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The Bear in the Bush

O Urso no Arbusto

Aimara da Cunha Resende*

Summary

This study discusses the different use of duplication in the structuring of ideological stances in A Midsummer Night's Dream. Linear duplication reinforced by classical motives and techniques forms the delimitation characteristic of Renaissance art while voicing the ideals of the status quo. On the other hand, not seldom simultaneously, a complex play of mirrors brings about the effusion and blurred contours of Baroque art and ironically destroys the established artistic and social ideals of the time, introducing doubt and a sense of relativity.

Resumo

Este estudo discute o uso diferenciado da duplicação no processo de construção de Sonho de uma Noite de Verão. A duplicação linear, reforçada por motivos e técnicas clássicas, forma a delimitação característica da arte renascentista enquanto expressa os ideais do status quo. Por outro lado, e não raro, um complexo jogo de espelhos leva à efusão e aos contornos indistintos da arte barroca, destruindo ironicamente os ideais artísticos e sociais vigentes, introduzindo a dúvida e a relatividade.

Renaissance art is characterized by a strong tendency to clear countours, definite ideals of balance

and propriety, classical motives. The Baroque, in its opposition to the Renaissance and in its search for expansion and infinitude, is built up through lack of delineation, doubt, complexity. As a result of these opposed tendencies the duplication structuring them is one of linear mirroring in the case of the Renaissance; and of complex mirrors in Baroque works of literature. In his play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* William Shakespeare makes use of both kinds of specularity so that the certainty and stability of the establishment is shaken and ironically destroyed at the deep level of the text while on the superficial level there is an appearance of idealized values both social and artistic.

In the *Midsummer Night's Dream* one has a comedy based on classical motives such as love hindered by a father's antagonism, crossed pairs of lovers, misunderstanding and misplaced interference, partial disguise, of the sort of Bottom's asses' head.¹ At the very beginning the reader/audience is presented with the characterization of Theseus – the representative of the ideals of the time – as a man utterly aware of the human condition and consequently very much linked to the earth. To him doubtless man had better live the **present moment** (and here one has an obvious Renaissance motive) than experience the beatitude of spiritual existence. He is also the man aware of the facts of this world, to whom only feason counts, and whose judgement cannot be directed by fantasy or dreaming. It is the sensible mind that speaks through him. When Hippolyta comments on the strangeness of the young lover's report he replies: "More strange than true. I never may believe/

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These antique fables, nor these fairy toys." (v. i. 3-4).

As a counterpart to the classical ruler embodied by Theseus, one has the rustics. Crude mechanicals, they are unable to grasp what is beyond the appearance of truth and consequently the play they are going to present before the nobility needs all warrant of reaffirmations. They cannot apprehend the dream-world of the theatre and so they feel the utter need for explanations concerning the duplicity of their roles. Reality is an imperative for them; and their reality is, above all, their delineated being, having a definitive place and time to exist. They must be ensured of this concreteness by the insertion of their identity in the language of the play or by detailed information concerning their characterization. They must be sure of not being mistaken for someone or some beast they really are not:

Bottom: Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I, Pyramus, am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver.

(III i. 18-23)

Bottom: Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck: and he himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect, "Ladies", or, "Fair ladies", 'I would wish you', or, 'I would entreat you, not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life: no, I am no such thing: I am a man as other men are; and there indeed let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner.

(III. I. 31-48)

And they go on with their preparations making sure that every little device does embody reality. In their little clear-cut world so intensely contrasted with Oberon's and Titania's fairyland! – every detail has to conform with the place assigned for it; no imagination is allowed. Very often expressions such as 'pat', 'my life for

yours', 'it were pity on my life', 'the truth is so', 'in truth' body forth the actuality they endeavour to establish during the prologue and in the replies of the actors to the interfering audience of the 'play within the play'.

Of all these rustics Bottom is the one who most deeply embodies Theseus's counterpart. Mirroring the amateur actors of that time who thought of themselves as excellent performers, able to play any part, Bottom cannot flutter above Theseus's earthly kingdom and so depends entirely on truth, discharging even the possibility of a dream being told. From the very beginning he is a 'man of evidences' and as such unable to appreciate the subtle opportunities offered him by enamoured Titania. In the scene in the woods, when she introduces her elves to him, the earthliness with which he talks to them makes the reader/audience instantly change from the paradisiac dream-world to his prosaic universe. Just observe the opposition, brought forth by language, between the scenes when Puck meets a fairy and when Titania goes to sleep, on the one hand, and that with Bottom among the fairies, on the other. The environment is the same but the feeling transmitted is radically changed. In the first scenes mentioned, where the whole pattern is a Renaissance one, there is a touch of suave beauty, like a miniature by Nicholas Hilliard. The suggestion of the enchanted land is created by means of the rhythm, of antithesis, of enumeration – all Renaissance techniques. There is clear delineation of each element and one is aware of a composition where every image accords with the others, in some sort of complementation; in act II, scene 1 the fairy describes the fairyland both to Puck and, obviously, to the reader/audience:

Puck: How now, spirit! Whither wander you?

Fairy: Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander every where,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green:
The cowslips tall her pensioners be;
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In their freckles live their savours:
I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
(II. I. 1-15)

The balance achieved in the fairy's speech is based on antithetical images: hill-dale; bush-brier; park-pale; flood-fire; on some alliteration, such as park-pale; flood-fire; bush-brier; swifter-moon's-sphere; must-see-some-drops; one repetition: thorough; and mainly on the rhythm, marked but not tiresome, due to a gradual variation which takes place as the idea is developed from the suggestion of the elf's errands, in the beginning, bringing forth the connotation of his hopping movement. The rhythm conveying this movement is brought about by amphimacer dimeters which make up the first four lines and first half of the fifth, when it changes to iambic feet of which the following lines are composed in tetrameters, except for the beginning of the sixth, seventh and eleventh lines, where a trochee introduces the ideas of comparison to the movement of the moon, statements of the elf's function and the jewel-like present of the fairies. This melodious speech has no enjambment, which accounts for the clearly marked rhythm. In this balanced indirect description of Titania's Nature Kingdom, where England's countryside is depicted, one has the environment functioning not as some confuse interpenetration of the human and fairy worlds, of the kind found in Baroque pictures, but only as the background where human and supernatural beings move and

are juxtaposed in their parallel but separate worlds.

The second Renaissance scene to be considered is the one just before and during the time when Titania is lulled by the fairies, in act II, scene 2:

Titania: Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;
Then, for the third of a minute, hence;
Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds,
Some war with rere-mice for their leathern wings,
To make my small elves coats, and some keep back
The clamorous owl, that nightly hoots, and wonders
At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;
Then to your offices, and let me rest.
(the fairies sing)

I

You spotted snakes with double tongue,
Thorny hedge-hogs, be not seen;
Newts, and blind-worms, do no wrong;
Come not near our fairy queen.
Philomel, with melody,
Sing in our sweet lullaby
Lulla, lulla, lullaby; lulla lulla, lullaby:
Never harm,
Nor spell, nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh;
So good night with lullaby.

II

Weaving spiders come not here;
Hence, you long legg'd spinners, hence!
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm nor snail, do no offence.
Philomel, with melody & c.

(II. II. 1-24)

Once again alliteration, chiefly of sibillant sounds, creates an atmosphere of peace and drowsiness: some-cankers-musk-rose-buds; war-rere-their-leathern; small-elves-coats-some-spirits-sing-asleep-of-fices-rest-spotted-snakes; hedge-hogs; long-legged; beetles-beach. Besides alliteration, repetition lulls one into a doze: Some-some; Hence-hence; this is reinforced by the refrain, another sort of repetition. Once again most of the stanzas are formed of end-stopped lines, thus delineating the images created at the same time that

rhythm is fixedly marked. Iambic pentameters make up the largest part of the stanzas; only when a new idea is introduced is the foot changed. Thus, in the second line, one has a dactylic trimeter encompassing Titania's dismissal of her servants; the third line, which opens the listing of their appointed tasks, begins with a trochee, to go on in iambic pentameters. When the fairy queen stops enumerating her vassal's offices and orders them to lull her, the iamb gives room to a trochaic trimeter. As a matter of fact on a first reading of this line the Latin scansion would detect an iamb. It happens that due to the peculiar stresses of the English language the words 'Sing me now asleep' correspond to a trochaic foot, not an iamb. In the song there is extense variation of feet, which creates a lively rhythm, suitable to the light creatures that sing it at the same time that it reflects the multiple beings it is addressed to. The device of the song, at this point, is a good way of bringing forth the 'essences' of Titania's natural kingdom.

If one compares these two previous scenes with those in the same environment, where Bottom is present, one notices an abrupt change of atmosphere, as if the human earthly being were here to destroy the flimsy background then existing. The unimaginative man, unable to grasp the meaning of beauty, can only see in nature and its bounty the practicality at hand. In act II, scene 1 and act IV, scene 1, the fairies' world is changed into mere tools to satisfy Bottom's material wishes. When Titania orders her elves to bring him the exquisite fruit of the forest, Bottom, the realist who states that 'to say the truth reason and love keep little company together now-a-days' does not want the delicious meal offered him, but declares that he would prefer:

... a peck of provender: I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks I have a good

desire to a bootle of hay: good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

(IV. I. 42-3)

Titania evokes around her the classical atmosphere of a Boticelli canvas, while Bottom's gross materialism pulls one back to earth.

It is also only in the rustics' play that language appears in verse form. Here Shakespeare plunges into derision of the rules of Renaissance poetics by ironically recreating, in accordance with the alleged rules, the sort of poetry which would not stand criticism if brought into focus, not as the product of a rude, almost illiterate workman-writer, but as art for art's sake. Quince cannot create poetry though he obeys the established norms of repetition, alliteration, explanation, marked rhythm, simile, personification. Despite that subservience, his incapability to "turn to sha-pe" "things unknown" makes him a writer who had better disappear, as Theseus remarks:

If he that writ it had played Pyramus, and hanged himself
in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy.

(v. I. 366-8)

Concerning the rustic's language, the very bush where a bear seems to be hidden, though on the superficial level it reflects the unpolished and incorrect utterance of rude people, at a deeper one it leads the reader/audience to the criticism of attitudes reflecting feelings characteristic of Shakespeare's time, ideologically conditioned to accept certain established values. The fact that they so often misuse words, as if in a slip of the tongue, makes one suspicious of so-me unconscious need or emotion repressed long ago and through some catexis able to emerge, though disguised.² Close analysis will show these slips of the tongue disguised among some real errors. But the disguise cannot prevent the discovery that the thoughts misrepresented

through those "joking" exchanges are nothing but the Poet's glimpses of another truth, not the one searched for by the Renaissance Theseus/rustics, but the truth behind the mask, some repressed feeling concerning either social values and 'status quo' or sexual yearnings. It is not merely the language of the uncultured. There is something behind such expressions as:

a) **Bot.:** We will meet; and there we may rehearse more *obscenely* and courageously. (I. ii. 111-12)

b) **Bot.:** and he himself (the lion) must speak through, saying thus, or to the same *defect*... (III. i, 40-41)

c) **Quin.:** Ay, or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lantern, and say he comes to *disfigure*, or to present the person of Moonshine. (III. i, 63-66)

d) **Quin.:** and he is a very *paramour* for a sweet voice. (IV. ii, 12-13)

(my italics)

In quotes a) and d) the sexual connotation is clear; at a moment before the nuptial night it is very likely that many minds would be concerned with the expected "finale" of the wedding rites and thus the words emerging inadequately from the rustic's unconscious, merely reflect the general thoughts of both audiences, the one of the 'play within the play' and the one of A Midsummer Night's Dream.

In the other two instances the repressed feeling is not erotic, but critical – literary, a sort of malapropism. Here the Poet thrusts a dagger into the established norms of the Renaissance. As a matter of fact what there is in the play is a farce, which "desfigures" art to the "defect" of a badly written work.

Another very subtle use of distortion is to be found in the 'play within the play', in the scene of the exchange of loving oaths between Pyramus and Thisbe. Here the great symbol of everlasting love – Pyramus and Thisbe – is made fun of,

following the track of linear reflections provided by the deep level. The reversed image is to come out suddenly, veering from the linear to the unexpected complex play of mirrors, typical of the Baroque, in the Helen symbol and through a slip of the tongue. Pyramus and Thisbe, through the mouth of the ignorant Bottom and Flute, present a series of duplications of true love: Pyramus/Thisbe; Leander/Hero; Cephalus/Procris. Their names are somewhat distorted, just as their symbolism is reverted. So far, the same kind of Renaissance linear reflexivity is found. Nevertheless the synthesis of the incongruous ideal of everlasting love seems to spring up in the Baroque manner in the language they use. The Renaissance attitude expressed in the Pyramus/Thisbe dialogue is the certainty of their true love:

This.: My love! Thou art my love, I think.

Pry.: Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace.

(V. i, 198-9)

and it is then elaborated through the repetition – characteristic of classical equilibrium – of other mythological symbols: Hero and Leander, Cefalus and Procris. The distorted names are easily accepted as mispronunciation due to the speakers' ignorance. But before the exchange of their oaths, something takes place subtly – the presentation, in language, of the disturbance and bewilderment implicit in the Baroque attitude, by means of misplaced sensations: "Pyr.: I see a voice: now will I to the chink,/ To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face." (V. i, 195-6): This misuse of language may be thought to have its origin in the actor's lack of knowledge and, obviously, considered a device to achieve comic effects. So far, acceptable. But as one goes on critically detaching these mispronunciations one gets to a point when the cause for the confusion is obvious – it will spring up in the very

central symbolism of Hero/Helen. Hero is the model consciously chosen as duplication of true love. She was so faithful to Leander that she killed herself after his death. But in a slip of the tongue, Pyramus/Bottom calls her Helen, the symbol of sensuality, of feminine frailty. The change, here, is quite to the point since it cannot be linguistically explained, as is Limander for Leander; this mistake comes out of ignorant distortion by way of addition; or Shafalus for Cephalus, and Procris for Procris, also explained through the similarity in the position of the mouth during the production of these sounds. But the nearly total modification of Helen for Hero has no possible explanation on linguistic grounds. Only a slip of the tongue can be responsible for it. Shakespeare's belief that love is not everlasting comes out skillfully mixed in the distorted symbolism. This is a Baroque moment, as it has no clear delineation, no step by step elaboration such as is found in the 'myse en abyme' of the sequence of mythological true lovers. It confronts one in the reversed verb sensation of the beginning and achieves its full disturbed synthesis in the implications conveyed by the Helen myth.

