e del vento eolio che ne impedisce il ritorno.

Funzionale del motivo del rapporto tra la micro- e la marcostoria è la scelta del personaggio femminile come protagonista: facitrice alacre (sempre una professionista all'opera: cartografa, giardiniera, ricamatrice, anche se di regale lignaggio) eppur muta interprete della "grande storia", in quanto vive innanzi tutto la propria storia individuale, confluita in quella grande, e da quest'ultima dimenticata o cancellata. Sono quindi realmente esclusi i piccoli eventi di cui è fatta la vita individuale, o – al contrario – ne rimane qualche traccia tra le pieghe della storia ufficiale? *L'invenzione della verità*, configurandosi come una mera ricostruzione immaginaria degli eventi passati, una rilettura della storia del celebre ricamo (o riscrittura del mito di Arianna o di Aracne) sembra tuttavia non lasciar dubbi.

Si tratta delle ricamatrici più esperte, accorse ad Amiens per "inventare la verità", ovvero per rappresentare - senza aver visto eventi e luoghi e senza avervi partecipato - le gesta e le avventure dei loro uomini. Ogni elemento del quadro richiede idealmente un'esperienza vera, nei minimi dettagli, come le onde marine, sconosciute alle donne. Anna Elisabetta (detta *amiénoise*), che eccelle per l'abilità e la cui maestria nell'arte del ricamo è riconosciuta uguale alla propria dalla regina stessa, al punto di destarne l'ira e l'invidia, non ha mai visto il mare, ma solo il fiume di Somme dove lei con molte altre usava lavare i panni sporchi nelle giornate del bucato. Va in riva al mare, raccoglie la gonna, si immerge nell'acqua fredda che le batte contro le ginocchia e inzuppa il vestito. Solo allora scopre che l'acqua marina, continuamente fluida, è diversa da quella del fiume. La Somme era limacciosa e gli stagni intorno ad Amiens le facevano paura. Tornata, riesce a imitare sulla tela "l'impercettibile pressione dell'aqua bassa contro gli stinchi e le ginocchia dei portatori; e la regina, sogguardando appena la tela della sua vicina, ricono[sce] forse lo sforzo di verità che la impegnava" (89-91).

Il lavoro cui sono intente le donne è un compito serio e impegnativo, e i loro sforzi sono concepiti come dedizione completa, la loro condotta proporzionata al compito gravoso. Le più abili ricamatrici della Francia vengono di frequente paragonate ai soldati audaci a misura che si approssimano al luogo in cui le ha convocate la regina: "Partirono portando con sé ben poco, per non gravare del superfluo il cammino: necessari erano soltanto un ditale e una pezzetta gonfia d'ovatta e ben stretta, entro cui riposavano nell'ordine disciplinato un'armeria di aghi di diversa grandezza", simili agli arnesi da guerra ridimensionati (p. 7). E' un lavoro non da meno rispetto alle imprese belliche, e il paragone induce a riflettere sull'insignificanza storica dele opere femminili poste a confronto con l'opera maschile. Altrove si parla della "strategia del ricamo" spiegata loro dalla regina come se distribuisse i compiti tra lo "schieramento della bataglia", e del rotolo di lino ancora vergine, immacolato in attesa di essere profanato e stende davanti alle ricamatrici come della pianura che attende uno scontro (p.35). L'azione non a caso è ubicata in Francia, la terra del genere cavalleresco, (informa la voce narrante) e la regina si lusinga dei paragoni virili mentre si mettono a confronto le due battaglie (di diversa risonanza storica): quella reale di Guglielmo, e quella immaginaria rappresentata dalle ricamatrici. E forse una terza, a guardar bene, non rimasta senza testimonianza, tra le ricamatrici stesse.

A misura che il difficile lavoro progredisce, ne vengono lumeggiati due altri aspetti. Uno: il ricamo è come un testo: le ricamatrici muovono le loro mani agili, attrezzate d'ago come se *scrivessero.*[3] Il senso della *scrittura*, leggiamo, riposa nelle loro mani: il disegno preliminare, abbozzato da altri, da solo non può niente, invece spetta alle esperte ricamatrici di "restituirgli con la forma una parvenza di vita, ma anche più di una parvenza, talvolta la vita stessa" (p. 40). Finché loro non iniziassero il loro lavoro, come se il disegno non avesse alcun significato, la tela è rimasta grezza. A termine della prima settimana di lavoro, una notte la regina si infila di nascosto nella stanza del ricamo e *legge* con cura la storia ricamata, tastando il ricamo come un cieco (p. 72). Più avanti ancora, dalle parole che le artigiane *scrivono* sulla tela (è l'altro dei due aspetti menzionati), emerge una sua dimensione figurativa e più unitaria, per cui il

[3] La parola "scrittura" riferita al ricamo è di estrema ricorrenza: p. es. pagine: 8, 9, 13, 33 e 57 del romanzo.

ricamo viene assimilato a una pittura o scultura. Tale infatti è il senso della gara: l'orgogliosa regina si misura con l'arte dei pittori e degli scalpellini (p. 128).

A questo punto finalmente si incontrano i due motivi: di cui uno risale all'undicesimo (il ricamo), l'altro al diciannovesimo secolo (il vaggio in Francia di John Ruskin per contemplare la cattedrale di Amiens) e che occupano a turni uno i capitoli pari, l'altro dispari. E` la prima volta che i due motivi, prima configurati come narrazioni parallele per un capriccio gratuito poste dentro lo stesso libro, si intersechino. Le ricamatrici la cui storia viene narrata cercano di far risaltare dal ricamo la loro firma, di imprimere un loro carattere individuale, in virtù di una firma metonimica, similmente a quanto fece la mitica Aracne. Contraria è l'intenzione della regina che tende all'uniformità e tiene all'indistinguibile, unitario esito del lavoro: "nell'aleatorio procedere comune dell'opera, nell'armonia delle operaie" (p. 60) doveva dissolversi la maniera individuale di ciascuna di loro. "Più di tutto, dunque, si compiaque dell'uniformità in cui ogni diversa mano spariva" (p. 73). Quando la tela è finita, viene accolta in chiesa come voto (la regina prega per la pace) il che spiega la perfezione pretesa dalla regina: "Io voglio che [la tela] non sia meno bella delle opere dei maestri scalpellini della cattedrale, e non sarà meno potente" (p. 84). Una volta la tela viene posta nella cattedrale di Amiens, la storia ne assorbe le autrici, spazzandole via. Anna Elisabetta non senza dolore "capì di doversi staccare dal ricamo" (p. 134). A guardare il ricamo, lo vede perfetto e ne rispetta l'autonomia e la dignità di un'opera anonima.

Le ricamatrici sembrano affini alla mitica Aracne (anziché a Penelope): soffrono di doversi staccare dalla loro opera, ma non disfanno quanto hanno fatto "durante il giorno".[4] Dopotutto è giocoforza che la storia del ricamo sia affidata a una ricostruzione fantastica, a un lavoro di immaginazione. Della convocazione delle trecento ricamatrici non è rimasta traccia. "Si racconta che una volta [...] si raccogliessero ricamatrici esperte. Non è rimasta testimonianza di alcun bando ufficiale promulgato in merito..." (p. 7). Si può ipotizzare che ci fosse stato. Tuttavia molti sono i dubbi che persistono: la famosa Tapisserie de Bayeux è stata ideata e concepita su iniziativa della duchessa normanna Matilde (la moglie di Guglielmo il Conquistatore) che volle celebrare

[4] Spontaneamente si richiamano le affinità con la versione ovidiana del mito di Aracne. Si pensi pure alla gara tra la regina e l'amiénoise, fatta scattare dall'audacia di quest'ultima che osa chiedere alla regina di affidarle l'esecuzione del brano col timone. La sua presunzione è insensata, come di Aracne, se pensa che la regina – come Minerva che concentra l'attenzione su simboli del dominio (il timone della nave, per l'appunto) – le permetta di fare quello che non ha esplicitamente vietato. Come Minerva, viene portata dall'ira a rompere le regole della gara e a prevenire l'amiénoise. Invano cerca di persuadere Aracne ad arrendersi. L'arcobaleno nel mito ovidiano era eseguito da Aracne con tanta abilità ché i confini tra i colori ingannassero l'occhio, sembrando tutt'uno pur rimanendo distinti! Perfetti *quasi* come le onde marine ricamate dall'amiénoise.

la conquista dell'isola e vittoria ad Hastings sull'esercito del re d'Inghilterra, Harold il 14 ottobre del 1066, o forse da un'altra Matilde, la moglie di Goffredo Plantageneto, che circa un secolo dopo Hastings volle "l'inconsueta stesura di questa memoria" (p. 137)? E così insieme all'identità e al vissuto delle trecento ricamatrici la persona dell'ideatrice della tela ha perso del tutto la sua rilevanza, in confronto con le immagini che la tela rappresenta: degli uomini di alto rango, cavalieri armati, scene di sangue e di battaglia. Gli storici d'arte sono incapaci di scoprire e di appurare la figura dell'autore/autrice della tapisserie.

Non è rimasta alcuna testimonianza di vita delle autrici di questo ricamo-voto? O forse una traccia, uno spunto da cui cominciare a "inventare" il passato si trova? Durante la seconda settimana del ricamo la regina - angosciata dalla maestria della migliore delle ricamatrici, Anna Elisabetta, detta l'amiémoise - si insinua nella camera in cui ogni mattina convengono le 300 artigiane e, dopo aver *letto* le immagini rappresentate sulla tela, si precipita nel buio a eseguire il brano cui stava lavorando l'altra perché "il tarlo di una inquietudine sorda le aveva distrutto il sonno" (p. 106). Della più grande nave del disegno, che Anna Elisabetta le aveva sottratto, era rimasto incompleto solo il timone: "l'amiénoise ne aveva tracciato il contorno chiaro, lasciando vuoto il centro che doveva essere compatto: era un riquadro piccolo e arduo da ricamare anche in piena luce, ma la regina era presa dall'animosità di una sfida e nemmeno l'assurdo impegno del lavoro notturno le parve spropositato. Punto dopo punto, compì il lavoro..." (p. 106). Impaziente e inquieta, angosciata forse dalla bravura dell'altra, la previene, finisce il dettaglio che Anna Elisabbetta ha lasciato, cesellandone il contorno, per l'indomani. E allora "la mano altrimenti perfetta della regale artigiana commette l'errore di coprire nel fitto della lana la linea dell'onda marina" (p. 106) accorgendosene solo quando dalla finestra a oriente la luminosità dell'alba l'ha raggiunta. La mattina dopo Anna Elisabetta, prima di riprendere il lavoro, come fa chi scrive, inizia solitamente dalla rilettura di quanto ha scritto il giorno prima, percorre la tela, e ferma stupita lo sguardo sul timone del vascello ducale. "Ricordava di aver lasciato il ricamo, la sera, incompiuto, perché la luce moriva grado a grado e il tratto richiedeva particolare attenzione. [...] qualcuno fosse penetrato per rapirle il gusto di un'opera che le costava tanta fatica e affezione?" (p. 112). Ella lascia il brano del mare per ricamare gli arabeschi inferiori. Il suo rancore si sfoga e confluisce nell'aggressività della scena di due uccelli da preda, coi becchi rapaci aperti in segno di minaccia, preparati all'assalto violento. L'imperfezione, l'errore della regina incoraggia chi legge a cercare l'autore del ricamo anonimo. Solo ad una lettura attenta della tapisserie, percorsa da uno sguardo ponderato e curioso, si svela la gara segreta tra le artigiane, la violenza subita, la sostanza della loro vita solitaria, devota all'emulazione delle opere maschili, nonché la mancanza di esperienza empirica della regina.