Another example of Shakespeare's stance running counter to the Renaissance canons comes to light in Thisbe's speech when she sees Pyramus dead:

This.: Asleep, my love?

O Pyramys, arise!

Speak, speak! Quite dumb?

Dead, dead! A tomb

Must cover thy sweet eyes.

These lily lips,

This cherry nose,

These yellow cowslip cheeks,

Are gone, are gone:

Lovers, make moan!

His eyes were green as leeks.

O Sisters Three,

Come, come to me,

With hands as pale as milk;

Lay them in gore,

Since you have shore

With shears his thread of silk.

Tongue, not a word:
Come, trusty sword:
Come, blade, my breast imbrue:

(stabs herself)
(V. 1, 332-353)

Among the repetitions and alliterations that due to misrepresentation and hyperbolic expression of distress lead one to a mocking vision of the established norms, there appears Shakespeare's attitude towards classical impositions: the wrongly applied description of the beloved. One has only to compare it to any literary composition after Petrarch to see the ridicule of the imagery here presented in reverse: lips are not cherry, but lily; marble-like nose becomes cherry and lovely rose cheeks are now yellow cowslip. To complete the ironical portrait nothing better than leeks to stand as symbolical of his eyes. The marked rhythm is broken when an interjection appears; and the passage is full of interjections. Shakespeare's criticism of contemporary writers is thus clear.

A play absorbed in the ideology of its time, the *Midsummer Night's Dream* tends towards the use of Renaissance structure as well as the motives and techniques then considered important. The main Renaissance motives here found are:

- a) The realistic man either sensible and intellectualized – and as a consequence upholding the status quo, embodied in Theseus; or the earthy man, gross and ignorant, whose characteristic stance is drawn through Bottom and his companions;
- b) Love seen as immature experience. Theseus's love for Hippolyta is utterly different from that felt by the young people. It is mature and lacks beauty, looking more like some necessary compromise while theirs, full of romanticism, stands out as being unflinching and so easily changeable.
- c) Clearly exposed feeling; the young lovers' feelings are seen through their expressions.
- d) Ideal Platonic/Petrarchan feminine beauty, chiefly symbolized in Helena.

Idealization of sentimental experience, mainly presented through Titania's love for ass-headed Bottom.

e) Search for stability, which permeates the whole play by means of the attempt to support the status quo, represented by Theseus and wedlock.

f) Man – in all cases, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream* seen as easily analyzed, presenting no riddle. One can predict what is to become of all characters.

g) More importantly: the present time embodied in the May nights, chiefly the midsummer night.

h) Use of pastoral images twice inside two eclogues to be studied further on.

The Baroque elements in this play do not appear so massively as the Renaissance ones do. These are found as part of the presentation of the identity of the characters and also of the society the comedy is written for. But the Baroque clash of emotions, the lack of delineation, the obscurity of ideals are conveyed through language, and more extensively, in five moments; the *Pyramus-Thisbe* play, already considered here, Titania's speech on the disturbance of the seasons, Hippolyta's words about the impact of hunting dogs in Crete, Helena's speech evocative of hers and Hermia's childhood and in Theseus's speech on the poets, madmen and lovers. If these are confronted with three other speeches, which resemble eclogues, the two kinds of duplication can be seen.

The eclogues, written at their beginning after the Arcadian manner, are structured around the Renaissance principles of balance, repetition and opposition. When Hermia and Lysander are left alone after her being given some time to decide between Demetrius and the convent, they lament over the predicament of true love. Their dialogue sounds classical, at first, with antithetical ideas: high x low, old x young; and with balanced rhythm, in end-stopped lines:

Lys.: Ay me! for aught that ever I could read,

Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth;

But, either it was different in blood, –
Her.: O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low.

Lys.: Or else misgraffed in respect of years, –

Her.: O spite! too old to be engaged to young.

Lys.: Or else it stood upon the choice of friends, –

Her.: O hell! to chose love by another's eye.

Lys.: Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,

War, death or sickness did lay siege to it,
Making it momentary as a sound,

Swift as a shadow, short as any dream,
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,

That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,

And ere a man hath power to say,
'Behold!'

The jaws of darkness do devour it up:
So quick bright things come to confusion.

(I. 1, 132-149)

Shakespeare's idea of true love, as presented through Lysander, is at first one of something 'momentary' as lightning in the darkness. But the way he puts it follows the Renaissance decorum. The reasons why 'true love never did run smooth' are given, step by step: it cannot be fulfilled because there is a difference in social status, or in age, or because relatives won't accept the match. If nothing like that occurs, then some outer force will come in its way – death, war, sickness. Hermia's interference comes in just to corroborate what Lysander says and to add a 'crescendo' to the misfortunes presented: 'O cross!'; 'O hell!'. The 'crescendo', a Baroque technique, insinuates itself among the Renaissance threads and reinforces the motive of impossible, suffering love. After the balanced collocation and subtle interpolation of the 'crescendo' there is a clash of emotion and thought when the Baroque synthesis makes its appearance – the image of night devouring up lightning; the idea of the swift passing by of love. The symbolism of the lightning (power and utmost creative element,

uniting heaven and earth) conveys the idea of a return to the womb, possibly the only situation in which happiness can be achieved.³ Though here, too, alliteration appears, it is only once: 'Swift as a shadow, short as'; and it is skillfully used to reinforce the achievement of sensation of movement created by the short sounding words in the lines: 'war, death... night', which come after slowly flowing verses and followed by long sounding and nasal words such as appear in the line: 'That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth'. The nasalization helps to convey the impression of heaviness.

Another moment to be considered, this time a Renaissance one, the talk between Hermia and Helena, brings forth once more some characteristic elements of pastoral eclogues: the contrasted predicaments creating balance, the clearly marked rhythm (iambic), the pastoral images surrounding idyllic love. The girls' feelings are presented in the Renaissance style of classical pastoral ideals:

Hel.: Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.

Demetrius loves you fair: O happy fair! Your eyes are lode-stars! and your tongue's sweet air

More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear;

When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.

Sickness is catching: O were favour so, Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go; My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,

My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.

Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,

The rest I'd give to be to you translated. O! teach me how you look, and with what art

You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

Her.: I frown upon him yet he loves me still.

Hel.: O! that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill.

Her.: I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

Hel.: O! that my prayers could such affection move.

Her.: The more I hate, the more he follows me.

Hel.: The more I love, the more he hateth me.

Her.: His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

Hel.: None but your beauty; would that fault were mine!

(I. I, 181-201)

The classical construction goes from the pastoral images – lode-star, shepherd; green wheat, hawthorn buds – to repetitions – eye... eye; tongue... tongue. Then it moves on to the balanced oppositions – frown x smile; curse x love; love x hate. In the evolution of these balanced rhetorical statements, one element marks the passage in Helena's mood from despondency to decision (the decision here hinted at which will later on be the catalyst in the development of the plot of criss-cross lovers). She shows how ready she is to do anything capable of abating Demetrius's resistance to her love. This moment of transformation in her mood is marked by a change in rhythm; a trochee suddenly thwarts the iambic lines: 'Sickness is catching: O were favour so,/Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go'.

This dialogue is loaded with the established elements of Renaissance poetics. One doesn't find in it any device conducive to doubt, disturbance, unbalanced positioning. Helena's suffering is the classical suffering of 'star-crossed lovers'. In her features the conventional romantic lover is present (pale, tall, unendingly doting upon an emotionally disinterested man). In her suffering and in its contrast to Hermia's fortune lies the motif of the speech – love as it is ideally seen by those watching the play. Such love, as it is going to be developed in the structure of the *Midsummer Night's Dream* is the one fitting the ideology of the audience it is addressed to; it must then be presented by means of the

accepted conventional poetics. In the duplication here found Hermia is the mirror reflecting Helena's wishes as well as the values of Shakespeare's society.

This sort of linear duplication is repeated in act I, scene 2, in the dialogue between Demetrius and Helena, in the woods. Using the same devices of contrast and repetition, including the antithetical images of the reversed hunting when 'cowardice pursues and valour flies' – Daphne x Apollo; dove x griffin; hind x tiger; cowardice x valour, Demetrius's speech reproduces unloved Helena's verbal construct.

From the suggestion of incongruity in the idea of human love's everlasting essence as is reiterated throughout the play by variously constructed linear mirror reflexions or duplications, Shakespeare leads one to the deeper vision of the only valid possibility of intense feeling: creative experience. It is through fancy that beauty and happiness take place. Fancy and imagination – the dream that is a vision, 'a most rare vision' because it is not part of ideologically viewed human life, cannot be conveyed by means of the accepted poetic standard of the times, Renaissance duplication. At this moment, when the Poet probably means to stress the value of creative life, he makes use of the Baroque synthesis: glimpses of a compound of impressions, mixed up vision lacking realistic contour.

The ideal of beauty/love as Shakespeare seems to conceive it, will emerge and set the pattern for the deeper structure: love will be great and true only when experienced by lovers whose place is among lunatics and poets. As these are the only ones able to grasp deep and everlasting feelings, they can feel love to its full, or the ecstasy of creation in its quintessence:

Lovers and madmen have such seething
brains,
Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever
comprehends.

The lunatic, the lover and the poet,
Are of imagination all compact:
One sees more devils than vast hell can
hold,
That is the madman; the lover, all as
frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt:
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from
earth to heaven
And, as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's
pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy
nothing
A local habitation and a name.

(V. I, 4-17)

These words, in the mouth of the sensible man, Theseus, echo the opposition Renaissance x Baroque inside the play. Theseus's imagery is Baroque. It is the apprehension of another world, not the world of reality, but of fancy. In his creative process, the poet gives a place and a name to the unacceptable and so builds a bridge between dream and reality; the lunatic and the lover experience the 'most rare vision' but are powerless to give it an habitation and a name, because they don't master language.

The Baroque motive of evocation is superbly created in a moment of classically comic abuse. In the midst of the dissensions between the four young people, when Helena believes both Lysander's and Demetrius's protestations of love to be a means of ridiculing her, which she thinks Hermia approves, there appears her address to the latter, full of tender evocation of their childhood:

Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,
The sister-vows, the hours that we have
spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us, o! is it all forgot?
All school-days' friendship, childhood
innocence?
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
Have with our needles created both one
flower

Both one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one
key,
As if our hands, our sides, voices and
minds,
Had been incorporate. So we grew
together,
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
But yet an union in partition;
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;
So, with two seeming bodies, but one
heart;
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry,
Due but to one, and crowned with one
crest.

(III. II, 198-214)

As if on a tapestry the picture of the two girls is brought before the reader/audience, in a unified composition. The imagery connoting the idea of two in one is repeatedly conveyed: 'both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion', both warbling of one song'; 'both in one key'; 'double cherry'; 'union in partition'; 'two lovely berries moulded in one stem'; 'two seeming bodies'; 'coats crowned with one crest'. There is repetition, here, not aiming at enumeration or opposition, but presented in such a way as to prepare one for the 'crescendo' in lines 207, 208: 'As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds had been incorporate'. This is one of the few examples, in the *Midsummer Night's Dream*, of what Hatzfeld calls 'hidden antithesis'.⁴ The static view of the two girls together, as fruit coming from one common stem, in truth leads one to some deeper feeling of loss. The Baroque motives of evocation, passing of time, spiritual incorporation of physical aspects are all there waiting to be detected and in fact give the passage its main mood. This mood is also built up by means of the alliteration of sibilants together with many caesuras in the verses, which create an atmosphere of diaphanous irreality.

It is through Titania, a fairy goddess, the queen of England's green world that there appears the greatest Baroque poetical synthesis in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Handling

pastoral elements some of which were used linearly in the *Hermia-Helena* speech and in the fairies' scenes, Shakespeare empties them of their previous meanings and what was once gradual opposition becomes now total apprehension of a state of bewilderment and disturbance:

Tit.: And never, since the middle
summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest, or mead,
By paved fountain, or by rushy brook,
Or in the beached margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling
wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd
our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the
sea
Contagious fogs; which, falling in the
land,
Have every pelting river made so proud
That they have overborne their
continents:
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke
in vain,
The ploughman has lost his sweat, and
the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard:
The fold stands empty in the drowned
field,
And crows are fatted with the murrion
flock;
The nine men morris is fill'd up with mud,
And the quaint mazes in the wanton
green
For lack of tread are undistinguishable:
The human mortals want their winter
here:
No night is now with hymn or carol
blest;
Therefore the moon, the governess of
floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
That rheumatic diseases do abound:
And through this distemperature we see
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,
And on Hiem's thin and icy crown
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer
buds,
Is, as in mockery, set. The spring, the
summer,
The chiding autumn, angry winter,
change
Their wonted liveries, and the mazed
world,
By their increase, now knows not which
is which.
And this same progeny of evil comes

From our debate, from our dissension:
We are their parents and original.
(II. i, 82-117)

Disturbance here is due to lack of love and misunderstanding. Shakespeare is not talking of married love, of love as it is established by social rules, but of harmony. The same images which might be connected with idealized pastoral values appear in this passage. But there is no Arcadia here. They are emptied of their pastoral meaning and come out as a void that is transposed from the outer to the inner surface. Void in wedlock (true love?) = void in symbolism of pastoral life connotative of love. Here the opposition becomes a paradox: where there is plenty (contagious fogs;

overborne continents; stretch'd yoke; fatted crows; drowned field; abundant diseases), this abundance means lack, void (fogs sucked up from the sea; lost sweat; stretched yoke **in vain**; **no seasoning** of corn; **empty** field; **murrion** flock). The world which might be paradisaical becomes full either of nothingness or evil. This paradoxically unified image of plenty/void is compressed into the confused visualization of the altered seasons. There is no balance, no distribution. The only global image is that of 'distemperature'. The sweet remembrance of hymns and carols being sung in winter nights is washed away by the 'governess of flood'. One might say that Shakespeare, through

Titania, with the imagery of rain and floods, yearns for some sort of purification which will put an end to the compelling force that disturbs the environment: lack of true love. Hatred, embodied in the fairy sovereigns 'debate' and 'dissension', is the cause of it all. And hatred cannot coexist with beauty and creativity. Being destructive, it has demolished every possible suggestion of peace and classical illusory beauty. Titania's speech, Baroque in its unity, expresses perhaps some repressed ideal of return to the richness of the imaginary world of the poet/lunatic/lover lost in the Renaissance 'cool reason'. □

NOTES

All quotations from Shakespeare are from GRAIG, J. W., *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*. Oxford; Oxford University Press, 1955.