John Ruskin scrisse nella *Bibbia di Amiens,* opera dedicata alla cattedrale, una frase interessante – riproposta del resto nel romanzo della Morazzoni – che la struttura esterna della chiesa gotica è come la struttura interna del tessuto, e che il fatto stesso di porre le due strutture a confronto deve sorprenderci in quanto insolito. Questa costatazione rimanda, come anche la storia del ricamo, al loro comune legame con il lato materiale della vita che non è mai stato oggetto di studio o di ricerca. E Ruskin-protagonista scorge un'intima somiglianza tra la cattedrale e il tessuto (p. 51). Tracciando l'insolito paragone tra l'architettura e la tessitura (una cattedrale gli sembra un tessuto fatto di pietra che non nasconde all'esterno le suture) egli pone enfasi sulle tracce del suo fare: "perciò [...] tessitori e profeti si muovevano in sfere contigue e architettavano linguaggi affini di misteriose precognizioni" (p. 57). La figura centrale dell'opera del famoso storico d'arte è il labirinto. Esso ricompare anche qui e porta Ruskin a concludere che ogni catedrale ha il suo labirinto (p. 125). Sia il tessuto che l'interno della chiesa gotica racchiudono un labirinto. Il labirinto è un segno del legame tra i tempi pagani di sconcerto e sbigottimento da una parte, e il rifugio cristiano dall'altra: all'ingresso del palazzo di Minosse Arianna tiene il filo della speranza e lo consegna a Teseo prima che egli affronti il Minotauro. La Vergine cui sono dedicate la cattedrali, per Ruskin, è una nuova Arianna: ella tiene in mano la matassa che segna la via di ritorno dal labirinto. La Vergine, non meno della principessa di Creta, conosce la fragilità della memoria degli uomini (come in caso di Ruskin) e la forza della loro distrazione (forse per distrazione la regina ha sbagliato il ricamo), e pertanto non ha una volta lasciato cadere dalle mani il capo della matassa. A questo punto il significato del labirinto e dell'Arianna cristiana viene esplicato così: „Quello che il labirinto di per sé significa non richiede nessuna arte divinatoria o intelligenza di interpretazione: è scritto tra le righe della vita di qualsiasi uomo" (p. 126). Ma il richiamo alla sovrumana artefice delle cose mondane presenta anche un interesse sul piano della creazione artistica che dona l'immortalità ai maestri scalpellini e architetti, non è tale per le trecento artigiane. La gara del ricamo e il viaggio di ricerca di cui narra il romanzo della Morazzoni convergono a questo punto a formare un unico motivo. Il grande ricamo, come anche la cattedrale di Amiens sono riconducibili alla figura del labirinto che per Ruskin poteva servire da metafora della vita umana affidata alla "Arianna cristiana" e all'arte che garantisce l'immortalità storica. Mentre per le ricamatrici esso cotituisce una figura di prigione e di esclusione dalla trascendenza. Dentro il labirinto del testo e della storia ufficiale vi è un corpo dimenticato, una mano dell'autore/autrice, un vissuto di cui è difficile rinvenire (o forse solo ipotizzare) la traccia.

Il romanzo risulta quindi in definitiva un racconto sulla memoria (personale) e sull'oblio (storico) che pervale sulla prima, ovvero sulle lacune e sull'oblio che la grande storia compie nei confronti delle storie individuali, delle microstorie. Alla fine, anche se Ruskin si sforza di evitare di sopprimere l'intuita materialità della creazione, egli si abbandona alle astrazioni universali e tipiche del tardizionale pensiero teorico, sorrendendo il soggetto immerso in una prospettiva di parte, mentre dentro il labirinto architettonico della chiesa gotica egli figura "la nuova Arianna" che deve aiutare Teseo o eroi suoi pari, a tramandare la memoria. Il rischio della mancanza di trascendenza storica per le donne è invece inevitabile: la loro è una morte spirituale dovuta alla dimenticanza, all'esclusione dalla memoria storiografica. La tela rappresenta le immagini degli uomini lontani alle ricamatrici, mentre conquistano o restano sconfitti, mentre lottano, mentre percorrono mari e monti, senza lasciare traccia di se stesse al lavoro, delle donne che ricamano, o di qualunque altra occupazione femminile del tempo. Rimangono in tal modo sospese nel limbo dell'inadempimento, della dimenticanza. Quel che loro *scrivono* con le immagini, sono i loro uomini che versano sangue durante la battaglia. Ma al di sotto il velo delle scene gloriose di battaglia si intravede testimoniata (e occultata, come in un palinsesto) la memoria di un'altra violenza, di un altro scontro tra la regina che in questa stessa scena ricorda suggestivamente il gesto di Minerva nei confronti di Aracne. Tra gli strati di questo palinsesto ricamato si nasconde un complesso gioco di rimando che ci rinvia ad altri testi mitologici e letterari, a ricami, alla storia ufficiale fatta di battaglie e guerre, come anche al compito dello storico o del critico che avrebbe voluto imporre all'opera un significato arbitrario metafisico-religioso, e innanzitutto alla storia della produzione del ricamo costituita da piccoli eventi.

L'imponente tela lunga settanta metri su cui tra le onde preziose naviga il regale esercito di Guglielmo, immortalando le imprese gloriose e audaci, i fatti di battaglia e le scene di vittoria, diventa il *noto* ricamo di Bayeux dall'*ignota* origine. Ogni piccola storia, a rinvenirla e riportarla alla luce, pone in dubbio e contesta la versione ufficializzata della Storia con la S maiuscola. In tale senso *L'invenzione della verità* è un racconto paradigmatico di tutta l'opera di Marta Morazzoni che a partire dalle storie in piccolo lumeggia l'operare della grande storia umana.

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Karolina Barwicz

L' Architettura poetica di Mario Luzi

> La più bella delle trame viene formata dagli opposti,
> e tutte le cose nascono secondo contesa.(Origene, Contro Celso)

Ad avvicinarsi alle opere di M.Luzi ci si trova davanti ad una costruzione letteraria particolarmente cosciente, ad una vera e propria 'architettura' poetica dove nulla pare lasciato al caso. Man mano, appare evidente il fatto che il suo ricchisimo insieme tematico e formale risponde ad una linea di sviluppo estremamente coerente, che poggia su alcune costanti fondamentali.[1] Nel suo processo creativo confluiscono varie ispirazioni e motivi, provenienti dall'esperienza della poesia europea, in particolare simbolisti francesi, nonchè da un'intensa sensibilità religiosa, che lo guida a creare nei suoi versi un'atmosfera metafisica da un tono quasi sacrale e profetico.

Tra le costanti capitali nella costruzione della poetica di Luzi c'è l'idea di 'progresso spirituale' e quella del lavoro letterario come ipotesi assoluta di vita. Dalla prima risulta l'importante posizione di dinamica, a cui viene sottoposto sia l'autore che la sua opera. Il movimento continuo, la qualità di progredire, ci spiega Pautasso, stanno al centro della poetica luziana:

> È evidente che Luzi[…] non attribuisce tuttavia all'idea di 'progresso spirituale' un significato di statica e supina accettazione degli eventi, ma all'opposto, le riconosce un ruolo attivo e dinamico, in cui il progredire si identifica con una condizione assoluta di disponibilità interiore a mettere continuamente in gioco tutti gli elementi che concorrono al compimento del destino, e, di conseguenza, se stesso e la sua opera. (1981:10)

Di qui il suo concetto metamorfico, sistematicamente presente nella dinamica e tematica dei testi. L'acqua: il mare, il fiume e la pioggia, e il perenne scorrere di luoghi,

[1]„ si puo' vedere come nell'architettura della costruzione della propria opera, Luzi non abbia lasciato nulla al caso […] „Pautasso.S 1981:8, *M.Luzi –Storia Di Una Poesia,*Milano

oggetti, gente, tempo, il fluire della vita naturale,(che si traduce in frequente cambiamento dei paesaggi, sia oggettivi che interni, dell’autore) costituisce un filo assai importante di questa lirica.

Per quanto riguarda la seconda, a questo punto bisogna ricordare che, il lavoro poetico del giovane Luzi si inserisce in un particolare quadro storico-culturale, dove, vista la decomposizione della vita culturale e sociale sotto regime fascista, l’equazione ‘letteratura come vita’ è posta senza mezzi termini. Nel anno 1938, in occasione di un convegno di scrittori cattolici tenutosi a San Miniato al Monte, Carlo Bo pronuncia il suo famoso discorso intitolato proprio “Letteratura come vita”, il quale fu generalmente riconosciuto come il manifesto del gruppo fiorentino (nonostante lo negassero gli stessi interessati). Due anni prima, lo stesso Luzi, nella premessa alla sua tesi di laurea “L’Opium Chrètien”, affermava che: “L’ignominia del letterato comincia al momento in cui egli non crede più alla letteratura come a una vita integrale, ma come a un mezzo verso la vita.”[2]

Sono le parole a cui lo scrittore fiorentino rimarrà sempre fedele nell’intera costruzione letteraria. La poesia di Luzi, dunque, deve essere intesa come un riflesso di una vera e propria condizione esistenziale. Seguendo il suo maestro Mallarme’ ció che apprezza di più nella poesia è la sua possibilità e il suo diritto a testimoniare la propria presenza. La parola – testimone del mondo? Si’, ma questo vuol dire testimone di se stessa, dell’autocoscienza. *La poesia esiste* , ribadisce Luzi nella “Creazione Poetica”, *cioè che la facoltà poetica è una facoltà reale3.* Luzi vede poesia come una voce universale, una forza creativa intrinseca della vita. Non è che esista parallelmente alla vita naturale, anzi, ne costituisce una rappresentanza fedele, che deriva dall’interno delle cose:“Si’, la poesia è il reale, il reale assoluto[..], il reale, che dal profondo della realtà del mondo trova la voce giusta per enunciarsi.”[4]

Luzi non si abbandona alla seduzione dalle pratiche simboliste, che volevano annullare la vita nella poesia, illudendosi di creare un suo universo autonomo. Il poetare luziano è più umile, rivelante un grande rispetto e stima verso la vita naturale, convinto dell’assoluto valore mistico di essa. Dal poeta toscano si nota subito, che al primo piano si colloca la vita, il cui suono emette l’arte e non all’opposto. Per cui in “La Creazione Poetica” leggiamo: “Non cercare i modi e le parole che sono poesia<e lo sono illusoriamente, sia chiaro>, ma i modi e le parole che fanno poesia.” (Luzi 1974 : 14) Nella sua vasta opera critica Luzi spesso sottolinea la necessità che l’invenzione

[2] Luzi.M 1938 : 6, *L’Opium Chrètien*, Modena, in op.cit 1981 :11

[3] cosi scrive Luzi.M nel 1974 in *La Vicissitudine e la forma – La Creazione poetica*, Rizzoli, Milano, in op.cit 1981 :7-16

[4] Luzi.M e Cassola.C 1973 : 14 *Poesia e Romanzo*,Rizzoli,Milano, in op.cit 1981 :10

rimanga all'interno della natura stessa, *rimessa al suo movimento e alla sua voce.* La creazione artistica, quindi, deve essere dentro le cose e mai fuori.

Da queste constatazioni nasce la messa in dubbio della distinzione tra chi scrive e la materia trattata, cosi' fortemente radicalizzata da parte dell'Ermetismo. Pur muovendosi all'interno di questa corrente letteraria, avente per principio un totale distacco dal mondo, Luzi cerca, per conto suo, di superare l'opposizione tra l'io scrivente e la realtà circostante. Volendo rendere pienamente la vita nel suo totale, nota ed rifiuta limitazioni derivanti dall'ossessiva concentrazione sul soggetto, tipica di molti ermetici. Nella propria lirica va oltre i conseguimenti dei grandi maestri come Montale o Ungaretti, puntualizzando che nella poesia di questi manca la voce dei feomeni stessi. Gli rimprovera troppa focalizzazione sul soggetto.

Cosicchè, secondo quanto sostenuto dal movimento ermetico di cui fa parte, Luzi rinnega naturalmente qualsiasi esperienza poetica che non trovi origine nella stessa intimità dello scrittore e rifiuta la mimesi della realtà(Manghetti 2000 : 25). Bensi' oltrepassa i pericoli del chiudersi esclusivamente all'interno della sfera dell'io.

Sta di fatto, che abbiamo a che fare con attuazione di una ricerca tenace il cui oggetto diventa sia l'autore che il testo. Luzi costruisce uno spazio, dove, come afferma Pautasso, *il progredire spirituale non è mai dissociato dal problema di fondo cioè dal movimento continuo e variato della creazione.*(1981:7-15) La vita naturale è la creazione continua e questa caratteristica deve anche essere propria della poesia. È nell'atto creativo che si realizza la forza vitale e che si adempie il destino poetico. La creazione, quindi, a fine di se stessa, significa per Luzi un rito mistico, sacrale, essendo rivelazione della somma verità, il percorso ed insieme l'obiettivo dell'intera esistenza. G.Manghetti scrive a proposito:' *Comunque rimarra' sempre presente l'atteggiamento sacrale dello scrittore nei confronti dell'atto poetico, vissuto come momento fondamentale della stessa rivelazione della vita, strettamente conesso al processo creativo del mondo.*(2000 : 15-25) In ogni singola poesia luziana si manifesta, dunque, il soffio vitale momentaneo, indipendentemente da tutto il resto delle sue opera letterarie. In conseguenza, le sue liriche (e pure le raccolte) sono da considerare come separati frammenti di un lavoro più vasto, ma anche come degli insiemi completi, come se nulla fosse scritto prima e nulla dovesse conseguire. Secondo Verdino, il poeta, in ogni atto dello scrivere diventa portavoce della corrente perpetua che ricomincia a parlare proprio in quell'attimo: " *E' evidente che per Luzi ogni poesia sia la poesia, che parla in quell'istante*".(Serraro 1983 : 116)

Riassumendo, siccome Luzi vuole rappresentare la vita come una totalita', immergersi pienamente nel suo grembo e lasciar che la sua voce più vera parli attraverso di lui, siccome vuole arrivare '*al fondo delle cose*' e penetrare l'essenza dell'esistenza, il suo lavoro non puó permettersi nessuna selettivita', nessuna presa di posizione soggettiva. Deve sempre interrogare sulla natura del filo del tessuto e sulla natura della natura ancora. In ogni istante, la sua lirica deve ripartire dallo zero, cominciare e ricominciare a porsi delle stesse domande per arrivare alle risposte nelle scelte poetiche sempre più nuove. Perchè il suo 'io' possa unirsi a quello universale, perchè la sua poesia possa essere equa alla verità e cogliere il ritmo della natura, deve abbracciare l'insieme dei fenomeni, il bianco e il nero del mondo, per non mentire, per non dare falsa testimonianza, come direbbe la sua voce cristiana.

Per cui, l'io poetico nell'opera luziana non giudica niente, *come tutto e tutti, si dissolve e si ritrova nel flusso, è attraversato dalla vita come dalla parola*.(Verdino 1998,p.www) L'evolversi dell'iter luziano si realizza in una costante prova del dialogo tra gli estremi opposti, apparentemente inconciliabili, nella ricerca di un ponte tra: acqua e fuoco, vita e morte, essere e divenire, mutamento ed identità, tempo ed eternità, sicchè questo si dimostra alla base dell'esistenza.

La coppia minima piu' caratteristica del Luzi e' quella dell' acqua e del fuoco, visto che ambedue gli elementi naturali rappresentano perfettamente i due pilastri della sua poetica, cioe' la vita naturale nonche' la metamorfosi. Per quanto riguarda il primo, poesia di questo poeta toscano è permeata del concetto del fluire. Dalle sue composizioni echeggia l'antico 'panta rei' e il suo liquido ritmo naturale trova le radici nell 'elan vital' bergsoniano. L'autore stesso usa il termine 'flusso vitale', che sarebbe l'elemento straponente, equo, ma implacabile, che se ne porta dietro tutto e tutti. Il simbolo della fluidità più pertinente, invece, è quello dell'acqua.

"I brevi anni nel flusso dell'acqua infinita"[5] (1979:21,I vol)scrive Luzi in "Alla primavera", appartente alla sua prima raccolta del '35' intitolata "La barca", "trovando nella *parola flusso* il fulcro di tutta l'azione – afferma G. Manghetti – sembra di poter intendere che la vita, nella sua brevità, scorre allo stesso modo dell'acqua"(2000:43) Vi si può proprio considerare tutta una '*rete immaginativa dell'acqua corrente*'.(Serraro 1983:117) Un mormorio d'acque: i mari, i fiumi e le piogge, ruscelli e fontane, onde e correnti, tutto sgorga, sprizza, gorgoglia, attraversa la terra e l'anima, nell'istinto di mantenere la circolazione vitale.

Luzi ricorre alle metafore acquatiche, a larga scala, fin dall'inizio della sua attività letteraria. Non è casuale che solo la prima raccolta di versi dello scrittore si intitola "La barca". La capacità evocativa di questa parola è più che evidente, rappresenta quello che per il giovane Luzi è l'oggetto del fare poetico cioè '*la vita considerata nel suo incessante fluire*'. Con "La barca", secondo Manghetti, Luzi nasce come l'uomo, scopre se stesso e la realtà che lo circonda ed avverte la necessità di trovare una forma in cui

[5] tutte la citazioni delle poesie di Luzi.M provengono da ' *Tutte le Poesie*' pubblicato nel 1979 da Garzanti, Milano, I volume – *Il Giusto della vita*, II volume – *Nell'opera del mondo*

esprimere la propria dimensione umana. In "La barca" abbiamo a che fare con *"La prima espressione dell'emozione di fronte al primo contatto consapevole con la vita"*. (2000:34)

"Amici ci aspetta una barca"(1979:31 I vol) scrive Luzi in "Alla vita" – la barca, che sarebbe una metafora della condizione umana, rappresentante un mezzo di trasporto, che come il nostro corpo fisico, ci porta verso questa avventura dell'esistere.