- ¹ On classical motives see NEVO, R., *Comic transformations in Shakespeare*. London; Methuen, 1980, p.37-107.
- ² See FREUD, S., *Introductory lectures on psycho-analysis*. London; Hogarth, 1973, part I, v.14 of the Standard Edition.
- ³ See HATZFELD, H. *Estudios sobre el Barroco*. Trans. FIGUEIRA, A., CLAVEIRA, C. & MINIATI, M. Madrid; Gredos, 1966, p.122.
- ⁴ *Ibidem*, p.196.

Feminist

Epistemology in

Piercy's Woman on

the Edge of Time

Summary

*Sandra Harding's view of science as a social activity leads her to propose critical interpretation as a mode of knowledge-seeking particularly useful for theorizing "the effects on the natural sciences of gender symbolism, gender structure, and individual gender."¹ I have chosen Piercy's novel, *Woman on the Edge of Time*, with a view*

toward discovering how a contemporary American feminist writer envisions a non-gendered society. Specifically, I

will examine some of the ways in which Piercy's imaginary culture relates to Harding's discussion of feminist epistemologies that are emerging as a response to sexist, classist and racist policies in science.

Resumo

*A visão de Sandra Harding da ciência como uma atividade social, leva-a a propor uma interpretação crítica como um modo de conhecimento particularmente útil para teorizar "os efeitos nas ciências naturais de simbolismo de gênero, estrutura de gênero, e gênero individual." Escolhi o romance de Piercy, *Woman on the Edge of Time*, com o objetivo de descobrir como a escritora feminista contem-*

porânea vê uma sociedade isenta de gênero. Especificamente, examinei algumas formas em que a cultura imaginária de Piercy relaciona-se com a discussão das epistemologias feministas de Harding, que estão emergindo como uma resposta a políticas sexistas, classistas e racistas.

For Harding, science-as-usual, while functioning under cover of a supposed value-neutral ethics, is inherently sexist, racist and classist. She identifies three types of feminist epistemologies whose nascent practice has the potential for producing "a politics of knowledge-seeking that would show us the conditions necessary to transfer control from the 'haves' to the 'have-nots.'"² Harding labels these epistemologies *feminist empiricism*, the *feminist standpoint*, and *feminist postmodernism*.

Feminist empiricism, working for the reform of "bad science," reveals the incoherencies of empiricist epistemologies by subverting the notion that the social identity of the observer is irrelevant to the results of the research. Harding points out, for example, that women in science are "more likely than men to notice androcentric bias."³ In spite of their commitment to empiricist principles feminist empiricists argue that "as a group [they] are more likely to produce unbiased and objective results than are men (or nonfeminists) as a group."

The second type of feminist epistemology, the feminist standpoint, is based in Hegelian "thinking about the relationship between the master and the slave"⁴ as elaborated in the

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Epistemologia Feminista em *Woman on the Edge of Time* de Piercy

Billie Maciunas*

writings of Marx, Engels, and Lukacs. The proposal of the feminist standpoint is that subjugated knowledge provides the grounds for unravelling the "partial and perverse understandings" of a science based on the interests of dominant groups. Unlike feminist empiricism, the feminist standpoint regards the social identity of the inquirer as a variable.

The third type of feminist epistemology, feminist postmodernism, would begin from the perspective of inevitable fragmentation. As a part of the general postmodernist movement, feminist postmodernism would seek a solidarity of oppositions to the myth of an essential human being that has been conceptualized in fact by historical males. Feminist postmodernism shares with the feminist standpoint the view that the fiction of the "uniquely human" has generated distorted and exploitative policies. However, post-modern suspicion of holistic epistemologies precludes acceptance of a single feminist standpoint.

For Harding, the epistemological foundations of our present science practices are history-specific. She divides the emergence of the "New Science Movement" of the fourteenth century into stages. The final stage, the "moment of mythologizing," coincides with the development of Descartes' method for the production of a "value-neutral" science. Instrumentalist in its outlook, Cartesian science "compromised the political goals of the New Science Movement,"⁵ whose organization of social labor stood in opposition to church dogma. As Harding herself points out, her argument follows that of Thomas Kuhn in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* in which Kuhn shows how "normal science" and its methods are merely the after-effects of revolutionary paradigm shifts. Moreover, defenders of "normal

science" "rewrite its history in a way that often hides the nature of its early struggles."⁶

Harding compares the practices of women scientists (presumably feminist empiricists) to the practices of those artisans of the New Science Movement. Their "new kind of labor made possible the ensuing widespread appreciation of the virtues of experimental observation."⁷ She lists five kinds of critiques which have helped in forming an emancipatory theory in response to normal science. They are:

1) equity studies that identify and document the ways that *de facto* discrimination is maintained even after formal barriers have broken down. Motivation studies, for example, show a difference between boys' and girls' interest in excelling in such subjects as science, engineering, and mathematics. To the point, Harding asks why women would want to be "just like men" in interesting themselves in questions "skewed toward men's perception of what they find puzzling."⁸

2) studies documenting the abuses of scientific technologies in biology and the social sciences. Such abuses include the perpetration of reproductive policies that are oppressive to women (doubly so in the case of poor women, including women of color). As an example of such abuse Harding mentions

the resuscitation of scientifically supported sentimental images of motherhood and nuclear forms of family life for some at the same time that social supports for mothers and non-nuclear families are systematically withdrawn for others.⁹

3) challenges to the idea of the possibility of a "pure science". Harding relates this challenge to the process of selection of problems to be solved by science. The hierarchical structure of the science profession

assures that a white male elite ("less than 0.01 percent of scientific workers"¹⁰) is privileged with decision-making, while the technicians and domestic staff who carry out the work are composed for the most part of white middle class women (in the upper ranks of technicians) and minority men and women (among the lower ranks of technicians and domestic staff). The case for value-neutral results is damaged when one considers the gap in knowledge between "the scientist" in his search for truth and the workforce that implements the research into problems deemed worthy of inquiry.¹¹

Harding questions whether the selection of problems to be solved will not always reflect the interests of dominant groups. But given this necessarily value-laden bias she considers whether some value-laden research projects may not be "maximally objective" within the structure of an already existing overtly sexist, racist, and classist program. For example, would not self-consciously anti-sexist and/or antiracist inquiries be more objective than "sex-blind" ones?

4) "[T]he related techniques of literary criticism, historical interpretation and psychoanalysis"¹² have unveiled the social meanings of metaphors used in the founding of modern science. In addition, the familiar dichotomies, reason vs. emotion, mind vs. body, etc., are related to masculinity and femininity, especially in the context of a supposed necessity to control emotions, the body, and "the feminine" in the interest of human progress.

5) Finally, as mentioned, feminist epistemologies have emerged that reflect more accurately "shifting configurations of gender, race, and class...."¹³

Marge Piercy's novel, published in 1976, offers contrasting visions between the present world view (perhaps the early 1960's) and a "possible" future (2137) in which the feminist epistemologies described by Harding help to form the world view. This possible future can emerge only through the imagination and intentional actions of Connie, a 37 year old Chicana mental patient. Connie's visions take her into the world of Luciente, who may be imagined as a possible version of Connie herself, given a world in which gender socialization and the concurrent division of labor along gender and/or class lines is abolished. Luciente is a plant geneticist whose work involves reconstructing species of plants that have been destroyed by pollution, as well as creating plants that are useful for food and other human needs. Most of the other characters in Piercy's novel also mirror each other in terms of present and future. For example, Sybil, who is confined to the hospital for being a witch, is mirrored by Erzulia, a black woman in the future who practices both witchcraft and traditional surgery.

When Luciente first appears to Connie she is mistaken for a man. The narrator says

Luciente spoke, she moved with that air of brisk unselfconscious authority Connie associated with men. Luciente sat down, taking up more space than women ever did. She squatted, she sprawled, she strolled, never thinking about how her body was displayed.¹⁴

By contrast, women in Connie's world are absurdly socialized according to men's conceptions of their reality. Connie's niece, Dolly, for example, is a prostitute who changes her appearance so that she will look more like the white male's idea of a beautiful woman. She says

I got to stay skinny, carla. The money is with the Anglos and they like you skinny and American-looking. It pays more if you look Anglo, you know.¹⁵

The nightmare of such a reality is glaringly shown in Piercy's image of another possible world into which Connie stumbles by accident while trying to contact Luciente. In the near future Connie encounters Gildina, Dolly's exaggerated double. Gildina is "a built-up contract.... [c]osmetically fixed for sex use."¹⁶

Piercy shows, too, the contradiction inherent in the socialization of women strictly for motherhood. Connie and her niece can afford to raise their children only at the cost of dependence on men who are for the most part abusive. At the same time, the women in Connie's world are subject to the abusive technology connected with reproductive policies that deny them the achievement of the ideal of motherhood. Both Connie and her mother, for example, after being admitted to the hospital for other reasons, were given hysterectomies "because the residents wanted practice."¹⁷ Connie's sister is given sugar pills instead of birth control pills after her sixth child because of an experiment. Her seventh child is then born with deficiencies that require costly treatment, "All because Inez thought she had a doctor, but she got a scientist."¹⁸

For Piercy, egalitarianism necessitates women giving up their exclusive right to bear children, in order that men may participate in the community as mothers (children are laboratory created; men are administered hormones so that they can nurse their children). Luciente explains

It was part of women's long revolution. When we were breaking all the old hierarchies. Finally there was that one thing we had to give up too, the only power we ever had, in return for no more power for anyone. The original production: the power to give birth. Because as long as we were biologically enchained, we'd never be equal. And males never would be humanized to be

loving and tender. So we all became mothers.¹⁹

In this instance, Piercy imagines a future whose grounding is in feminist postmodernism. Feminist postmodernism does not ostensibly seek to reform science or to raise subjugated forms of knowledge to higher status. Rather, like postmodernist theories in general, it seeks an end to globalizing discourses in which an elite avant-garde is empowered to define and administer the tenets of "truth." One type of feminist postmodernist theory is object-relations theory. Object-relations theory considers philosophy to be the site of the problematization of "the relationships between subject and object, mind and body, inner and outer, reason and sense..."²⁰ It proposes that men's preoccupation with objectivity stems from infantile separation from the mother. Men, more than women, remain frozen in a defensive infantile need to dominate and/or repress others in order to retain... individual identity." Women's experience thereby becomes the opposite pole of the duality by which men "take their own experience as paradigmatically human rather than merely as typically masculine."²¹ Mothering (caring work), then, must be incorporated as a human experience and located at the center of culture, rather than remaining at the margins of culture as "women's work, undervalued and/or sentimentalized."

Feminist postmodernism, as Harding notes, proposes reciprocity as a more desirable way of knowing than defensive gendering. In *Woman on the Edge of Time* Piercy imagines a world in which interpersonal relations are valued as a form of community activity. Members of this intentional community participate in "wormings" in order to discover and eliminate the sources of hostility between individuals. Connie, visiting from the past, complains, "Don't you people

have nothing to worry about besides personal stuff?" One of the community members then points out the connection between individual and national warfare:

[W]e believe many actions fall because of inner tensions. To get revenge against someone an individual thinks wronged per, individuals have offered up nations to conquest.²²

Thieves in this society are given presents to relieve feelings of neglect and poverty (there is no private property). Likewise, crimes of violence are regarded as treatable by healing. However, if a person commits such a crime for a second time, they are executed. Parra, the Hispanic woman who is selected as referee (judge) for a warring explains, "We don't want to watch each other or to imprison each other. We aren't willing to live with people who choose to use violence. We execute them."²³

Piercy's valuation of interpersonal relations (to the point of an absolute intolerance for violence) reflects the feminist standpoint epistemology in which relational forms of knowing are regarded as morally preferable to the objectification of individuals and groups. In opposition to Cartesian dualisms, interpersonal caring as community work unites the "manual, mental, and emotional ('hand, brain, and heart') activity characteristic of women's work..."²⁴ It also recalls the craft labor necessary for the emergence of the "New Science Movement" of the fourteenth century. As Harding points out

The organizational forms of the women's movement, unlike those of capitalist production relations and its science, resist dividing mental, manual, and caring activity among different classes of persons. And its project is to provide the knowledge women need to understand and manage our own bodies: subject and object of inquiry are one.²⁵

The intolerance of violence in the possible future can be read as Piercy's reaction to the disproportionate

number of violent crimes committed by men in our present society, particularly when many of the most violent are committed as a matter of course by men *against women*.²⁶ Piercy shows a parallel between violent crimes against women and the practices of science-as-usual. The white male doctors privileged to define Connie's reality on the ward label her as violent. The description, however, is ironic since Connie's violence consists in her defending herself against physical abuse by her niece's pimp, referred to as the niece's "fiancé" by the doctors.²⁷ The interpretation of Connie's actions as "violent" is used to justify forms of research into behavior control, called "treatment," such as forced isolation, administration of soporific drugs, shock therapy, and brain implants for the control of "patient's" emotions by electrical impulses administered from outside.