Accanto all'acqua, come si e' gia' detto di sopra, nelle liriche luziane imperversa il suo contrario per eccelenza – il fuoco. Mentre l'acqua, per la sua natura, può essere considerata sia ferma che mossa, essendo l'elemento, in tutte le sue manifestazioni, identificabile esclusivamente con se stesso, il fuoco si alimenta di altre sostanze e quindi funziona solamente in movimento. '*Non è tanto l'essere fuoco ad avere importanza, quanto la sua capacità di mutarsi in ogni altro elemento*'(De Crescenzo 1994 : 69)Mentre l'acqua simboleggia la condizione del vivere il fuoco sta alla base delle metamorfosi, constituisce la più elementare ed intrigante forza della trasformazione, agente sia al livello fisico che a quello spirituale. Nella simbolica dei sogni secondo C.G.Jung la presenza del fuoco significa un'incalzante necessità di cambiamento cui bisogna sottoporsi.(Reiss e altri 1995 :87) Clemente Alessandrino nella "Stormata" afferma che il mondo nacque proprio dal fuoco. Parla di un'fuoco vivente', di un fuoco creatore che avesse dato origine alla materia.(De Crescenzo 1994:183) Uno scambio con il fuoco, in conseguenza, si dimostra necessario per far sorgere qualcosa di nuovo, sia nel mondo della fisica che dell'anima. Non è quindi sorprendente, che la raccolta di Luzi del'78[6], la più occupata dal concetto di trasformazione, come disse uno dei maggiori critici del Nostro, Franco Fortini:'*in traccia di qualcosa che di un solo tratto superasse il dualismo*' e creasse '*la integrità*' (Marchi 1998:64), contiene nel titolo l'ardore di questo elemento universale. La silloge, dominata dal polemico carattere dei dialoghi, è piena delle interrogazioni assolute, degli scontri e scambi delle parti, in speranza che da questo 'folgore' possa emergere un'ente novello. Si osserva, dunque, tutto un processo di trasformazione – creazione, della lotta feconda del progresso, il chè viene sottolineato dal lessico 'focoso': "Nè osa più a fondo la mente interrogarsi/ vacilla nella sua dubbia fiamma, lei/ O non è la vita, non è il suo ritmo?" (1979 : 200, II vol); "Cuoce nella sua storia – che può fare d'altro/ brucia nella sua solitaria metamorfosi." (1979 :248, II vol)

Anche la raccolta del'63 è rappresentata dal fuoco, dal fuoco nascosto all'interno della terra, la cui forza non si sente direttamente, ma può rivelarsi all'improvviso sotto forma del magma strapotente, in pochi attimi capace di cambiare il volto del pianeta. E proprio 'Nel magma' si intitola questo volume. 'Nel magma' nasce nell'im-

[6] si tratta di *Al fuoco della controversia* Garzanti, Milano 1979

mediato dopoguerra italiano, quando la condizione del paese e della società infatti assomiglia al paesaggio dopo l'eruzione di un vulcano. Secondo G.Zagarrio, nel caso di 'Nel magma' si può perfino parlare di una discesa lungo questo magma, agli inferni moderni.(Marchi 1998:54) Anche qui abbiamo a che fare con una forte tensione alle aperture dialogiche ed interrogative al riguardo della vita nonchè con la presenza intrinseca della metamorfosi che questa vita produce.

"È un viaggio tentato dentro il magma moderno della materia cosmico – umana (Marchi 1998:54) Prendendo in considerazione il carattere della silloge, l'ampia presenza del fuoco, nell'ambito del vocabolario e, innanzitutto, nello spazio immaginativo-metaforico, appare del tutto indispensabile. Oltre a quella dell'acqua e del fuoco si potrebbe analizzare un elenco di opposti piu' esteso, afferma R.Gagno in un saggio intitolato "Conoscenza per ardore", dato che l'intera opera di M.Luzi si caratterizza dell'intreccio dialettico da essi perseguito, nonchè di una specie di tensione che questi generano.(Serraro 1983:168)

Secondo le antiche concezioni del Manicheismo, diffusesi nel 216-276, nell'Impero Romano e poi anche in Asia, specie in Iran,(Kopaliński 1985 :648) l'universo sarebbe il risultato di un gigantesco conflitto, avvenuto all'inizio dei tempi, tra le truppe del Bene e quelle del Male, il chè implichi che proprio a loro ed alla loro incessante presenza nel mondo dobbiamo la condizione del vivere.

Analogamente, il famoso *panta rei* eraclitiano, inteso come il Divenire, suppone una lotta continua tra gli opposti estrmismi, sempre nemici, senza che uno possa prevalere sull'altro. Cosmos e Caos, Eros e Eris, Vita e Morte, sospesi sempre in contesa come il garante dell'esistenza. La vittoria di uno coinciderebbe irrevocabilmente con la sua sconfitta, visto che Eraclite immaginava la guerra perpetua *non come calamità apportatrice di lutti, ma come una necessità di vita, anzi, come la vita stessa.*(De Crescenzo 1994:67-73)

Similmente, nell'opera di Luzi – come nota Zagarrio (Serraro1983:172) - "c'è lo sgomento di essere insieme il no e il si' dell'esistenza: il no come coscienza critica(ma pietosa) dell'assenza, il si' come volonta' (ma soffocata) della presenza."

La natura non si ferma un attimo, scrive De Crescenzo in"Tutto Scorre", *fluisce di continuo sotto la spinta dei contrasti.*(1994;70)E in base alle stesse leggi viene meticolosamente costruita la poesia di Luzi, la poesia che secondo S.Givone :

> Resta sempre fedele alla sua verità contraddittoria: tutto è pieno degli dei, gli dei ci hanno abbandonato. E sceglie di sostare dove gli opposti possono essere prospettati nel loro quasi insostenibile coesistere.[…] Perfetta sospensione. Apertura di uno spazio in cui la verità sopporta la contraddizione. (Givone,p.www)

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Rafał Wodzyński

Il pianeta letteratura di Italo Calvino - tra il pensiero deconstruttivista e l'idea della letteratura

> "vedere vuol dire percepire delle differenze, e appena le differenze si uniformano nel prevedibile quotidiano lo sguardo scorre su una superficie liscia e senza appigli"(Calvino 1991: 566).
>
> Italo Calvino

Nelle *Lezioni Americane* Italo Calvino dedicando la prima conferenza all'opposizione leggerezza-peso si pone il compito di sostenere le ragioni della leggerezza. Però, aggiunge subito che questo non significa che "lui consideri le ragioni del peso meno valide, ma solo che sulla leggerezza pensa d'aver più cose da dire"(Calvino 1988: 5). Così, già all'inizio ci si accorge che la poetica con cui Calvino inizia la prima conferenza è quella del doppio legame. La leggerezza viene definita soprattutto come sottrazione del peso, il che rimanda alle parole di Friedrich Nietzsche secondo il quale "a volte l'unico modo per attirare l'attenzione del pubblico verso qualche questione sta nel presentarla in una forma di paradosso"(Nietzsche 1910: 310). Calvino seguendo il pensiero decostruttivista distingue diversi valori della letteratura basando non tanto sulle loro essenziali e particolari caratteristiche quanto sulle differenze siccome "nel linguaggio esistono solo differenze senza elementi positivi"(Nycz 2000: 41). Riflettendo sull'opera di Italo Calvino scopriamo che questo scrittore, "nonostante la propria idea della letteratura come strumento di conoscenza, come il punto di partenza per la sua concezione del rapporto tra testo e mondo sceglie il pensiero decostruttivista o derrideano"(Musarra-Schroeder 1996: 68). Il mio scopo principale sarà presentare le tracce del pensiero decostruttivista nell'idea della letteratura di Italo Calvino riferendomi soprattutto alle *Lezioni Americane*. Comincio dalla definizione del decostruttivismo e successivamente cerco di trovarne esempi nel pensiero di Italo Calvino.

Il decostruttivismo nella teoria della letteratura può essere definito come un insieme di idee metodologiche e teoretico-letterarie sull'esistenza, sulla struttura e sulla caratteristica dell'opera letteraria e, in senso largo, su tutti gli oggetti semiotici e tutti i testi di cultura. Il decostruttivismo, elaborato al volgere degli anni sessanta, ha raggiunto una forma matura a cavallo degli anni settanta e ottanta. Il fondamento metodologico e teoretico-letterario del pensiero decostruttivista deriva dai concetti di Jacques Derrida, i quali sono stati adattati alle esigenze della letteratura e sviluppati soprattutto dagli studiosi americani – de Man, Hillis Miller, Hartman, Felman, Johnson – ma anche da altri, tra l'altro, francesi, inglesi, tedeschi e australiani. La denominazione del decostruttivismo trae origine dal concetto filosofico-metodologico della decostruzione, caratterizzata da Derrida (in relazione critica all'idea della "critica dall'interno" di Nietzsche, della "desedimentazione" di Hussler e della "distruzione" di Heidegger) come definizione dell'analisi testuale a due aspetti. Tra gli scopi principali di quest'analisi distinguiamo una presentazione "effettiva" della struttura del testo, tramite la quale si può dimostrare che elementi apparentemente marginali hanno un significato fondamentale e in realtà "dall'interno" guidano le opposizioni (Nycz 2000: 77).

Le *Lezioni Americane* basano sulla struttura dicotomica formulata da Jacques Derrida in cui di due termini opposti (interiore/esteriore, identità/differenza, vita/morte, leggerezza/peso) uno viene sempre considerato superiore e l'altro inferiore e perciò escluso (Derrida 1972: 1-29). Al posto della "présence" Derrida introduce la "différance", concetto che indica la realtà di un movimento dinamico all'interno e fra i termini della dicotomia in quanto ogni termine non possa esistere che grazie a o come effetto dell'altro o in quanto ogni termine possa subire delle suddivisioni interne. Sia l'una che l'altra forma della "différance" sono caratteristiche delle qualità o proposte calviniane.

Il pensiero decostruttivista traspare nell'organizzazione del libro. Anche se "i titoli delle cinque lezioni in un primo momento potrebbero dare l'impressione che si tratti di un tipo di argomentazione tradizionale, in cui di volta in volta una qualità viene presentata come termine positivo, mentre il suo contrario viene concepito come termine negativo, appare chiaramente che Calvino man mano decostruisce un simile modo di pensare per opposizioni"(Musarra-Schroeder 1996: 68). Nel testo incontriamo diversi modelli di contrapposizione: leggerezza/pesantezza, rapidità/indugio, il contrario dell'esattezza – l'indeterminato e l'indefinito, nella quarta lezione la scrittura intensiva ed estensiva sono valori intercambiabili – l'una, inoltre, più che il contrasto, è l'effetto dell'altra – e nella quinta lezione infine molteplicità e perfezione strutturale vengono presentate come qualità complementari (Musarra-Schroeder 1996: 69). Però qui non finisce il fenomeno della dicotomia. Nelle *Lezioni Americane* troviamo tra l'altro "queste elencazioni di temi ossimorici: 1) stile come modello universale *vs* stile come singolarità individuale; 2) il tutto *vs* la parte; 3) gli altri *vs* l'io; 4) disordine *vs* ordine; 5) Mercurio *vs* Vulcano; 6) compatto *vs* fluido"(Asor Rosa 2001: 13).