In order to avoid "treatment" Connie tries to prove her normalcy by volunteering to do housework on the ward. Likewise, in order to persuade her brother (who has committed her) to let her visit him, Connie must agree to do the housework for him and his Anglo wife. Thus Connie's labor is extracted on the basis of definitions of normalcy for women that posit a natural genesis for women's caring, as opposed to a social one. These definitions of women and their reality help to naturalize their victimization. In Piercy's book, Connie is aware of the connection:

[T]he pressure was to say please and put on lipstick and sit at a table playing cards, to obey and work for nothing, cleaning the houses of the staff. To look away from graft and abuse. To keep quiet as you watched them beat other patients. To pretend that the rape in the linen room was a patient's fantasy.²⁸

Reading the above passage from a feminist standpoint, it is easy to see that the rape fantasy is that of the white male doctors. The parallel drawn

earlier between the division of labor in the sciences and in society makes clear that ruling conceptual schemes do not include categories adequate for defining women's reality, although the attempt is nevertheless made, with an arrogance that is both ignorant and invasive. Regarding women's work of personal maintenance Harding says,

Men who are relieved of the need to maintain their own bodies and the local places where they exist can... see as real only what corresponds to their abstracted mental world.²⁹

Piercy's novel is hopeful in its images of a possible future in which the revolutionary feminist epistemologies described by Harding are instrumental in creating a more egalitarian world. As Harding suggests, change is a labor intensive activity. The emergence of the "New Science Movement" in the early Renaissance required a new type of individual who was both educated and willing to perform manual labor: artisans, shipbuilders, mariners, miners, foundrymen, and carpenters.³⁰ When Connie imagines revolution as "Hon-chos marching around in imitation uniforms," she is informed that

It's the people who worked out the labor- and land-intensive farming we do. It's all the people who changed how people bought food, raised children, went to school!³¹

Sybil, the mental ward image of Erzulia, the healer, manages to make contact with the future in such a concrete way. Near the conclusion of the book Sybil notes that some of the college girl volunteers on the ward are interested in the healing properties of herbs. Although Sybil could not go to college, much less study witchcraft there, she is told by the college girls about "a class in a women's school" where they learned, among other things, to cure infections with lovage compresses.³² Thus, Sybil can be seen as a "foremother" of the emerging

movement in which forms of medicine that have been suppressed as “voodoo” and “witchcraft” are practiced along with surgery and genetic engineering. One of the most renowned “healers” in Piercy’s possible future is a black woman, Erzulia, who is famous for developing a method of setting bone fractures in the aged and who practices mental telepathy in the control of physical processes. Connie asks, “How can anybody be into voodoo and medicine? It doesn’t make sense!” Luciente, her guide, responds, “Each makes a different kind of sense, no?”³³ Piercy’s vision reflects the emergence of feminist epistemologies in that forms of subjugated knowledge stemming from suppressed practices are accepted in her future world. In addition, the valorization of a black woman as a professional healer indicates an interest in redressing the imbalance of the division of labor discussed by Harding as the position of feminist empiricists. In this instance, Piercy is imagining a reform of science such that the presence of women scientists works to eliminate androcentric bias that prohibits useful forms of medicine. Further, the character of Erzulia addresses the issue of the absence of black women (and men) in the upper strata of the science profession’s hierarchy and the forms of knowledge consequently lacking in science for any sort of “objective” knowledge about the world we inhabit.

Piercy’s novel reveals the emergence of the three feminist epistemologies as detailed by Harding. It does not, however, offer a Utopian vision, nor does it show an “intuitive grasp” of any emancipatory theory. Piercy simply imagines a possible world given the intentionality of people receptive to change. Connie’s “receptivity” in contacting Luciente is a metaphor for

the ability to comprehend and implement change for those whose ways of knowing and forms of knowledge have been denied reality. Piercy’s metaphor for implementing these changes, however, is war. She concludes her book with the certainty that Connie will be forced to undergo a brain implant in spite of her model behavior. Such an event bodes the emergence of Gildina’s world and the possibility of melding human and machine for use and control by the empowered.

At the conclusion of Piercy’s story, as at the beginning, Connie’s choice is to defend herself against violence with violence. After losing her appeal to the doctors that she be allowed to forego the brain implant, Connie poisons four of the doctors with a pesticide that she has stolen from her brother’s nursery. Her method of murder underscores the tragedy of her being thwarted in her potential development as a member of a caring community. As mentioned, her mirror image in the future, Luciente, is a plant geneticist who is concerned to create and use plants for the growth of the community, not its destruction. Moreover, Sybil and her future counterpart, Erzulia, show how the development of their knowledge of plants can lead to cures. Connie’s solution of murder with the very tools that could be used for good reflects the dominant culture’s own misuse of technology in its objectifying view of the environment.

As soon as Connie has poisoned the doctors, she understands that she is no longer receptive to Luciente’s world. Piercy thus seems to conclude that the possibility of the world that she imagines is closed off by violence. Although Connie was receptive to change, she could not escape the confines of the reality defined for her by the dominant white male culture.

But neither was she active in the political struggles (like Sybil, for example) that would have created a more ambiguous relationship with that culture than definitions of mother and/or mental patient could provide. Instead, Connie’s resistance is confined to conforming to her doctors’ expectations of her in order to buy time and gain privileges, attempting to escape, and finally committing murder.

While this paper is unable to address in detail all of the issues raised in Harding’s and Piercy’s books, it is hoped that it nonetheless demonstrates the relationship between sexist, classist, and racist policies in science and in society at large. For Harding, such policies are not a science-as-usual, whose epistemological foundation of value-neutral, objective inquiry is skewed toward the needs of a white male elite. As both Harding’s and Piercy’s texts argue, feminist epistemologies indicate revolutionary changes in knowers, ways of knowing, and the world to be known. They ought to and do show us “the conditions necessary to transfer control from the ‘haves’ to the ‘have-nots.’” □

NOTES

¹ HARDING, S. *The Science Question in Feminism*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1986. p.33.

² Ibidem, p.20.

³ Ibidem, p.25.

⁴ Ibidem, p.26.

⁵ Ibidem, p.217.

⁶ Ibidem, p.202.

⁷ Ibidem, p.139.

⁸ Ibidem, p.22.

⁹ Ibidem. The "withdrawal" of social support includes programs for controlling reproduction, including withholding of state funds for abortion for the poor, as well as sterilization of the poor.

¹⁰ HARDING, Sandra. Op. cit., p.73.

¹¹ Harding's example of the selective revival of sentimental images of motherhood suggests the division of labor within the nuclear family that corresponds to the hierarchical structure of the science industry. In the nuclear family, the woman's work is essentialized as a labor of love and is unpaid. At the same time, women's work may be classified as "leisure" activity in studies that separate leisure and work on the basis of money earned.

¹² HARDING, Sandra. Op. cit., p.23.

¹³ Ibidem, p.28.

¹⁴ PIERCY, Marge. *Woman on the Edge of Time*. New York; Fawcett Crest, 1976, p.67.

¹⁵ Ibidem, p.218.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p.299.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p.45.

¹⁸ Ibidem, p.275.

¹⁹ Ibidem, p.105.

²⁰ HARDING, Sandra. Op. cit., p.152.

²¹ Ibidem, p.153.

²² PIERCY, Marge. Op. cit., p.207.

²³ Ibidem, p.209.

²⁴ HARDING, Sandra. Op. cit., p.142. (HARDING cites Hilary Rose, "Hand, Brain and Heart: A Feminist Epistemology for the Natural Sciences." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 9 (1983)).

²⁵ HARDING, S. Op. cit., p.144.

²⁶ Rape, as disgusting to this future community as cannibalism is to us, is virtually unknown.

²⁷ PIERCY concludes her book with excerpts from the Official History of Consuelo Camacho Ramos, presumably an actual "clinical summary" of a woman's confinement to Bellevue Hospital in New York. This history is telling in its objectification of, "This 35-year-old Mexican-American Catholic woman separated from her husband Edward..."

²⁸ PIERCY, Marge. *Op. cit.*, p. 194.

²⁹ HARDING, Sandra. *Op. cit.*, p.156.

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p.218.

³¹ PIERCY, Marge. *Op. cit.*, p. 198.

³² *Ibidem*, p.342.

³³ *Ibidem*, p.159.

A Ironia em Morte em Veneza

de Thomas Mann

Irony in Thomas Mann's
Death in Venice

Georg Otte*

Summary

Given that our knowledge of reality is always provisional, that is, since there is an inevitable gap between our concepts and "Dinge an sich", irony is used to bridge this gap. Thomas Mann, the "Ironic German" (E. Heller) uses irony not only through his characters, but also through his style, provoking the readers "mistrust".

Resumo

Partindo do pressuposto de que o nosso conhecimento da realidade sempre é provisório, ou seja, que há uma eterna ruptura entre os nossos conceitos e a "coisa em si", a ironia entra como instância mediadora para superar essa ruptura. Thomas Mann, o "alemão irônico" (E. Heller), recorre à ironia não somente através de seus protagonistas, mas principalmente através de sua linguagem, que exige "desconfiança" por parte do leitor.

1. Reflexões preliminares sobre ironia

Partindo da idéia de que toda ironia é resultado de uma incongruência e, partindo também do pressuposto lógico de que cada incongruência implica uma relação binária, toda análise da ironia deve consistir em detectar os dois lados daquela incongruência.

Assim, a definição mais corriqueira de ironia aponta para essa incongruência quando explica a ironia como "procedimento expressivo que consiste em dar a entender que não se diz o que se diz." (Diaz-Migoyo, 1980:50). Esta definição 'lingüística' não só estabelece um contraste entre aquilo que se diz e aquilo que se quer dizer, mas chama também a atenção para a desconfiança em relação à palavra por parte do receptor.

Do plano lingüístico pode-se passar diretamente para o plano filosófico, uma vez que a palavra é expressão de um determinado conceito, conceito este que, por sua vez, é relacionado a objetos ("objeto" no sentido mais amplo). A relação Conceito - Objeto é problemática na medida em que um conceito serve, normalmente, para abranger ou uma grande multiplicidade de objetos ou objetos muito complexos, tão complexos que costumam escapar aos limites delineados pelo conceito. A questão epistemológica, portanto, consiste basicamente no problema da congruência ou incongruência entre Conceito e Objeto, entre Conceito e Realidade, entre Consciência e Ser, entre Eu e Mundo (cf. Bourgeois, 1974: 30/31):

elle (l'ironie) n'est rien de moins qu'une attitude de l'esprit devant le probleme de l'existence, qu'une prise de position philosophique dans la question fondamentale des rapports du moi et du monde.

Desta dicotomia faz parte a divisão do Eu em Eu consciente e Eu inconsciente. A busca da identidade do indivíduo nada mais é que a busca de uma congruência entre o conceito elaborado pela consciência do Eu e o Eu inconsciente.

Porém, a simples ruptura epistemológica entre Conceito e Objeto, normalmente designada pela noção do 'erro', não é suficiente para expli-

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car, de maneira satisfatória, o fenômeno da ironia. Como já foi dito, a compreensão de uma colocação irônica pressupõe uma atitude de desconfiança por parte do receptor, ou seja, um mínimo de atenção para eventuais sinais de ironia. Vendo a linguagem como reflexo de determinados conceitos, esta desconfiança, na verdade, questiona a sinceridade do falante em relação à congruência entre Conceito e Objeto (estamos falando de um caso de "ironia intencional"; a seguir). "Sinceridade" e "desconfiança" aqui não são consideradas no seu sentido moral, mas como noções psicológicas que evidenciam o fato de que uma pessoa tem uma certa liberdade em relação aos conceitos, sejam eles conceitos individuais ou sociais (valores, etc.), e de distanciar-se deles. Na sua tentativa de captar o Mundo mentalmente através de conceitos, de racionalizar o Mundo, o ser humano teria, portanto, a liberdade de questionar ou até de abandonar estes conceitos que, conseqüentemente, perderiam qualquer valor absoluto. A noção da ironia é ligada justamente a esta margem de liberdade em relação aos conceitos que sofrem, assim, uma relativização permanente (cf. a "bufonaria permanente" de F. Schlegel).

Uma vez que os conceitos são questionáveis e relativos, deve-se perguntar pela sua razão de ser. Historicamente, a tendência de conceitualizar o Mundo teve o seu maior impulso na época do Iluminismo, quando o Saber era considerado como base indispensável para a emancipação do Homem, para a "libertação do Homem da sua minoridade" (Kant/ O que é Ilustração?). O termo "menoridade" expressa bem como a falta de saber é ligada a uma questão de impotência, ou seja, de falta de poder. Encaixar uma determinada realidade dentro de um conceito e tornar, assim, esta realidade manejável, significa não só emancipar-se da dependência desta realidade, mas também apoderar-se dela. Impor um

conceito à realidade, realidade esta que por natureza sempre foge ao ideal do Conceito (cf. a relação simulacro-ideia na filosofia platônica), significa forçar uma congruência entre um conceito "poderoso" e a realidade. A atitude irônica, concedendo vida própria à Realidade, desmascara o caráter impositivo do Conceito, ou seja, a pseudo-congruência entre Conceito e Realidade.

Apesar de ser uma redução inadmissível, a oposição entre Conceito e Realidade pode contribuir para esclarecer também a divisão geralmente adotada entre "ironia intencional" e "ironia do destino". Mesmo designando uma ruptura entre Conceito e Realidade, as duas divergem segundo o alvo do questionamento irônico. O tipo de ironia acima descrito, que visa a questionar a validade de determinados conceitos, poderia ser considerada como "ironia do destino". A "ironia intencional" seria, conseqüentemente, dirigida contra a Realidade, questionando um determinado estado de coisas. Neste caso, algum ponto de vista teórico, mais ou menos bem definido, serviria como base para questionar, ou seja, ironizar "intencionalmente" uma situação indesejada. Do romance-pícaro à literatura engajada faz-se uso da ironia intencional a fim de criticar principalmente alguma realidade social.

Perguntar-se-ia se os dois tipos de ironia não estariam ligados, também, a determinadas posições ideológicas ou políticas. Sendo a ironia intencional uma ironia voltada contra uma determinada realidade, baseando-se na "intenção" de contribuir para a transformação desta realidade, esse tipo de ironia, provavelmente, deve ser encontrado mais no campo progressista. A "ironia do destino", ao contrário, que ataca, como um todo, a possibilidade de conceitualizar a Realidade de maneira abrangente, teria um caráter "conservador", não no sentido de conservar valores, ou seja,

conceitos tradicionais, mas no sentido de defender a Realidade como tal, contra o poder "aniquilador" (Nietzsche/ Ecce homo).