Per quanto riguarda la prima conferenza vorrei cominciare dal simbolo molto significativo che è stato scelto da Calvino per il nuovo millennio: "l'agile salto improvviso del poeta-filosofo che si solleva sulla pesantezza del mondo dimostrando che la sua gravità contiene il segreto della leggerezza"(Calvino 1988: 13). Calvino ha l'intenzione di mettere in evidenza un'interdipendenza perenne tra la leggerezza e la pesantezza. "L'idea del mondo come costituito d'atomi senza peso ci colpisce perché abbiamo esperienza del peso delle cose; così non potremmo ammirare la leggerezza del linguaggio se non sapessimo ammirare anche il linguaggio dotato di peso"(Calvino 16). Quello ovviamente vale per la letteratura e il linguaggio in cui lo scrittore distingue due vocazioni: "l'una tende a fare del linguaggio un elemento senza peso, che aleggia sopra le cose come una nube, o meglio un pulviscolo sottile, o meglio ancora come un campo d'impulsi magnetici; l'altra tende a comunicare al linguaggio il peso, lo spessore, la concretezza delle cose, dei corpi, delle sensazioni"(Calvino 16). Queste due tendenze sono le due strade aperte da Cavalcanti e Dante. Dante che "quando vuole esprimere leggerezza [...] nessuno sa farlo meglio di lui [...] ma la sua genialità si manifesta nel senso opposto [...] mentre Cavalcanti dissolve la concretezza dell'esperienza tangibile in versi dal ritmo scandito, sillabato, come se il pensiero si staccasse dall'oscurità in rapide scariche elettriche"(Calvino 16-17). Calvino riflettendo sull'opposizione leggerezza – pesantezza mostra gli esempi tramite i quali vuole far notare che sia l'una che l'altra sono valori complementari ed una esiste solo grazie ad altra. Così "il software non potrebbe esercitare i poteri della sua leggerezza se non mediante la pesantezza del hardware"(Calvino 10). La stessa interdipendenza viene evidenziata mediante il rapporto tra Perseo e la Gorgone – dal sangue della Medusa nasce un cavallo alato, Pegaso che "con un colpo di zoccolo sul Monte Elicona fa scaturire la fonte da cui bevono le Muse". Così "la pesantezza della pietra può essere rovesciata nel suo contrario"(Calvino 6-7). Inoltre le opposizioni e le suddivisioni continuano anche nel campo della leggerezza stessa che è "una qualità a due facce: da una parte la sua forza "scattante e tagliente" e dall'altra la sua fragilità"(Musarra-Schroeder 45). Avendo questi due volti opposti diventa una funzione esistenziale della letteratura perché la sua ricerca viene percepita come reazione al peso di vivere.

Nella seconda conferenza, cioè, nella conferenza dedicata alla rapidità viene evidenziato il fatto che ogni valore scelto come tema delle conferenze "non pretende d'escludere il valore contrario – scrive Calvino - come nel mio elogio della leggerezza era implicito il mio rispetto per il peso, così questa apologia della rapidità non pretende di negare i piaceri dell'indugio"(Calvino 45). Calvino definisce la rapidità come "un valore in sé" e aggiunge che "il tempo narrativo può essere ritardante o ciclico o immobile ma in ogni caso il racconto è un operazione sulla durata, un incantesimo che agisce sullo scorrere del tempo, contraendolo o dilatandolo"(Calvino 36). Quello che il più importante nella conferenza sulla rapidità è il tempo oppure, per essere precisi, la sua corsa. Così, come l'esattezza viene presentata come "una battaglia con la lingua" la rapidità potrebbe essere definita soprattutto come "una battaglia contro il tempo". Calvino elenca due modi per ritardare la corsa del tempo, cioè, mediante l'iterazione e la digressione. Alla fine della seconda conferenza Calvino presenta la contrapposizione tra "Mercurio - sintonia, ossia la partecipazione al mondo intorno a noi e Vulcano[1] - focalità, ossia la concentrazione costruttiva che sono "le due funzioni vitali inseparabili e complementari". [...] Mercurio è leggero e aereo abile e agile adattabile e disinvolto invece Vulcano non spazia nei cieli ma si rintana nel fondo dei crateri, chiuso nella sua fucina dove fabbrica instancabilmente oggetti rifiniti in ogni particolare [...] Vulcano contrappone al volo aereo di Mercurio l'andatura discontinua del suo passo claudicante e il battere cadenzato del suo martello"(Calvino 52). Di nuovo ogni tendenza richiede l'altra per esistere – "la concentrazione e la craftmanship di Vulcano sono le condizioni necessarie per scrivere le avventure e le metamorfosi di Mercurio. La mobilità e la salvezza di Mercurio sono le condizioni necessarie perché le fatiche interminabili di Vulcano diventino portatrici di significato"(Calvino 52). Secondo Calvino "il lavoro dello scrittore deve tener conto di tempi diversi: il tempo di Mercurio e il tempo di Vulcano"(Calvino 53).

La terza conferenza è dedicata all'esattezza. Però Calvino sottolinea che il valore dell'esattezza è sostanzialmente condizionato dall'esistenza del contrario. Questa duplicità viene evidenziata tramite il simbolo doppio del "cristallo" e della "fiamma". "Il cristallo con la sua esatta sfaccettatura e la sua capacità di rifrangere la luce è il modello di perfezione che ho sempre tenuto come un emblema [...] cristallo (immagine d'invarianza e di regolarità di strutture specifiche) e la fiamma (immagine di costanza d'una forma globale esteriore, malgrado l'incessante agitazione interna) - due forme di bellezza perfetta, due modi di crescita di tempo, di spesa della materia circostante, due simboli morali, due assoluti, due categorie per classificare fatti e idee e stili e sentimenti"(Calvino 69-70). Quello che per Calvino significa l'esattezza è "non solo alta perfezione strutturale, perfezione che del resto non esclude la complessità sfaccettata ma anche lotta e ricerca all'interno del modello geometrizzante stesso, una ricerca agitata e disperata per almeno una minima padronanza del caos e del caso"(Musarra-Schroeder 51). "L'esattezza e indeterminatezza sono anche i poli tra cui oscillano le confetture filosofico-ironiche di Urlich, nello sterminato e non ter-

[1] Nel *Castello dei destini incrociati* queste due figure mitiche vengono sostituite dalle due figure mitiche San Girolamo e San Giorgio: l'eremita e il cavaliere.

minato romanzo[2] di Robert Musil"(Calvino 63). Invece Leopardi "la confronta con l'indefinito, vago fluttuare delle sensazioni"(Calvino 63). Infine Calvino presenta le due strade per raggiungere l'esattezza tra cui oscilla: "una che si muove in uno spazio mentale d'una razionalità scorporata dove si possono tracciare linee che congiungono punti, proiezioni, forme astratte, vettori di forze, l'altra che si muove in uno spazio gremito di oggetti e cerca di creare un equivalente verbale di questo spazio. Né l'una né l'altra arriveranno alla soddisfazione assoluta"(Calvino 72).

Il valore della visibilità a cui è dedicata la quarta conferenza è per Calvino particolarmente importante perché come sostiene lui stesso "all'origine d'ogni mio racconto c'era un'immagine visuale (un uomo tagliato in due; un ragazzo che s'arrampica su un albero)"(Calvino 88). Calvino spesso si trova tra queste due alternative: "l'immaginazione come strumento di conoscenza o come identificazione con l'anima del mondo"(Calvino 90). Ci sono anche i due tipi di processi immaginativi: "quello che parte dalla parola e arriva all'espressione visiva e quello che parte dall'immagine visiva e arriva all'espressione verbale"(Calvino 83). Lo scrittore descrive il proprio processo creativo come la mediazione fra le due tendenze opposte, che egli cerca di tenere unite dentro un medesimo disegno: "insomma, il mio procedimento vuole unificare la generazione spontanea delle immagini e l'intenzionalità del pensiero discorsivo"(Calvino 103).

Per quanto riguarda la quinta conferenza Calvino vi riflette sulla molteplicità. Vede un esempio di questo valore nel "romanzo contemporaneo" che percepisce come "enciclopedia, come metodo di conoscenza e soprattutto come rete di connessione tra i fatti, tra le persone, tra le cose del mondo; sistema dei sistemi in cui ogni sistema singolo condiziona gli altri e ne è condizionato"(Calvino 103). Uno degli scrittori che Calvino sceglie come esempio è Gadda la cui scrittura viene caratterizzata come "tensione tra esattezza razionale e deformazione frenetica come componenti fondamentali d'ogni processo conoscitivo"(Calvino 106). Calvino usa il termine della rete[3] come metafora della strutturazione del molteplice che significa, secondo lui, questa grande sfida per la letteratura, cioè "il saper tessere insieme i diversi saperi e i diversi codici in una visione plurima, sfaccettata del mondo"(Calvino 110). Anche nella forma di una dicotomia viene presentata la definizione della conoscenza di Robert Musil. Dunque "la conoscenza per Musil è coscienza dell'inconciliabilità di due polarità contrapposte: una che chiama ora esattezza ora matematica ora spirito puro

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[2] si tratta di *Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften (L'uomo senza qualità)*

[3] la metafora della rete ha tutte le qualità del rizoma secondo la descrizione di Umberto Eco (non ha né dentro né fuori). e a sua volta l'espansione infinita di questa rete o rizoma e paragonabile alla semiosi infinita di Peirce.

ora addirittura mentalità militare, e l'altra che chiama ora anima ora irrazionalità ora umanità ora caos"(Calvino 107).

Questi ed altri esempi delle dicotomie sono presenti nelle *Lezioni Americane*, però bisogna aggiungere che Calvino non solo nelle *Lezioni* presenta il suo pensiero tramite le opposizioni. Già nel saggio *Tre correnti del romanzo italiano d'oggi* del 1959 leggiamo "da tutto il mio discorso avrete capito che l'azione mi è sempre piaciuta più dell'immobilità, la volontà più della rassegnazione, l'eccezionalità più della consuetudine"(Calvino 1995: 73). In questa frase staranno al primo posto fra le sue preferenze "i romanzieri dell'appassionata e razionale partecipazione attiva alla Storia, da Stendhal a Hemingway a Malraux"(Calvino 1995: 75). Secondo Alberto Asor Rosa questo non gli impediva già allora di nutrire una predilezione trascinante per Ariosto. Ma questa, che avrebbe potuto apparire ed in parte era espressione di una dicotomia congenita nella *forma mentis* di Calvino ("è evasione il mio amore per l'Ariosto?" si chiedeva lo scrittore) veniva ripresa e sanata da una concezione più libera e più complessa della letteratura e della poesia, che gli consentiva di vivere anche Ariosto quasi fosse un "romanziere dell'appassionata e razionale partecipazione attiva alla storia"(Asor Rosa 2001: 76). Asor Rosa sottolinea qui l'opinione di Calvino sull'Ariosto: "Anche lui [Ariosto], infatti, ci aveva insegnato come l'intelligenza viva anche, e soprattutto, di fantasia, di ironia, d'accuratezza formale, come nessuna di queste doti sia fine a sé stessa ma come esse possano entrare a far parte di una concezione del modo, possano servire a meglio valutare virtù e vizi umani"(Calvino 1995: 75).

La struttura ossimorica è presente in tutta l'opera di Calvino. La letteratura è per lui, al tempo stesso "un fatto esistenziale e un fatto di civiltà, e in ambedue i casi un dato umano irrinunciabile"(Asor Rosa 76). Inoltre nell'opera di Calvino "una fantasia tutta dispiegata e agilissima e una razionalità precisa e metodica, capace di arrivare fino a una visione geometrica e matematizzante del mondo coesistono e s'intrecciano. Mettere insieme Ariosto e Stendhal, Borges e Galilei ha esattamente questo significato"(Asor Rosa 77). Pian piano diventa evidente che in lui "i due mondi sono non distinti ma profondamente compenetrati: sicché si potrebbe parlare, per quanto lo riguarda, così d'un realismo a base fantastica come di una fantasia a base realistica"(Asor Rosa 77). Asor Rosa vede ancora dietro queste due diverse e ben definite tendenze della sua immaginazione letteraria "una scissione più profonda, una compresenza di più piani della visione del mondo che incide sulla sfera esistenziale non meno che su quella ideologica. "Come esempio dà Amerigo (specchio e portavoce trasparentissimo dello scrittore) che" esce definitivamente dalla sfera e dalla fase delle certezze universali per entrare in quella assai più sofferta di un perenne e travagliato problematicismo"(Asor Rosa 77). Allora nella *Giornata di uno scrutatore* "Amerigo è quello che è sempre pronto a comporre gli estremi"(Calvino 1995: 43).

Da una parte, l'opera di Calvino è caratterizzata dall'attrazione verso il vuoto, il nulla, o, se si vuole, l'universo, il cosmo infinito, in cui tutto si perde, dall'altra dal richiamo della praticità, della concretezza, del fare positivo ed alacre:"la vanità del tutto e l'importanza di ogni cosa fatta da ognuno erano contenute tra le mura dello stesso cortile[Cottolegno]"(Asor Rosa 78).

Quella scissione, secondo Alberto Asor Rosa s'allarga fino a diventare incolmabile. Il testo in cui c'è la più alta verifica di questa separazione è *Dall'opaco* del 1971 dove viene presentata "la linea di divisione e la contrapposizione fra luce e ombra, dove l'aprico e l'opaco sono al tempo stesso due forme dell'essere: stanno dentro e stanno fuori, delineano un conflitto fra conscio e inconscio, fra razionalità e fantasia"(Asor Rosa 79). Invece, nel *Castello dei destini incrociati* questa tematica prende la forma più specifica di un conflitto tra "scelta" e "caso". L'infinita variabilità delle opzioni possibili porta a infinite soluzioni possibili, continuando senza sosta a oscillare "tra due poli: il tutto e il nulla." Lo schema ossimorico molto interessante lo troviamo anche in *Palomar* – dicotomia tra l'io e il mondo – "lo scrittore immagina che non ci sia più un soggetto separato dal quale far partire lo sguardo verso il mondo ma un soggetto che è già mondo, che sta nel mondo e può guardarlo solo come parte del mondo"(Calvino 1991: 968-70). E proprio dalla dicotomia io - mondo nasce ....il signor Palomar riscopre anche la strada per conoscere il cosmo attraverso sé stesso perché già sa che "col trovare una pace interiore che doveva cominciare"(Calvino 1991: 973). Anche per quanto riguarda il futuro della letteratura Calvino vede per essa due strade nel duemila: "ricalcare le immagini usate in un nuovo contesto che ne cambi il significato" cosa fanno i postmodernisti "oppure fare il vuoto per ripartire da zero"(Calvino 1988: 95) che è la via scelta da Beckett.

Finalmente va tenuto presente che le dicotomie che sono presenti in tutta l'opera calviniana riflettono anche la personalità di Calvino, la quale "apparentemente luminosa ed uniforme presenta invece una scissione interna evidente e radicale" (Asor Rosa 76). Così in tutta la sua opera si osserva "lo scontro tra la fantasia e razionalità, luce e ombra, conscio e inconscio, scelta e caso e ovviamente le contrapposizioni tra letteratura e realtà, mondo scritto e mondo non scritto, parola e cosa che rimangono sempre centrali" (Musarra-Schroeder 71).

Alla fine vale la pena di riflettere a quale scopo servono queste dicotomie? Una risposta interessante viene proposta da Alberto Asor Rosa che seguendo il pensiero calviniano in cui la sfida per la letteratura è "il saper tessere insieme i diversi codici in una visione plurima, sfaccettata del mondo" vede nella concezione del pensiero calviniano un modo per "tenere insieme, riunire le labbra di quella ferita aperta, che l'essere umano porta con sé e in sé, e che sta al tempo stesso nel cosmo circostante. Tenere insieme due parti dell'essere nel singolo individuo come nei grandi aggregati della civiltà umana"(Asor Rosa 82). Sono d'accordo e posso solo aggiungere che quel compito che Calvino vuole attribuire alla letteratura mi sembra proprio uno di quei "obbiettivi smisurati anche al di là d'ogni possibilità di realizzazione. [...] una di quelle imprese che solo poeti e scrittori si proporranno e che nessun altro osa immaginare". Però solo in queste circostanze "la letteratura continuerà ad avere funzione"(Calvino 1988: 110).

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L'insostenibile pesantezza dell'identità: *Il Doppio Regno* di Paola Capriolo

Il Doppio Regno, il romanzo di Paola Capriolo pubblicato nel 1992, riprende la tematica dell'identità perduta, respinta, rinnegata e, allo stesso tempo, sdoppiata e dunque moltiplicata, visto che rifiutando un'identità bisogna sostituirla con un'altra. L'opera della Capriolo presenta il personaggio principale nel processo di una progressiva decostruzione della memoria accompagnata da un tentativo di ricostruzione dei ricordi il quale viene tralasciato conducendo la protagonista alla costruzione di un'identità del tutto nuova. La protagonista sottopposta alla decostruzione dell'identità si ritrova a un bivio: può invano cercare di ricostruirsi la sua ex - identità oppure sulla base di ciò che è riuscita a ricostruire nonché le esperienze nuove costruirsene un'altra. Già il titolo del romanzo esprime il duplice aspetto del mondo in cui si svolge la storia di 'Cara'[1] presentata da lei stessa in forma di un diario che mescola il passato col presente. La dissociazione della personalità è l'effetto di un avvenimento che troviamo all'inizio del libro. È proprio l'inseguimento della protagonista dall'onda che costituisce il momento soglia per le sue vicende e che comincia la decostruzione della sua identità. L'autrice del diario non ricorda quasi nulla del suo passato prima di quel mattino fatidico quando è uscita per fare una passeggiata che sarebbe dovuta essere un rimedio per la sua insonnia. Camminando all'improvviso ha notato un'onda che divideva l'orizzonte in due parti. La paura e il terrore suscitate nella protagonista dall'onda che ha cominciato ad inseguirla la spingono a fuggire. Quella fuga attraverso la città marina e successivamente attraverso un bosco si conclude per Cara davanti all'entrata di un edificio il quale rimarrà luogo d'azione di tutto il romanzo: un albergo. Come osserva Gillian Ania nel suo articolo dedicato interamente a *Il Doppio Regno* nello stesso termine 'albergo' prescelto[2] da Paola Capriolo troviamo una moltiplicità di significa-

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[1] 'Cara' è l'appellativo con cui viene chiamata dai tre ospiti dell'albergo la protagonista dal nome scordato

ti che sottolinea il suo ruolo non precisamente definito e allo stesso tempo multiplo: i significati moderni quali 'hotel', 'alloggio', 'ospizio', 'rifugio', 'ricovero' e i significati più antichi quali 'casa', 'dimora'(Ania 1999: 134). Quando Cara vi entrerà nulla sarà come prima, il mondo verrà rovesciato e decostruito (o come probabilmente direbbe la stessa protagonista: ordinato e ricostruito). Il varcare la soglia dell'albergo e come entrare dall'altra parte dello specchio dove regna un'altra logica: Cara è come Alice che nell'*Attraverso lo specchio* entra nella Casa dello Specchio e ne deve accettare tutte le regole.[3] Il preciso momento dell'entrare indica la linea della simmetria temporale tra 'il prima' e 'il dopo' nonché il punto nel quale avviene la scissione dell'Io della protagonista. 'Il prima' si riflette nei pochi ricordi di Cara che soffre di amnesia, del resto sono i ricordi degli eventi avvenuti presumibilmente parecchio tempo prima del giorno in cui viene iniziato il diario e che dunque sono 'filtrati' dal soggiorno della protagonista nell'albergo. Perché precisamente il momento dell'entrata costituisce il principio del periodo in cui l'identità di Cara viene rinnegata e al posto di essa ne viene costruita un'altra: quella che coincide con ciò che è l'albergo.

La situazione di Cara cambia velocemente: quella della fuggiasca viene presto sostituita con il ruolo dell'ospite dell'albergo. È la prima delle metamorfosi che subirà Cara. Alla protagonista viene assegnata la camera che costituisce il punto 'X' sulla inesistente pianta dell'albergo cioè il centro dell'edificio. Questa camera costituisce una specie dell'interno all'interno dell'hotel cioè un interno duplice il che esalta ancora la separazione dall'esterno per di più avvertibile per via della mancanza delle finestre. Trovandosi in tali condizioni Cara si sente in un certo senso protetta da tutto ciò che le è successo fuori, ha bisogno di un rifugio dal caos dell'esterno. Un rifugio per ritrovare se stessa. L'albergo pare essere un asilo ideale vista la sua forte opposizione nei confronti del mondo di fuori. In questo posto il tempo pare di essersi fermato. Tale sensazione viene esaltata pure dal fatto che l'orologio della protagonista non funziona più: si è fermato alle due[4] . La protagonista viene in questo modo imprigionata in una specie di nodo temporale il che dà l'impressione al lettore nonché alla protagonista stessa che lei è sempre stata l'ospite dell'albergo. Tale situazione della protagonista

[2] infatti nell'intero libro nei confronti di questo posto non appare mai la parola 'hotel'

[3] si può rischiare di fare un'analogia all'altra opera di Lewis Carroll cioè all'*Alice nel paese delle meraviglie* la quale similmente comincia con un inseguimento però un inseguimento al rovescio in confronto di quello che avviene ne *Il Doppio Regno* visto che nell'opera di Carroll la protagonista varca la soglia di un altro mondo inseguendo (il coniglio bianco) e non fuggendo come succede nel caso di Cara.