É provavelmente nesse sentido que Th. Mann, nas suas "*Meditações de um apolítico*", defende uma posição "conservadora" que considera irônica e ataca, ao mesmo tempo, o "radicalismo" político, no caso o radicalismo de cunho marxista. Tendo o marxismo como fundamento a idéia de que a Realidade pode ser inteiramente compreendida através de conceitos teóricos, ou seja, não admitindo uma praxis que fuja, para sempre, à teoria, o marxismo seria uma filosofia não-irônica, nos termos da ironia do destino. Admitindo uma correção dialética pela práxis, o marxismo não aceita nenhuma ruptura ontológica entre os dois.

2. A ironia no plano do enunciado

Segundo E. Heller (1958:23), existe, na obra de Thomas Mann, uma "incongruência calculada e artisticamente bem sucedida entre o sentido da história narrada e a maneira de narrá-la". Construindo "uma casa tradicionalmente sólida em local metafisicamente condenado", deixando uma ruptura entre uma "forma tradicional" e a "experiência de desintegração" (entre Conceito e Realidade), Mann causaria uma impressão de "profunda ironia" (Heller, 25).

Transferindo a dicotomia Conceito x Realidade para a literatura, o efeito irônico surgiria como produto de uma ruptura entre discurso literário e mundo ficcional. É tarefa do leitor "desconfiar" da coerência aparente deste mundo, insinuada por um discurso tradicional. Esta desconfiança em relação a um narrador "tongue-in-cheek" (Almansi), de um narrador que esconde qualquer sinal óbvio de ironia, deve ter, contudo, algum fundamento, por parte do leitor, seja dentro da obra literária, seja em

conhecimentos extra-literários (conhecimentos históricos sobre a época em questão, p. ex.). Estes últimos podem levar a uma comparação entre a obra e a situação histórica na época da sua criação e levantar no leitor uma primeira suspeita em relação à "sinceridade" do autor. O leitor pode se perguntar se é intenção do autor fornecer, p. ex., um retrato mais ou menos fiel da época (a pretensão realista) ou se ele quer questionar o estado de coisas por meios irônicos.

Voltando às afirmações de Heller, pode-se entrever como pressuposto a idéia de que existe para cada conteúdo uma forma adequada, ou seja uma congruência entre enunciado e enunciação. Para a literatura "tradicional", isto significaria que uma linguagem coesa reflete uma realidade supostamente coesa. Segundo esta visão mimética, ainda, autores modernos como Joyce e Proust seriam coerentes quando se servem de uma linguagem fragmentada para representar um mundo fragmentado ou, como no caso de Proust, um Eu fragmentado. Com esta congruência "negativa", estes autores continuariam sendo não-irônicos, uma vez que eles aspiram a uma congruência entre enunciação e enunciado. Mantendo uma linguagem tradicional diante de uma realidade em desintegração, Th. Mann optou por um discurso irônico que exige do leitor um maior grau de atenção para o "tongue-in-cheek", ou seja, que deixa o leitor numa dúvida maior a respeito da postura do narrador.

Seria uma simplificação inadmissível considerar Joyce e Proust como autores não-irônicos. Tanto Joyce quanto Proust questionam, de maneira irônica, a suposta homogeneidade, seja de uma determinada cosmovisão individual, seja de determinados valores sociais. Porém, transferindo a divisão em "ironia intencional" e "ironia do destino" para a técnica narrativa, poder-se-ia dizer que estes dois autores recorrem mais

ao primeiro tipo de ironia, atacando "intencionalmente", por meios estilísticos, uma realidade pseudo-harmônica, ao passo que Mann "finge" uma continuidade conceitual servindo-se de uma linguagem tradicional, continuidade esta, no entanto, desmentida pelo "destino", quer dizer pela própria Realidade. Nesse sentido, Mann pode até ser comparado a Kafka, que também se mostrou avesso a qualquer experimentalismo formal (em relação às normas sintáticas, p. ex.), escrevendo sobre um mundo absurdo, sem coerência.

2.1. Retrato de Aschenbach

Outra possibilidade de o leitor "desconfiar" da "sinceridade" do narrador é a análise dos personagens ficcionais (quando os mesmos não são idênticos à figura do narrador). Os personagens, por um lado, fazem parte do "Mundo" do narrador, por outro lado, são portadores de uma consciência própria e têm que lidar, por sua vez, com relação conflitante entre Conceito e Realidade. É o caso do protagonista Aschenbach em "Morte em Veneza". Logo no início do conto, quando da sua "apresentação" ao leitor, destaca-se o caráter coercitivo das suas atividades como escritor:

Aschenbach já dissera uma vez expressamente ... que quase tudo que existe de grandioso existe como um "apesar de", ou seja, algo que se realizou apesar de preocupações e tormentos, apesar da pobreza, do abandono, da fragilidade física, do vício, da paixão e de mil outros obstáculos.

Até "jatos de água fria no peito e nas costas" (20; números simples se referem à tradução brasileira, mencionada na bibliografia) têm que ajudar para que Aschenbach, que por motivos de saúde não pôde frequentar a escola, vença a inércia e a fragilidade do corpo. Toda a atitude de Aschenbach ganha até um aspecto guerreiro quando a tenacidade da sua "luta" é comparada à tenacidade com a qual

a sua província natal foi conquistada (20), ou quando ele aplica para a sua vida o lema "resistir" (o original "durchhalten" tem uma conotação militar).

A luta interna de Aschenbach para vencer a própria instabilidade física ou psíquica, mostra como ele subordina a sua vida a uma imagem de "grandeza" (20) ou superioridade, alimentada por modelos históricos e também pelo espírito (militarista) da época, na véspera da 1ª Guerra Mundial. Todas as dúvidas em relação a esta imagem, do modo como elas surgiram na juventude (222/23), são consideradas produto do "encanto picante e amargo do conhecimento" (23), conhecimento este que tem, para o "mestre maduro", um caráter de superficialidade, comparada com a "profundidade" que "nega o saber, recusa-o, ultrapassa-o de cabeça erguida, toda vez que este (o saber) ameaça, ainda que de longe, tolher, desencorajar e desmerecer a vontade, a ação, o sentimento e mesmo a paixão." É interessante observar que é nesse contexto que surge a palavra "ironia" que, para Aschenbach, junto com a dúvida, é fruto do conhecimento e, com isso, obstáculo no caminho de Aschenbach para a "dignidade" (22/23). Ela é sinônimo de "dubiedade moral" e "simpatia pelo abismo" (24), superadas pelo "milagre da espontaneidade renascida."

Com a superação dos problemas do conhecimento que questionam a relação Conceito - Realidade e com a imposição de uma pretensa "espontaneidade" ("Unbefangtheit", em alemão, significa literalmente 'desprendimento'), Aschenbach se recusa a admitir alguma ruptura irônica na sua visão do mundo. De uma certa maneira, Aschenbach reclama ser representante da Realidade como ela é, postulando um acesso direto ("espontâneo") a ela, sem o intermediário de uma razão crítica, ou seja irônica. É por essa ausência de qualquer

dúvida “corrosiva” que Aschenbach conquista tanto a “confiança de amplas massas de público” quanto o reconhecimento por parte do Governo que inclui “páginas da sua autoria nas antologias escolares oficialmente adotadas” e lhe confere o título de nobreza. A colaboração com o Poder Oficial pode ser vista como continuação da imposição dos princípios na vida pessoal de Aschenbach. Os seus escritos ganham um “caráter oficialmente pedagógico” depois de ele ter eliminado qualquer espírito crítico-irônico, espírito este que também é inimigo do poder governamental. A “espontaneidade renascida” de Aschenbach, que é resultado de um ceticismo reprimido, torna-se instrumento para a repressão política.

Esta breve retrospectiva biográfica, que nos apresenta o protagonista Aschenbach como pessoa “não-irônica”, segue ao primeiro capítulo (na tradução brasileira, a divisão em capítulos é apenas indicada por espaços em branco), que mostra Aschenbach durante um passeio por um bairro de Munique. Durante o passeio, inicialmente uma tentativa para descansar de um “trabalho árduo e arriscado”, Aschenbach é surpreendido por um “sentimento tão vivo, tão novo, ou, antes, há tanto tempo inabitual e desaprendido” (12) que nem a tão treinada autodisciplina pode impedir uma luta interior entre visões de uma paisagem tropical e tentativas de compreender e de dominar estas investidas descontroladas do seu inconsciente. Com uma aparente facilidade, Aschenbach dá um nome a estes impulsos (“Era vontade de viajar, nada mais” (12) — “Ele sabia perfeitamente por que motivo a tentação surgira tão inopinadamente. Era desejo de fuga ...” (14)), tentando não perder o controle, o poder sobre as manifestações do inconsciente. Porém, Aschenbach não consegue mais moderar estas manifestações e colocá-las no “devido lugar” através da sua

razão e pela autodisciplina “exercida desde a juventude.” (14) Ele desiste do seu plano de voltar ao trabalho, ocasião máxima para exercitar a sua autodisciplina, e, temendo a vingança do “sentimento escravizado” (15), acaba cedendo a uma “necessidade de uma pausa, um pouco de improvisação, de vadiagem...” (16).

2.2 Aschenbach viajando

A viagem a Veneza é uma concessão de Aschenbach ao seu “desejo de fuga”, ela representa um meio termo que permite a sua “alma européia” satisfazer veleidades até então reprimidas e continuar, ao mesmo tempo, dentro do mundo familiar europeu. A Itália, ou seja, Veneza, representam para Aschenbach a possibilidade de escapar para um “far-niente de três ou quatro semanas”, mas o dispensam também de ir mais longe (“não exatamente até os tigres”) e de ultrapassar as barreiras do mundo ocidental. Esta divisão geográfica em Europa Central, Europa do Sul e Trópicos reflete, de uma certa maneira, a ‘geografia interna’ de Aschenbach, geografia na qual Veneza representaria o lugar onde a rigidez dos “conceitos centro-europeus” entra em conflito com a realidade meridional, que, nessa hora, representa a Realidade.

A própria viagem de navio para Veneza tem caráter de transição, porque nela reaparece a luta interna de Aschenbach entre impulsos inconscientes e tentativas da consciência de colocar estes impulsos no seu “devido lugar”, ou seja, entre a tentação de se entregar à sedução do meio e o imperativo de não perder o controle da situação. Assim, Aschenbach observa a aparência “repugnante” do vendedor de passagens (que tem um “ar de diretor de circo mambembe” (29)) e fica horrorizado com a descoberta de um velho disfarçado de jovem. Aschenbach se recusa a aceitar simulação e disfarce e reclama que este

último “não tinha direito a se fazer passar por um deles (dos jovens)...” (31).

Detectar o “engano” do velho, para Aschenbach, é uma maneira de manter o controle do seu mundo que é o mundo da relação inequívoca entre Conceito e Realidade, entre aparência e verdade. Aschenbach não é capaz de aceitar, como os jovens do grupo, a brincadeira (a “bufonaria”) do velho e lhe contesta o “direito” de disfarçar-se. O velho é um “jovem postiço” (31), falso, aos olhos de Aschenbach que, por sua vez, se recusa a qualquer ambiguidade que questionaria a sua compreensão do mundo e, com isso, o seu poder sobre este mundo.

Porém, a viagem se torna ao mesmo tempo uma despedida da terra firme dos conceitos fixos e, pouco depois da partida do navio, depois de constatar que “nem tudo se encaixava de modo habitual”, a sua indignação cede ao embalo dos movimentos do navio e, perdendo cada vez mais o ‘controle da situação’, ele não resiste mais ao cansaço que o vinha acompanhando desde Munique, cansaço este que, além de ser consequência de um trabalho árduo, tem características metafísicas e parece ter suas causas naquela ‘rigidez conceitual’ que o impedia de aceitar situações ‘inadequadas’, ou seja, rupturas irônicas.

É interessante observar que o autor, para descrever a atmosfera desta viagem, recorre a um vocabulário parecido àquele que servia para evocar o ambiente de uma paisagem tropical:

... céu carregado de vapores ... região pantanosa, úmida ... brejos e braços de rio lamacentos ... flores flutuantes de um branco leitoso (13)

O céu estava cinzento; o vento, úmido ... horizonte nevoento ... flocos de fuligem ... cúpula opaca do céu ... espaço vazio e indiviso ... incomensurável ... gestos vagos ... palavras confusas, como num sonho ... (32/33).

Apesar de se tratar de duas situações topográficas bem diferentes, predomina, nos dois casos, a impressão da umidade, do opaco-cinza, do vago e do sujo, todos elementos que contradizem os conceitos claros e "limpos" de Aschenbach e que atrapalham qualquer conceitualização bem delineada das coisas. Tratando-se, no primeiro caso, de um impulso inconsciente, uma "visão", Aschenbach se censura a si mesmo ("meneando a cabeça" (13)), recalçando, assim, a realidade inconsciente do próprio Eu. A viagem para Veneza, entretanto, sendo uma realidade do mundo externo que não pode ser negada, provoca uma mudança em Aschenbach: ele desiste de censurar "enganos" e se deixa vencer por um ambiente mais "poderoso".

2.3. Aschenbach e Tadzio

A viagem de Aschenbach, originalmente "uma medida higiênica, que era preciso adotar de tempos em tempos" (13), torna-se uma tentativa de conciliar o conceito que adotou para a sua vida e os "impulsos" do inconsciente que abalam a firmeza destes conceitos. Como ele não é capaz de adotar uma postura irônica em relação aos seus conceitos, no sentido de aceitar as manifestações deste inconsciente como algo que escapa a um controle total, ele procura se libertar delas como de um corpo estranho que tem que ser extirpado através de uma "medida higiênica".