[4] dunque in un certo senso la Capriolo è contraddittoria: le due di sicuro non appartengono all'ora mattutina alla quale è cominciata la fuga di Cara... forse è un minuto segnale dell'autrice al lettore che i fatti riportati nel diario non devono essere del tutto credibili? che essi costituiscono solo una maldestra forma della ricostruzione del passato?

fa pensare a quella del personaggio di Jack Torrance del film *Shining* di Stanley Kubrick la cui trama si svolge pure in un hotel desolato. Le parole pronunciate in una delle scene al protagonista: "(...) è lei il custode dell'albergo. È sempre stato lei il custode. Io lo so, perché sono qui da sempre." (Cremonini 1999: 34) sarebbero potute essere pronunciate dal direttore dell'albergo caprioliano alla protagonista se solo si scambiasse la parola 'custode' con la parola 'ospite'. Del resto i punti di convergenza tra l'opera di Kubrick e quella di Capriolo ce ne sono tanti altri, in particolare si distinguono quelli della predilezione per il numero due e per il labirinto, ma è un tema che andrebbe approfondito in un altra analisi. Dunque è il nodo temporale che fa dell'hotel un luogo immutabile. Non vi è nessun contatto con il mondo esterno: i giornali che vengono portati a Cara sono inizialmente quegli antichi, poi quei più recenti però la data dell'incontro con l'onda non viene mai 'raggiunta': la distribuzione della stampa di continuo rotea per incominciare di nuovo con i giornali dalle pagine ingiallite chiudendo ogni prova di ricostruzione dei fatti in un circolo ininterrotto... Il tempo nell'albergo ha il carattere circolare: non vi si può segnare né la fine né l'inizio delle cose. Questa immutabilità esige da chi vi entra di adeguarsi ad essa: così comincia il processo dell'identificazione della protagonista con l'albergo. Il suo sdoppiamento si basa sulla regola della metamorfosi (che è per sé una forma di costruzione): dal momento in cui Cara entra nell'albergo inizia il suo lento cambiamento - il diventare l'albergo - il quale causa il rigetto del suo Io di prima. Alla protagonista viene offerta un'identità nuova, quella dell'hotel, la quale come si vedrà, verrà pienamente accettata da lei. Ma per capire cosa diviene Cara, qual è quel suo 'doppio' con cui si identificherà, occorre capire che cosa è l'albergo.

L'albergo costituisce un'unità omogenea che contrasta con la non-omogeneità della protagonista. È un posto in cui non esistono le opposizioni: non ci sono i contrasti fra i colori neppure una chiara divisione tra giorno e notte e tra le stagioni. Non vi si scorge il passare del tempo: anche i fiori nella camera di Cara vengono cambiati ogni giorno in modo tale da non poter notare che appassiscono cioè da non poter osservare nessun cambiamento che direttamente li riguarda. Tutte le azioni intraprese dai camerieri si ripetono uguali e automatiche. È come se fosse sempre la stessa giornata a ripetersi. Tutti gli oggetti vengono rimessi dai camerieri al loro posto. Presto sarà la stessa Cara a metterli automaticamente in ordine subendo in questo modo il comportamento dei camerieri, assomigliandosi a loro, costruendosi delle nuove abitudini. Niente cambia in questo luogo. Ogni giorno Cara viene svegliata con la stessa domanda fatta dal cameriere: "Il solito, signora?" il che fa diventare i suoi mattini uguali. L'unico elemento a mutare nell'albergo è la protagonista stessa che ogni giorno diventa più la parte dell'hotel: accetta la sua struttura, le sue regole, la sua costruzione e le identifica come proprie. Nell'albergo non ci sono gli specchi. È uno dei segnali al lettore che l'identità del personaggio principale è in pericolo. Se ci fossero, potrebbero in qualche senso difendere l'Io di Cara. All'inizio la protagonista inconsapevolmente esprime voglia di conservare ciò che è suo, ciò che costituisce la parte della sua identità, la vuole ricostruire: tenta di ricordarsi il proprio nome il quale potrebbe darle un senso di appartenenza, ma non ci riesce. Inizialmente sente anche il bisogno di pettinarsi, di cambiarsi. Dopo un po' di tempo considera quei bisogni che sono ormai spariti: "le testimonianze dell'amor proprio di chi si sente ancora parte del genere umano". (1993: 35) Un'altra sindrome della perdita della particolarità costituisce la sua progressiva diminuzione della capacità di scegliere, Cara accetta tutto ciò che le offre l'albergo: quando uno dei camerieri le chiede di scegliere fra i due dolci dalla carta, la protagonista ordina di portarle ambedue.

A poco a poco Cara perde la memoria e con essa le abitudini umane. La protagonista si pone la domanda "perché ricordare?": normalmente i ricordi servono a conservare il proprio Io, a ricostruirlo ma se questo Io ogni giorno diviene qualcos'altro non lo si può mantenere. Per questo Cara scrive il diario: non per ricordare e avere un punto di riferimento ma per avere una prova del fatto che ogni giorno diviene più estranea a sé stessa, per rendersi conto quanto varia la sua personalità per dare una testimonianza della totale decostruzione della sua identità e dunque per potersi defintivamente liberare dal proprio Io di prima che le pesa sì tanto.

> Non è lontano il giorno in cui mi sarò divenuta interamente estranea, e solo da queste pagine potrò apprendere che è esistito un prima, che non sono vissuta sempre qui dentro; ma quanto adesso giudico una testimonianza veridica mi sembrerà forse pura invenzione. (1993: 45)

Scrivendo il suo diario la protagonista riflette sulla veridicità delle proprie parole che secondo lei è impossibile dato il continuo sovrapporsi dei ricordi e le loro reinterprazioni. Constata che per un Io che continuamente cambia è impossibile essere credibili: lei stessa per essere veridica ogni giorno dovrebbe cambiare i suoi scritti nel diario visto che ogni giorno assume un'ottica diversa di quella originaria. Per essere veridica dovrebbe cioe' decostruire cio' che ricostruito per poterlo costruire di nuvo:

> Scrivo di me stessa, ma non sono più colei di cui scrivo, e ciò non avviene soltanto quando tento di registrare le rade memorie della mia vita fuori di qui. (...) forse sarei più onesta e più coraggiosa se anziché con la prima indicassi sempre me stessa con la terza persona. "Io" che inizia questa frase sarà già lei alla fine di essa. (1993: 66-67)

Come si è detto Cara non scrive per aiutare la sua memoria a conservare i ricordi. Lei stessa non sa se è stato l'albergo a farla perdere la memoria oppure è rimasta nell'albergo (visto che nessuno le ha impedito di uscire) per perderla, per fuggire dalla propria identità oppure dalle proprie colpe che potrebbero essere simboleggiate dall'opprimente onda. La fuga dall'onda e il consecutivo oblio costituirebbero dunque una *volontaria* cancellazione della memoria, una lotta con il proprio passato, un'intenzionale distruzione di sé stessa. Questo duplice atteggiamento verso l'hotel (punizione? o compenso?) illustra perfettamente la lacerazione interna del personaggio. Cara non sa se trattare l'albergo (e il conseguente dimenticare se stessa) come il proprio Inferno o Paradiso il che inizialmente la spaventa ma col passare del tempo le diviene sempre più vicino. Se fosse l'inferno, non saprebbe dire quale sarebbe stata la causa del castigo che deve ricevere. Invece per lei è più facile e comprensibile trattare l'albergo come il paradiso, cioè una liberazione da se stessa attraverso il diventare una creatura *migliore*. Cara non vuole uscire dall'albergo, vi si sente al sicuro, non vuole separarsene: la protagonista indugia a trovare l'atrio, e ciò costituisce la prima manifestazione della sua complicità con l'albergo.

La protagonista durante la sua interminabile permanenza nell'albergo subisce una serie delle rievocazioni delle immagini del passato condizionate dalle associazioni suscitate per l'analogia o per il contrasto dai vari oggetti e situazioni. La sua memoria funziona sulla base del montaggio dei ricordi. È come un caleidoscopio nel quale vengono aggiunti sempre nuovi frammenti mentere gli altri vengono perduti ogni volta producendo un insieme diverso e irripetibile. Il caso della memoria di Cara fa pensare al processo di sognare in cui gli elementi che sono delle modificazioni dell'individuo sono in una moltitudine indefinita dunque la varietà delle possibili combinazioni è ugualmente indefinita (Guénon 2003: 61). Cara stessa esprime il doppio dubbio se ricorda sognando oppure se sogna ricordando. Perciò è difficile stabilire qual è il vero passato di Cara, quali elementi di questo *collage* sono i suoi ricordi veri, quali invece appartengono al mondo del sogno o dei libri letti da lei nel passato e quali infine costituiscono una pura invenzione della mente turbata della protagonista. I ricordi vengono a Cara in quanto *luccicanze*[5], scarti della memoria il che porta il lettore a una sorta di spaesamento e disorientamento: tale intervento narrativo accentua la dimensione incerta e sfuggente dei ricordi, rende l'oggetto della visione stessa fluido

[5] Il termine *luccicanza* è l'equivalente italiano della parola inglese *shining* che secondo me è adeguato per definire le visioni del passato in forma dei *flash* che subisce Cara. Nel film il piccolo Danny subisce degli *shining*, delle luccicanze cioè vede le immagini che costituiscono le anticipazioni degli eventi oppure le rievocazioni di ciò che è già accaduto nell'Overlook Hotel (Cremonini 1999: 30, 60, 77)

e comunque misterioso come del resto lo è il passato della protagonista. Primamente Cara tenterà di costruire una specie di ponte mentale fra il mondo di fuori e quello in cui si è ritrovata ma a poco a poco i ricordi cominceranno a venirle automaticamente e lei stessa inizierà a trattarli come appartenenti a un mondo che non esiste più ovvero a un mondo ormai irraggiungibile o forse addirittura irreale. Il sogno svolge una funzione molto importante in tutto il romanzo (forse tutto ciò che è accaduto a Cara è stato soltanto un sogno?). Il sognare costituisce il modo più comune che "consente di identificarsi con altri esseri, senza per questo cessare in alcun modo di essere se stesso" (Guénon 2003: 62). La protagonista de *Il Doppio Regno* nel sogno si identifica con gli esseri che *è stata* allo stesso tempo non cessando di essere ciò che *è* al momento. A parte i sogni che esprimono il passato ci sono pure quelli che riflettono il presente di Cara.