Aschenbach não só mostra esta intransigência em relação a si mesmo, mas também no que diz respeito aos outros. Como no caso do "jovem posição", Aschenbach não admite uma relação lúdica entre Conceito e Realidade (que, segundo Friedrich Schiller é base de uma visão estética do mundo) e censura o comportamento "inadequado" do velho. Em vez de deixar esta relação em aberto, em vez de admitir um jogo livre entre forma

e conteúdo, Aschenbach só conhece "a forma" (24), cujas origens ele vê na cultura grega, o "berço" da cultura européia, que é da maior importância para a justificação da sua atuação como escritor ("Excessivamente ocupado com as tarefas que seu eu e a alma européia lhe propunham, ..." (13)).

É nesse mundo grego que Aschenbach procura encaixar o jovem Tadzio:

... belo como um deus, era uma visão que inspirava concepções místicas, era como o anúncio poético do início dos tempos, das origens da forma e do nascimento dos deuses. (52)

Se, nesta citação, ainda parece ser a nova realidade que causa ("inspira") a "concepção", a insistência com a qual Aschenbach se dirige a Tadzio como "Fedro" (sem chegar a falar com ele de fato) mostra como tenta conseguir algum domínio sobre o jovem. Aschenbach transforma o diálogo platônico num monólogo que impõe a Tadzio a concepção que tem do rapaz.

Em momento algum, Aschenbach procura o contacto direto com Tadzio, e o seu "amor" por ele evita qualquer resposta. Assim, Tadzio aparece muito mais como uma projeção do seu conceito de beleza que de um amor à busca de satisfação mútua. Aschenbach, querendo, mais uma vez, impor ao outro a sua imagem, aniquila Tadzio como Outro e impede assim uma relação verdadeiramente amorosa, que, segundo F. Schlegel, é necessariamente irônica. Tadzio representa para Aschenbach um ideal de beleza, cujo modelo, desde o classicismo alemão até Nietzsche, é a arte grega. Seguindo a teoria sobre o belo do autor clássico F. Schiller ("A Educação Estética do Homem"), segundo a qual a arte como concretização do belo seria a única maneira de conciliar matéria e forma, Aschenbach procura esta conciliação na figura de Tadzio:

Pois a beleza, meu caro Fedro, e apenas ela, é simultaneamente visível e enlevadora. Ela é — nota bem — a única forma ideal que percebemos por meio dos sentidos e que nossos sentidos podem suportar. (74)

Tratando-se, porém, de uma projeção que aplica a Tadzio, Aschenbach trai, de certa maneira, a teoria de Schiller, que considerava a síntese entre o sensível e o espiritual/formal como um ato de liberdade, rejeitando, assim, uma normatização rígida da arte (Schiller atacava a estética iluminista). Paradoxalmente, a teoria da (livre) conciliação torna-se, nas mãos de Aschenbach, uma camisa de força para "prender" seu "objeto" Tadzio, cujo corpo é admirado por expressar "disciplina" e "precisão de pensamento" (72). Como Aschenbach não consegue lidar com a força sedutora que a figura de Tadzio exerce sobre ele, como não é capaz de admitir uma realidade alheia aos seus conceitos e de entregar-se cegamente a ela, tem que "apoderar-se" de Tadzio, impondo-lhe "concepções místicas". Quando Aschenbach mantém o silêncio a respeito da epidemia de cólera que flagela a região de Veneza, ele dá uma prova prática do seu desejo de dominar Tadzio. O plano de segurar Tadzio ao seu lado se frustra, porém, — irônicamente — com outra realidade inconcebível que é a morte.

3. A ironia no plano da enunciação

A ironia, em Th. Mann, manifesta-se sob várias facetas, inclusive autobiográficas (as obras que Aschenbach levou a cabo com tanto sacrifício, como a biografia de Frederico o Grande, são projetos abandonados pelo próprio Mann). Especialmente no início do conto, na "apresentação" de Aschenbach, não faltam elementos irônicos baseados no princípio do exagero que podem ser vistos como sinais de ironia. O exagero como recurso da ironia retórica (cf. a repetição de "excessivamente" na pág. 13)

reflete o exagero na “autodisciplina” de Aschenbach. Qualificar um determinado discurso como expressão de um exagero depende, sem dúvida, da recepção por parte do leitor (a repetição como recurso retórico não é um sinal inequívoco da produção de efeitos irônicos), assim como todo efeito irônico pressupõe uma determinada interpretação que, até nos casos mais “óbvios”, pode variar de receptor para receptor. Assim é de se esperar que muitos leitores da época, quando a disciplina militar fazia parte até da vida nas escolas, não tenham visto nenhuma ironia na descrição da atitude de Aschenbach. Participando dos mesmos princípios militaristas, muitos leitores, pelo menos nesta primeira parte do texto, não devem ter constatado nenhum exagero na “Weltanschauung” de Aschenbach, exagero este que poderia criar a expectativa de futuras incongruências irônicas.

Como já foi dito anteriormente, a mera incongruência entre Conceito e Realidade, o simples erro, não são suficientes para se poder falar em ironia, pois o erro pressupõe a noção da verdade, e a ironia, sendo de natureza essencialmente aberta, sempre vai além desse maniqueísmo entre verdadeiro e falso. Ela questiona, ou até nega, a possibilidade de uma relação inequívoca entre Conceito e Realidade, evitando assim qualquer “verdade” com valor absoluto. Aschenbach, que rejeita “qualquer simpatia pelo abismo” (24; tb. 113) considera-se “liberto de toda ironia” (113). Ele não se distancia dos próprios conceitos que delimitam a Realidade e são responsáveis pela sua visão “fechada” das coisas e de si mesmo.

Se o protagonista Aschenbach é um personagem “anti-irônico”, se ele se vangloria da sua “espontaneidade reconquistada” (115), deve-se perguntar então de onde surge o efeito irônico. Uma vez que a distância em

relação aos próprios conceitos como condição indispensável da ironia não se encontra no protagonista, ela deve ser resultado da própria leitura da obra, cujo narrador pode contribuir, de maneira mais ou menos sutil, para o distanciamento irônico entre o leitor e os conceitos do protagonista. Tratando-se, em Thomas Mann, de um autor “tongue-in-cheek”, este distanciamento não é conseguido através de sinais explícitos, mas através da técnica narrativa.

Não se pode, aqui, entrar em detalhes da narratologia de “Morte em Veneza”, devido à sua complexidade. Sabendo-se, porém, que o narrador desta obra ocupa uma posição oscilante entre a narração onisciente na terceira pessoa e a perspectiva pessoal do protagonista, passando pelo meio termo do “style indirecte libre”, sabendo-se que ele vacila entre uma posição objetiva e subjetiva, abre-se uma primeira pista em direção a uma narrativa irônica. Identificando-se com a figura do protagonista, o narrador tem a possibilidade de conhecer a sua vida interior, inclusive os seus “impulsos” inconscientes. Saindo desta identificação, afastando-se do protagonista e tomando a posição de um narrador em terceira pessoa, ele estabelece a distância necessária para provocar efeitos irônicos, distância esta (a “lacuna” da estética da recepção) que tem que ser preenchida pelo leitor.

Assim, o distanciamento necessário à postura irônica, uma vez que ele não é conseguido pelo protagonista Aschenbach, efetua-se através de um narrador onisciente. Como este, porém, não recorre a sinais explícitos de ironia, ele apenas oferece ao leitor uma margem para poder adotar uma leitura crítica. A disposição do narrador talvez seja o recurso mais importante do narrador para guiar, por um lado, o andamento da leitura, sem determinar, por outro lado, o entendimento definitivo do texto.

Assim, p. ex., a mera justaposição mais ou menos brusca dos impulsos inconscientes de Aschenbach com a censura subsequente destes mesmos impulsos pode provocar no leitor um primeiro protesto contra esta censura e levá-lo a abandonar uma eventual identificação inicial com o protagonista. Aceitando a vida inconsciente de Aschenbach como realidade inegável, o leitor distancia-se automaticamente da posição intransigente deste personagem, cuja reação negativa às manifestações do inconsciente ganha para o leitor um aspecto exagerado ou até ridículo. Distanciando-se tanto da realidade (inconsciente) quanto dos conceitos (conscientes) do protagonista, o leitor descobre a incongruência entre os dois planos e assiste ao desmascaramento irônico dos princípios intransigentes de Aschenbach. A repetição dos mesmos princípios no final do texto (cf. págs. 23/24 e 113), quando Aschenbach, provavelmente contagiado pela cólera, está à beira da morte, a colocação destes princípios num ambiente sombrio, os torna cada vez mais questionáveis:

Lá estava ele sentado, o mestre, o artista dignificado, o autor de *Um miserável*, que em tão exemplar pureza de forma recusara a boemia e as profundezas turvas, negara qualquer simpatia pelo abismo e reprovara o réprobo ... (113).

Os mesmos princípios, repetidos depois da tentativa fracassada de possuir Tadzio, são desmentidos pelos fatos, ou seja pela decadência física de Aschenbach e aparecem, com isso, sob um foco completamente diferente. A rigidez dos princípios cede a um discurso de “palavras desconexas”, proferidas por “lábios frouxos, relevados pelos cosméticos” (113).

A maquilagem de Aschenbach não é apenas grotesca por apontar para um comportamento “inadequado” (em relação ao comportamento anterior), mas ganha um peso específico por representar um

espelhamento, uma repetição invertida, do "jovem postiço", tão condenado anteriormente. O fato de Aschenbach adotar uma atitude antes rejeitada não produz nenhum efeito irônico nele, no sentido de perceber a contradição e de reconhecer a relatividade dos próprios conceitos. A ironia apresenta-se apenas para o leitor atento que compara o Aschenbach do início com o Aschenbach no final do texto.

A relação entre Aschenbach e Tadzio também é caracterizada por uma paulatina inversão de posições que evidencia a fragilidade dos seus conceitos. Esta inversão vai da usurpação da figura de Tadzio através da imposição de um sistema de conceitos (no caso a mitologia grega) até à "derrota" de Aschenbach, em decor-

rência de um esvaziamento dos mesmos conceitos que carecem de um sustento real. A descrição do estado lamentável de Aschenbach relativiza e ironiza também o último discurso "platônico", dirigido a Tadzio. A colocação deste discurso imediatamente depois da descrição de Aschenbach cria um contraste entre o aspecto deplorável de Aschenbach e o conteúdo idealista do discurso que começa, mais uma vez, com "Pois a beleza, Fedro, ... (114)." Mais uma vez, a simples justaposição, ou seja, sucessão imediata no plano da enunciação, provoca uma ruptura brusca no plano do enunciado, ruptura que é interpretada como contradição. Esta justaposição dispensa o narrador de usar um sinal de ironia explícito e deixa a critério do leitor o preenchimento do "vazio" irônico.

A morte em "*Morte em Veneza*", como realidade definitiva, não só desmente a arrogância dos conceitos de Aschenbach, mas morre, junto com ele, toda a grecomania que, por sua vez, é representativa da alienação dos intelectuais da época em relação aos acontecimentos políticos. Nesta obra, Mann não só ironiza a atitude não-irônica de um protagonista isolado, mas também a mentalidade "fechada" de uma época concreta. Esta mentalidade, por mais elaborada que tenha sido, mostrou-se estreita demais para absorver as novas tendências políticas. Para os adeptos do "belesprit", a catástrofe da Primeira Guerra Mundial foi uma realidade que não se encaixava em conceito nenhum. □

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Summary

The purpose of this study is to show how the context of orality deeply influences the structure of the African novel, contributing to its identity. The first part of the paper serves as a support for the second

a focus on the latter, I will demonstrate how written form of certain novels creates a fictional representation of the external world and how it incorporates and reflects the African oral tradition.

The paper will be divided into two main segments. The first deals with the development of the African novel; it provides a theoretical framework and historical background for the second, which constitutes an analysis of three representative novels that contain basic characteristics of oral literature. Before outlining general features present in works, I would like to discuss two important aspects regarding the identity of the African novel.

The contemporary African novel of the second half of the twentieth century and the early works, written during the first half of the century or before, derive from the European literary tradition. As Chidi Amuta explains, African writers were to a certain extent influenced by western novels, since these "formed part of the literature syllabus of colonialist education in different parts of Africa" (125). The African novel, however, is not a mere 'deviation' of the European novel. African writers have not simply copied European literary forms: they have adapted them to their own literary context. In other words, the written text in Africa is a product of its context, Obviously different from the European one.

Referring to the question of whether the African novel is the same as the western novel, Charles Larson indicates that there are similarities, but the African novel has developed its own peculiar characteristics, in that "in spite of the lack of several typical unities which are generally considered to hold the western novel together,

* University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The Written Text in a

one, in which it emphasizes

that the African novel clearly

portrays its cultural and

Context of Orality:

political context. The second part, then, analyzes

how characteristics of orality are manifested in the written work.

an Approach to

the African Novel

Resumo

O propósito deste estudo é mostrar como o contexto da oralidade influen-

cia profundamente a estrutura do romance africano, contribuindo para a identidade deste.

A primeira parte deste trabalho serve como apoio para a segunda, uma vez enfatizando que o romance africano retrata claramente seu contexto político e cultural. A segunda parte, pois, analisa como características da oralidade são manifestadas no texto escrito.

O Texto Escrito no Contexto da Oralidade: uma Abordagem ao Romance Africano

Gláucia Renate Gonçalves*

The purpose of this research paper is to show how the African novel has evolved in the twentieth century in terms of theme, style, purpose or objective, and form. With

that is, to give it its structural background, the African writer has created new unities which give his fiction form and pattern" (21). On the other hand, several critics have stated that the novel is the only literary genre which does not have African roots — in contrast to poetry and drama.¹ As Frantz Fanon has written, "we today can do everything, so long as we do not imitate Europe (253)". The question that emerges here is: have African writers totally copied the novel as a literary genre, or have they simply borrowed the written form of the novel to function as concrete documentation for the oral narrative of the continent?

Based on the African oral tradition, it can be affirmed that the folk tale could very well have provided the 'seed' for the written novel of the late nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. As McEwa notes, "novels ... depend before anything else on the art of story-telling" (28). The western influence should not be disregarded; however, the African novel may be seen as written and expanded versions of tales. Both the novel and the tale imply the narration of a story, and in this case, the role of the writer may be compared to that of the teller.

The fact that many novelists choose to write in European languages may occasionally lead to misinterpretation of their intentions. The use of a European language raises the question of identity, but it does not necessarily imply imitation of European models. In the same way that the African writer 'borrows' the novel as a literary genre, he also 'borrows' European languages as a vehicle for the creating of his texts. Amos Tutuola's *The Palm-Wine Drinkard* (1953) and Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart* (1958), for example, are written in the same language as that used by Charles Dickens and James Joyce. However it is rather a

modified usage of the English language, which is then adapted to African linguistic patterns. It is an innovated and innovative language: it allows the 'intrusion' of vernacular terms, as well as the imposition of a foreign syntax, through which musicality and rhythm overflow. Figures of speech, such as hyperbole, repetition and onomatopoeia are constantly present. It is through language structure that one of the most important features of orality is portrayed, that being the use of proverbs. This 'unusual' language indicates a need to read the novels in an also 'unusual' way. Although the language is western, the texts are not western and should not be read as such. All of this must be kept clearly in mind in order to avoid criticizing African fiction by looking at it through 'western eyes'. An unbiased approach is, thus, necessary.

The Rise of the Novel

From a chronological point of view, poetry was the first literary genre to appear in Africa, in terms of written literature. It was soon followed by the novel form, which representatively began to manifest itself in the early 1900's. Thomas Mofolo, a South African, published *The Traveler of the East* in 1906; several other works then followed. The first group of novels and novelists must be studied separately. They share common and unique characteristics, such as the praising of the colonizers and the changes brought by these, especially christianity. Because of the small number of writers, there was hardly any competition among them, as regards publishing in Europe. Critics point out that the first African novels, considered to be artless and 'raw' narratives, were published in Europe due only to a certain 'paternalism' and hunger for exotica (Owomoyela 76).

In 1953, the Nigerian writer Amos Tutuola published *The Palm-Wine Drinkard*. At that time, Europe was more aware of Africa and its literary development, and Tutuola's novel, at first criticized for being a series of episodic tales awkwardly arranged, was later praised for its narrative spontaneity and simplistic, but original and creative use of language. From then on, a series of other novels were published. An examination of general characteristics of African novels reveals that they tend toward realistic portrayals of specific settings and historical moments. Basically one may identify two distinct 'generations' of writers, each with its own particular features: a first one, grouping writers of the 1950's and 1960's; and a second, from the 1970's up to today — a generation of post-colonial writers. Each of these generations, although thematically different, is generally committed to a fictional representation of the external social and political situation.

Within the first generation of writers, a certain thematic change is evident. In the beginning of the 1950's novels tended to be documentations of African traditional life in a village, illustrating it with description of food, clothing, daily habits. Moving toward the period of independence of most British and French colonies, the 'literary mood' changed considerably. It was certainly a period of political excitement, and the focus was shifted from the traditional life to the turmoil of the quest for independence.

The decade of the sixties was undoubtedly one of nationalism, and the glory of the African past was praised. It was time to rediscover their values; the African essence had survived the years of colonialism. Consequently, the colonizer was seen as a disturbing and destructive element, and was many times even ridiculed. European materialism was put in stark contrast with the African

spiritualism, the latter being portrayed as ideal and worthy of reward.

The characters in the novels of that period are not very deeply developed, and as a result, the readers usually have an external view of them. They are mostly characterized by their actions, instead of thoughts; sometimes they are even defined by proverbs — a device which Chinua Achebe brilliantly exploits. This type of characterization is due to emphasis being placed more on the 'situational construction':² a group of people — rather than an individual — being affected by an event. This trend was, to a certain extent, an unconscious attitude on the part of the writers. The concept of membership of a group was embedded in their minds, and since literary production grows out of societal behavior, the situational construction was a natural consequence.

The structure of the novel was generally linear, with events following one another in chronological order, or, sometimes, it consisted of a series of stories or tales put together. The tone was a didactic one, and the novels were neither written nor read simply for the pleasure of the text itself: they were instructive too, used as a means of teaching a moral.

The 'documentary' style of African novels is another aspect worth mentioning. The eyes which supposedly see the events (the narrator) are now passing that information on to the readers. In order to create a relative distance between the narrator and what is being narrated (a distance which is implied by such narrative style), indirect speech, as well as third person narration, is preferred — as opposed to the use of dialogues in the text. The characters are seldom allowed speech, so that they do not interfere with the narrator's

documenting role, as Owomoyela remarks:

Dialogue ... tends to confer the aura of the here and now on the story being told, since to give the characters speech is to give them life.

... The stories are better presented in the perfect tense and in the perfect *sense*; in other words, in the form of summary as opposed to actualizing dialogue. (80)

As the 1970's approached, both the content and the form of the novels gradually changed. Most colonies had already gained independence, a fact which caused strong impact on literary production, thematically speaking. The writers' focus shifts considerably towards the present, rather than the past, since the latter is no longer seen as a solution to present conflicts. Worshipping the past, Africans were indeed worshipping freedom and independence, since it was only then that they had known and experienced such state. But independence is now a present condition, even if chimeric.³ Social issues are now seen under a new light. For instance, the 1958 character Okonkwo, a central figure of the Umuofian clan in Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, is replaced by the frivolous businessman El Hadji Abdou Kader Beye, in Sembène Ousmane's *Xala* (1974). Polygyny is another example: portrayed as a natural phenomenon in Achebe's *Arrow of God* (1964) it begins to be seriously questioned in Mariana Bâ's *So long a Letter* (1980). With the emergence of the African bourgeoisie, topics such as politics and education became relevant. The novels presented scenes of cruelty and poverty, since "fictional realism (was) a contemporary and urgent art" (McEwan 127).

A new kind of setting is gradually introduced. Instead of villages and their compounds, the reader is now confronted with towns and their modern villas, apartments, cars, and several other indexes of

modernization brought from the west. Interacting with the new environment, characters were also approached in a different way. In contrast with the characters of the previous decades, they became more rounded and were allowed to speak more for themselves, instead of through the voice of a narrator. The situational plot gave way to the individual one, focusing now on the individual's psyche and his spiritual conflicts caused by the external world. The small parts (individuals) which together constituted a whole (community) are now seen separately. The characters are still engaged in society, but their inner conflicts are fore-grounded from the political scene. They are portrayed as brutalized by the circumstances and terribly alienated deep inside. The internal problems of a character (reflected externally on his relationship with the other characters) are often due to the impossibility of adjusting again to the African tradition after spending some time abroad. Pitifully, the character is caught half way through a journey, and unfortunately he can neither reach his final destiny nor return to his point of origin: he will never be totally western because he is African, and by the same token he cannot be totally African again since he has become partially 'westernized'. Thus, he becomes a foreigner in his own land and among his own people.

In summary, the prevailing tone in most contemporary African narrative is one of disillusionment, and even of a certain pessimism: "bitterness, disgust, and a lack of hesitancy to criticize the status quo, strongly identify the works of the most recent novelists" (Larson 245).

The aspects pointed out in this study are shared by the whole community of novelists in Africa, but these are only general characteristics. In a continent as large as Africa and one that is influenced by so many

different foreign cultures as it is, much diversity is encountered within it. Applied to literature, such diversity refers to a number of exceptions and unique characteristics among predominant features. In the specific case of South Africa, for instance, particular characteristics set the works apart from the African literary community in general. As regards themes, South African novelists are deeply engaged in the issue of apartheid and the fight against white supremacy. The novels are used as vehicles of political discourse by many writers. The language used by writers of South African origin differs somewhat from other anglophone writers, in that it presents fewer similarities to the African pattern, using, for example, less proverbs and 'showing instead close kinship with the language of American Blacks' (Owomo-yela 98).

In conclusion, not only orality, as we will see next, but also the political, social and cultural contexts have close relationship to and are therefore reflected in the written text. The novel, or in the greater scope literature in Africa, goes beyond 'art for art's sake'. It is significantly relevant to the African context and assumes a political function, inasmuch as it is a product of a given society.

Oral Literature and the Novel

The purpose of the second part of this study is to verify the existence of a common bond shared by the majority of novelists throughout the continent: the presence of oral literature in the written novels. Novelists coming from different regions and cultural backgrounds draw on the African oral tradition and rely on some of its characteristics to build the structure of their novels. In other words, orality is the context they share and reflect in their works.

Both written and oral literatures are provided with form and content. The basic difference is that the form and content of written literature appear as letters printed on paper, while in oral literature they depend exclusively on performance. African novelists draw on orality when creating their texts as far as they include in the novels different forms of oral literature, such as proverbs and songs; give fiction the same purpose of some forms of oral literature, such as the didacticism of folk tales and legends; or make explicit in novels the vital aspect of oral literature: performance. It is not my intention, however, to place more value on either oral or written literatures. Both co-exist nowadays, and if any kind of hierarchy is to be established between the two, it has to be necessarily a chronological one. Writing was brought into Africa by the colonizer, whereas the practice of oral literature is hundreds of years old among Africans.

The first novel chosen for analysis is *Xala*, by the Senegalese Sembène Ousmane. Published in 1974, it draws on an important aspect of oral art: the didacticism of folk tales. The next novel is Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, published in 1958. The Nigerian writer draws on orality in a way different from the author mentioned before. Instead of the moralizing tone of folk tales, Achebe uses throughout the novel one of several forms of oral literature: proverbs. Another characteristic of orality is present in Achebe's novel, as well as in the last novel chosen for analysis in this paper. Both *Things Fall Apart* and *Mayombe* (published in 1980) reflect the performance of oral literature. Despite very different settings — Pepetela's *Mayombe* takes place in an Angolan forest, while *Things Fall Apart* is set in a Nigerian village — the narrators of the two novels play the same role addressing the audience, as if orally telling the

story. The choice of novels from varied geographic locations and from different times emphasizes how wide is the practice of drawing on oral art.

Ousmane's *Xala* is very similar in form (short narrative) to the African oral folk tale, and is, as well, characterized by its didacticism. With a modernized setting, *Xala*'s instructional function is presented through the protagonist, who is part of the African bourgeoisie that emerged after the independence. El Hadji Abdou Kader Beyer, on the occasion of his third marriage, is assailed by the *xala* (impotence). He puts all the efforts he can into 'becoming a man' again, even at the cost of his wealth and business. El Hadji can only see El Hadji, feel El Hadji, think El Hadji. His 'Self' outgrows everything else to the point that he becomes the center of his own world. After bankruptcy, he is left helpless with his first wife. A beggar — who had in fact put a curse on him, causing his *xala* — is the only one who can restore his 'manhood'. Giving power to one who is, according to El Hadji's values, an outcast of society, Ousmane is teaching a lesson about life in an African society: selfishness and materialism are to be severely punished.

In *Things Fall Apart* the instructional objective is not so deeply developed as in the novel mentioned before. The characteristic of orality revealed in Chinua Achebe's work is the fact that the author includes forms of oral literature in the structure of the written work. The novel is an account of a character's tragedy. Regarded as a man of several qualities and a model for the village inhabitants, Okonkwo accidentally kills a member of his community, and therefore goes into exile. By the time of his return, Okonkwo becomes indignant at the Umuofians for having accepted the presence of the whites and their interference in matters that were

exclusively of the villagers. Without their support to reject the intruders, he desperately takes his own life.

A brilliant documentation of traditional life among Igbos, this novel, as well as others by Achebe, relies on the use of one of the forms of oral literature: the proverbs. Not only do they contextualize the novel within the African oral tradition; proverbs were also used as a device for description. The clan was characterized for being "like a lizard; if it lost its tail it soon grew another" (121); Obierika's son, Maduka, is defined in terms of his similarity to his father by the proverb "when mother-cow is chewing grass its young ones watch its mouth" (49). Besides proverbs, Achebe uses other forms of oral literature, such as songs (25, 36, 42, 83) and tales (38, 67), obtaining tremendous literary richness as a result.

Things Fall Apart also portrays the essential aspect of oral art, namely, its performance. The act of performing oral literature implies necessarily two opposite poles: the teller and the listener, both identified within Achebe's novel. The third person narrator created by the author in this novel clearly indicates that Okonkwo's story is not simply written, but it is being told to someone. The sentence structure is very similar to that of oral speech, as it is seen, for instance, in the way the following paragraph is introduced:

*That was many years ago.*⁴ Today Okonkwo was not bringing his mother home to be buried with her people. (91)

Achebe also makes use of the repetition of the conjunctions *and* and *but* to begin independent or main clauses, exactly as a speaker does when narrating an event, in order to give it continuity:

But although he thought for a long time he found no answer. (87) And then came the clap of thunder.

Despite the change in theme, the next novel analysed shares the same aspect of oral narratives pointed out in *Things Fall Apart*: *Mayombe's* narrators address the readers and establish a channel for communication, consequently resembling the performance of oral literature. Not surprisingly at all, Pepetela (pseudonym for Arthur Carlos Maurício Pestana dos Santos) won the Angolan National Award for Literature in 1980. Set in the forest which gave title to the book, the novel is a vivid portrayal of the fighters' conflicts caused by colonialism and tribalism. Trying to find strategies to abate the colonizer, they endure difficult times and must overcome their tribal differences.

Mayombe's narrative begins with a third person omniscient narrator, responsible for the diegetic level of the story. But often along the novel (15 times, to be more specific), a first person narrative takes place, before which is indicated 'I, THE NARRATOR, AM X' (X = variable character). The third person narrative is fragmented, but the story itself, in its diegetic level, is provided with continuity. What the first person narrators do is to retell, from a different perspective, the same thing the third person narrator had already told, or sometimes they simply add their point of view about what has been narrated. The third person narrative is alternated with first person micro-reports, which constitute the pseudo-diegetic level⁵ of the novel. In this level the different narrators address the readers, as the teller addresses his audience, expecting some kind of response (verbalized or not). For example, when talking about tribalism in his micro-report, the character Miracle says:

See how the Commander was so concerned about the hundred escudos of that Cabinda traitor? Didn't you ask why, didn't you wonder? Well, I will explain. (28)

Such indexes of an implied reader lead to an intentional engaging of the readers in a lively relationship with the text, as the audience is supposedly engaged in the act of telling.