Abbiamo già accennato al fatto che la prima parte del romanzo costituisce un'illustrazione di come la protagonista diviene l'albergo. Quel luogo le offre le possiblità di cambiamento, le quali non vengono rifiutate ma pienamente accettate. L'albergo in un certo senso assorbisce Cara già dagli inizi del suo soggiorno. Vuole che ella ne divenga una parte inseparabile. Tutto ciò che accade alla protagonista nell'hotel è in qualche modo controllato da esso sicché ella se ne renda dipendente. Nei primi giorni i camerieri smontano la porta della sua camera: un'azione che in qualsiasi altro posto sembrerebbe assurda e inaccettabile per la protagonista col passare del tempo diventa qualcosa di ovvio. Non esiste più la barriera che la separava dal resto dell'hotel: è come se la protagonista fosse un organo di quell'organismo senza macchia, un organo che in questo modo comincia a funzionare armonicamente. Dato che in quell'albergo non si compie mai niente la porta della camera di Cara non viene mai rimontata, l'entrata rimane sempre aperta. Lo stesso vale per la visita del parucchiere. Egli fa alla protagonista un taglio maschile, quasi da cameriere, un taglio maschile irreversibile dato che i capelli non ricresceranno mai. È uno dei primi sintomi della vacillazione del sesso della protagonista che è collegato alla sua identificazione con l'albergo. La sua femminilità viene rinnegata in quanto una delle caratteristiche appartenenti alla sua identità di prima. La visita del parucchiere è uno dei pochi momenti nell'intero romanzo in cui la protagonista ha il contatto con il suo riflesso speculare e può accorgersi della propria metamorfosi esterna provocata da quell'interna che progredisce. Un altro passo che fa Cara per sbarazzarsi della sua personalità è quello di dare il suo vestito alla tintoria. In cambio la protagonista riceve una divisa da cameriere che del tutto cancella i suoi tratti femminili. Conformemente alla regola che nell'albergo non vi si compie mai nulla il suo abito non le sarà mai restituito. Quanto si perde non viene mai ritrovato in questo luogo *extra tempus*. Da questo momento esternamente Cara non si differenzia più dai camerieri dell'hotel.

Ma il cambiamento esteriore deve essere accompagato ancora dal cambiamento interiore e solo allora l'identificazione di Cara con l'albergo sarà compiuta (è un'unica azione all'interno dell'hotel destinata a compiersi). La prima impressione che subisce la protagonista sulla nuova se stessa è quella di una certa incompatibilità: non è ancora una dei camerieri anche se lo sembra essere esternamente poiché conserva ancora qualche caratteristica della persona che era nel passato, un'impronta personale, qualche relitto di individualità tipica per il genere umano, sul punto di dissolversi. Il sentimento di incongruenza del vestito produce il contrasto fra la protagonista e la sua divisa, come se ella fosse travestita da qualcun altro. Nel momento in cui si mette la divisa Cara assume le caratteristiche di un personaggio sdoppiato: non è ancora una di loro ma allo stesso non è più se stessa, si trova in un certo senso nello stadio di crisalide avendo i tratti sia quei rudimentali della larva che quei preliminari della forma matura. La protagonista osserva con fascinazione quel "procedere graduale di un'intima metamorfosi" (1993: 72). I suoi ricordi si dileguono sempre di più. Lei stessa cessa di capire la distinzione tra uomo e donna, sottomettendosi in questo modo alla regola di assessualità che regna nell'albergo. Le parole perdono per lei i loro significati: anche se ricorda di esser stata una donna non ricorda più cosa vuol dire essere una donna, questo termine per lei non porta più nessuna informazione. Perdendo i tratti femminili comincia a parlare come se non fosse più una donna: "vorrei che mi accettassero come *uno* di loro" [sottolineatura mia: K.S.] (1993: 73). Il suo desiderio si compie: i camerieri la invitano a prendere parte nelle loro partite di carte nei quali non esistono i contrasti come vincere - perdere, non esiste la rivalità, le partite si svolgono sempre uguali, secondo un ordine incomprensibile ma per Cara ormai automatico. Durante il gioco la protagonista imita i gesti degli altri camerieri, impara ad essere una di loro, a costituirne un rispecchiamento.

Un ruolo molto importante nel processo di identificazione di Cara con l'albergo svolge il motivo musicale che ogni notte raggiunge gli orecchi della protagonista. È un tema pastorale modellato dal flauto del direttore, come una notte scopre Cara. I camerieri si radunano nella sala del bar per partecipare a questo concerto che assume il carattere quasi di un mistero. Questi incontri ritornano ossessivamente notte dopo notte, la musica del flauto echeggia nella mente di Cara a volte per intere giornate e ogni sera la conduce di nuovo al bar. La protagonista si pone la duplice domanda: se è questa musica a evocare le immagini dalla sua memoria oppure è la melodia del flauto a scaturire quelle immagini che appaiono nella sua visione che si ripete all'infinito. Col passare del tempo Cara comincia a credere che i continui concerti notturni costituscono un approfondimento della melodia: è un'altra sindrome della sua assunzione dell'ottica dell'albergo. Cara trova nella musica ciò che l'albergo vuole che ella vi trovi. Il motivo del flauto fa pensare a una specie dell'adattamento del mito di Orfeo e

Euridice: la protagonista assume il ruolo di Euridice che 'Orfeo – albergo' per mezzo della musica di flauto vuole portare fuori dal suo inferno, che qui sarebbe l'inferno dell'ex – Io. Quando per la prima volta si siede nel cerchio, quello più interno, per la prima volta si sente davvero *una* o anzi *uno di loro*. Per la prima volta pensa "noi" nei confronti degli altri camerieri e di se stessa, è veramente lieta di aver finalmente abbandonato quell'Io che le pesava così tanto. La sua memoria individuale si dissolve e viene sostituita dalla memoria collettiva dell'hotel. La protagonista non sta più in opposizione al carattere corale dell'albergo ma vi si insinua non senza l'assenso e consecutiva approvazione dalla parte dell'hotel. Cara sostiene di non amare quegli uomini, i camerieri, il direttore per amarli sarebbe dovuta essere un'Io, un'individuo e ora vede che non lo è più. Non si riconosce nei sentimenti quali affetto, amore, attaccamento. Perdendo la propria identità ha perso pure la capacità di sentire visto che il sentire appartiene al mondo umano. La protagonista tralascia se stessa e comincia a far parte di questa moltiplicità di esseri, di camerieri dell'albergo. Tuttavia quando dalla parte del direttore le viene offerto il flauto non lo accetta, si spaventa (di una tale responsabilità?) e scappa il che significa che la sua metamorfosi non è ancora compiuta. Il processo del diventare l'albergo si può illustrare con una parafrasi del titolo pirandelliano: *l'Albergo, nessuno e centomila*. All'inizio la protagonista rinunciando alla propria identità ha raggiunto il primo stadio di *nessuno* visto che il suo ex - Io ha cessato di esistere e non si è ancora formato un Io che lo avrebbe potuto sostituire. Tramite la divisa, il taglio di capelli e accesso volontario al cerchio dei camerieri Cara è arrivata allo stadio di *centomila* dato che ha cominciato a far parte di quell'organismo multiplo di *centomila* camerieri. Ma rigettando l'offerta del direttore di prendere il flauto ha dimostrato di non ancora aver raggiunto l'ultimo stadio della sua metamorfosi: quello dell'*Albergo* cioè lo stadio di una totale identificazione con esso e l'assunzione di tutto ciò che l'abergo *è*. Per poter pienamente identificarsi con quel suo doppio complementare, per arrivare alla conclusione della propria metamorfosi la protagonista dovrà sostenere un'ultima prova. La prova della fedeltà all'albergo.

La prima parte del romanzo costituisce una specie di illustrazione di ciò che diviene la protagonista invece la seconda ne costituisce una verifica. Ciò che è stato costruito deve rivelarsi solido. E lo è. Cara resiste alla tentazione di lasciare l'albergo la quale avviene con lo sconvolgente arrivo e la seguente drammatica partenza dei tre ospiti nel secondo capitolo. Gli ospiti partono e tutto pare tornare allo stato di prima. Ogni dubbio della protagonista sulla sua decisione di restare viene dissipato quando al termine del romanzo nel giardino dell'albergo ella vede il gatto tigrato che credeva appartenesse al mondo dei suoi ricordi o sogni. Allora la protagonista constata che se nell'albergo c'è quel gatto (il quale non aveva visto mai prima all'interno dell'hotel) ci deve pure essere *tutto cio*' che lei considerava appartenente al mondo di fuori.

Perché *tutto ciò* fa parte dell'albergo, sempre l'ha fatta, perché fa parte di Cara che ora è diventata *l'Albergo*, che ha raggiunto l'ultimo stadio del proprio sviluppo. La sua metamorfosi è compiuta. Il processo della sua nuova costruzione basato sull'identificazione con l'albergo si è concluso. La protagonista si identifica pienamente con il suo doppio, con il suo complemento che ora ne fa una parte inseparabile. La sera durante il concerto accetta il flauto dalle mani del direttore e comincia a suonare perché ora è lei a dirigere visto che ha sostenuto la prova della fedeltà all'albergo. Cara è *l'albergo* e la sua volontà è quella *dell'albergo*. La protagonista ne è pienamente consapevole perché nella sua lettera destinata a Guido, uno dei tre ospiti scrive: "io, caro Signore, non sono nulla, o *se sono qualcosa sono l'albergo*. [sottolineatura mia: K.S.]" (1993: 168). Come ammette la stessa autrice nell'intervista con Gillian Ania quello che avviene a Cara è una specie di doppio movimento. La graduale spogliazione dall'identità della protagonista trova qui il suo finale ma il percorso di quella spogliazione è stato accompagnato dalla crescente creazione di un'identità nuova (Ania 1999: 312): quella che coincide con ciò che è l'albergo.

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