The novels analysed in this study draw on orality basically in three different ways: related to the purpose of oral literature, to its form and to its performance. Other aspects of oral literature may also be found in the novels: for example, the characters in *Mayombe* are according to their position within their social cosmos, emphasizing the importance of membership of a group over individuality. They are named after their role and characteristic in the guerrilla group: Theoty, Political Commissar, Fearless, Operations Chief and Miracle, among others.

In the final analysis, African literature, still in its infancy in terms of written texts, is in a period of growth and transformation. It is therefore difficult to indicate the specific directions it will take as it evolves. Diverse tendencies such as focus on the present rather than on the past, use of a more cosmopolitan language, and innumerable other trends have emerged in this early phase of its growth. A certain unity, however, is created by the important characteristic of the orality that has continuously manifested itself in the written literature. The manifestation of the oral tradition in African novels comes to prove, also, the theses stated in the introduction of this paper: the novel in Africa is not a mere imitation of the European novel. Orality is the context in which African fiction grew, and consequently the former is reflected in the latter. □

NOTES

- ¹ See AMUTA (*Theory*, 1989) and DATHORNE (*African Literature*, 1976).
 - ² I am borrowing Larson's term. See *The Emergence*, 1972, p.19.
 - ³ The adjective chimeric is used here since it is well known that although African nations achieved political independence, the very same economic and social structure of colonialism was maintained.
 - ⁴ The italics are mine.
 - ⁵ I am using Genette's terminology. Cf. Genette, *Narrative*, p.237.
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A Literatura

Afro-Americana

sob a Ótica da

Tradução

Afro-American Literature
as Translation

Idelber Vasconcelos Avelar*

"So perhaps we shy from confronting our cultural wholeness because it offers no easily recognizable points of rest, no facile certainties as to who, what, or where (culturally or historically) we are. Instead, the whole is always in cacophonous motion."¹

Ralph Ellison

Summary

The article makes use of Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari's concept of minor literature – i.e. that which is produced by a minority within a major language – to shed light on the displacements imposed by Afro-American writers upon the symbolic tradition they inherit through the English language.

By means of an analysis of a short story by Katherine Porter and a poem by Paul Laurence Dunbar, emphasis is placed on the recurrent process of demetaphorization one finds in African-American texts. Such processes are shown to entail a theory of translation that highlights difference and contests the authority of the original.

Resumo

O artigo utiliza, a partir de Gilles Deleuze e Félix Guattari, o conceito de literatura menor – literatura produzida por uma minoria no interior de uma língua majoritária – para analisar os deslocamentos operados pelos escritores negros americanos na tradição simbólica herdada por eles através da língua inglesa. Por meio de uma leitura de um conto de Katherine Porter e um poema de Paul Laurence Dunbar, enfatiza-se os recorrentes processos de desmetáforização encontrados nos textos afro-americanos. Num momen-

to seguinte, mostra-se que tais processos implicam uma teoria da tradução que privilegia a diferença e contesta a autoridade do original.

Tradução e literatura menor

Há uma ambigüidade fundamental e constitutiva de toda a produção literária do negro norte-americano: ao escrever, ele reencontra, a cada texto, sua condição de americano/estrangeiro. Para este sujeito, não há como escrever a não ser em inglês, língua imposta pelo dominador, língua originada alhures, língua para sempre e desde sempre estranha. Ler a poesia negra americana é recolocar permanentemente um problema: quais são as implicações textuais – semióticas – de se produzir literatura numa língua que não diz das origens e da história do sujeito que escreve? Quais são as marcas dessa escrita que se encena na língua do Outro? Se a literatura é também um olhar que lançamos sobre nós mesmos, ser um escritor negro nos E.U.A. implica um permanente e inquietante enxergar-se pelos olhos do Outro. É dessa contradição que partimos. É esta a contradição que W.E.B. DuBois, no começo do século, já percebia: "One ever feels his twoness: an American; a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideas in one dark body."²

Por isso a literatura negra americana pode e deve ser estudada a partir do conceito de literatura menor, aquela produzida por uma minoria do interior de um língua maior. Ao pensarmos em literatura menor, portanto, estamos partindo da relação do sujeito-escritor com a linguagem, que é necessariamente estranhada e confl-

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tuosa. Ao herdar a língua do dominador e construir nela sua literatura, o escritor negro herda uma série de construções simbólicas entranhadas na língua e já inseparáveis dela. Escrever na língua do Outro é assim um fato que traz conseqüências que vão muito além do meramente lingüístico. A língua herdada traz para o momento de produção de cada texto toda a tradição que ela veicula: exerce assim um efeito modelador sobre o olhar do escritor menor. Este não pode ser então visto como um sujeito onipotente, senhor de sua linguagem; é um sujeito ao qual já foram conferidos territórios, limites, inclusive os limites do dizível e do indizível.

Mais que ninguém, o escritor menor encontra palavras habitadas. A escrita torna-se esse espaço radicalmente intertextual: necessidade de traduzir-se na língua do Outro, de coexistir com as palavras das quais ecoam vozes outras. Nesse teatro onde se encena a crise do lugar do sujeito-criador, só há reelaboração e reescrita de signos; tudo já é imediatamente tradução. Não há mais como, portanto, se pensar românticamente no sujeito que escreve. Este é jogado para o interior de uma rede semiótica na qual não é mais que um ponto, um signo remetendo a outros. Ao traduzir-se na língua maior, o sujeito é também traduzido por ela. Escrever torna-se uma operação tradutora permanente. Nesse palco onde me reencontro com a tradição do Outro e me reinvento nela, escrever parece equivaler a traçar uma linha de fuga, construir diferenças, permanecer vivo enfim.

A diferença e o limite do traduzível

É pois pelos descaminhos da tradução que enveredamos. Como afirma Néelson Archer, o versículo do Gênesis "Deus criou o homem à sua imagem" pode

"ser considerado o primeiro exemplo de tradução (...) Desde já, ela propõe o

problema primeiro de toda e qualquer teoria da tradução: o da semelhança entre original e tradução. Sem dúvida, por muito tempo, os leitores do Gênesis deram maior destaque à semelhança entre homem e Deus. Sabe-se hoje, porém, que a história acabou sendo feita menos pela semelhança que pela diferença. Caso houvesse apenas a identidade absoluta entre original (Deus) e tradução (homem), esta não teria história própria, independente, que não fosse seqüência ou parte da história daquela. E, como Deus, por ser eterno, existindo, portanto, fora do tempo, não tem história — nenhuma história existiria."³

É este, "mutatis mutandi", também o problema da literatura menor. A condição de existência de uma escrita menor é a conflituosa preservação/reinvenção de uma diferença em relação à tradição "main-stream". Para esse sujeito-escritor, é impossível manter uma relação naturalizada com a linguagem; há um estranhamento instaurador, constitutivo do próprio texto. Trata-se de manter um espaço vital: para isso, há que se deslocar, desterritorializar, introduzir fissuras na língua do Outro. Devolver-lhe um olhar estrangeiro. Num certo sentido, a língua e a tradição do branco só podem reviver no texto do negro se forem previamente assassinadas. A literatura menor se configura assim em *espaço privilegiado para se contestar a concepção de tradução servil e submissa ao original*. A tradução, mais que nunca, surge como encenação intertextual/antropofágica da diferença.

Para essa escrita que só pode existir traduzindo a tradição do Outro, reinventando-se na língua do Outro, e ao mesmo tempo construindo uma diferença em relação a ele, o texto freqüentemente tangencia o limite da tradutibilidade. Nessa escrita-suicida, reencontra-se a todo o tempo a incompreensão, o intraduzível, o que é impossível de ser dito na língua do Outro. Em "O Grande Nadador", de Kafka, por exemplo, um dos personagens confessa atônito: "devo constatar que estou na minha terra e que, apesar de todos os meus esforços, não com-

preendo uma palavra sequer da língua que vocês falam."⁴ Relemos o intraduzível também na poesia africana, nos versos de Agostinho Neto: "Escrevo versos que não entendes/ compreendes a minha angústia?"⁵

Na literatura negra americana, o conto "The Witness", de Katherine Porter, coloca radicalmente o problema da tradutibilidade. Uncle Jimbilly, um velho negro ex-escravo, conta hoje às crianças as experiências do tempo da escravidão. Ele é o narrador clássico benjaminiano: transmite um testemunho, um vivido. É um narrador que mantém um forte sentimento de comunhão com as origens, com seu lugar, seu território. Seu relato, legitimado pelo fato de tratar de sua própria experiência, só pode ser narrado no dialeto negro. A língua aqui deixa de ser simples instrumento de comunicação para se transformar em instância legitimadora do próprio relato: "Dey used to take'em out and tie'em down and whup'em (...) wid gret big lether strops inch thick long as yo' ahm, wid round holes bored in'em so's evey time dey hit'em de hide and de meat done come off dey bones in little round chunks"⁶. Trata-se de uma narrativa intraduzível para o inglês padrão, pois se podemos evidentemente contar a mesma história no dialeto branco, a relação artesanal de Uncle Jimbilly com a linguagem só pode se construir em "Black English". Enquanto a mensagem literal veiculada pelo relato de Uncle Jimbilly presta-se à tradução, o processo de produção de sentido, no entanto, envolve esferas que extrapolam o meramente lingüístico. O sentido de um relato como o seu só pode ser definido a partir da consideração de aspectos como as relações sujeito-linguagem e sujeito-história. Enfim, para além da tradutibilidade lingüística, há a intradutibilidade semiótica.

A reação das crianças que ouvem atesta a impossibilidade da tradução do relato de Uncle Jimbilly em outro

código: "The children (...) sat disposed around Uncle Jimbilly and listened with faint tinglings of embarrassment"⁷. Para o ouvinte já situado fora da tradição do narrado, o embaraço, a estranheza é a única possibilidade. Rompe-se aí a relação ingênua entre narrador-ouvinte, que, segundo Benjamin, caracteriza este tipo de narrativa. Não há mais qualquer sentimento de comunhão. Nesse estranhamento, nessa fissura que se abre a partir do encontro algo assustador com o Outro, surge a necessidade de uma outra tradução, capaz de dizer algo a esse ouvinte que vem de alhures. O até então confiável relato de uma experiência é remetido para o terreno da fidelidade incerta da memória. Como recontar ao Outro a história que ele sempre escreveu sozinho? Como dizer dos fatos quando o que há são cicatrizes? Qual o distanciamento possível quando o que está em jogo é o próprio corpo? Qual a retórica possível quando o próprio corpo é uma eloquência? A necessidade de traduzir-se para o Outro, na língua do Outro marca para a literatura negra a perda de toda inocência.

Para além (aquém?) do símbolo

"Não se trata de revelar o sentido (latente) de um enunciado, de um traço, de uma narrativa, mas de fissurar a própria representação do sentido; não se trata de mudar ou purificar os símbolos, mas de contestar o próprio simbólico."⁸

Roland Barthes

Esse aventurar-se na língua do Outro que é a escrita negra deve deparar-se necessariamente com as construções simbólicas da tradição branca, elaborada ao longo dos séculos. Pensando-se a linguagem enquanto algo da ordem do simbólico (e portanto da lei), qual é o lugar do escritor menor face a esse aparato que já determina o que é e o que não é possível ser dito? Sabendo-se que a língua é fascista (Barthes), podemos percebê-la como um demarcador de territórios e de limites.

A vereda aberta por Paul Laurence Dunbar em seu poema "A Song" é a da reescritura desrespeitosa da tradição branca. Assumindo o caráter necessariamente intertextual da literatura menor, o texto repensa o problema do símbolo a partir de um soneto de Shakespeare (soneto XVII):

"Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?
Thou art more lovely and more temperate:

Rough winds do shake the darling buds of May.

And summer's lease hath all too short a date:

Sometime too hot the eye of heaven shines,

And often is his gold complexion dimm'd;
And every fair from fair sometime declines,

By chance or nature's changing course untrimm'd;

But thy eternal summer shall not fade,
Nor lose possession of that fair thou owest,

Nor shall death brag thou wanderest in his shade,

When in eternal lines to time thou growest;

So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see,

So long lives this, and this gives life to thee."⁹

A Song (Paul L. Dunbar)

"Thou art the soul of a summer's day,
Thou art the breath of the rose.

But the summer is fled

And the rose is dead.

Where are they gone, who knows, who knows?

Thou art the blood of my heart o'hearts,
Thou art my soul's repose,

But my heart grows numb

And my soul is dumb

Where art thou, love, who knows, who knows?

Thou art the hope of my after years —
Sun for my winter snows.

But the years go by

'Neath a clouded sky.

Where shall we meet, who knows, who knows?"¹⁰

No texto shakespeareano, a literatura surge como o lugar possível de eternização da beleza da amada ("when in eternal lines to time thou growest"). As metáforas retiradas da

natureza ("summer's day", "buds of May", "the eye of heaven") cumprem o papel de reforçar a impermeabilidade da musa ao fluxo do tempo. Há, em Shakespeare, uma beleza algo platoniana que permanece idealmente imune aos estragos do tempo sobre a matéria. O texto assim articula construções simbólicas que, na medida em que se pretendem eternas, se apresentam naturalizadas.

Ao investir parodicamente sobre o texto de Shakespeare, Paul Laurence Dunbar reescreve seus símbolos, desconstruindo-os. Se atentarmos para o trabalho desenvolvido em "A Song", veremos que se trata de uma *temporalização do símbolo*; este é deslocado para o ciclo vida/ morte ("the rose is dead", "the summer is fled"): escrito/ inscrito novamente na história, relativizado, temporalizado. Enquanto a amada é remetida para um outro lugar — o da incerteza —, começa-se a desconfiar do poder da representação da metáfora. O que acontece quando as metáforas construídas pelo branco já não dizem do amor do menor? Diante da impossibilidade de ignorá-las — o que corresponderia à utopia de um lugar fora do simbólico — resta-lhe arranhá-las, esvaziá-las, reescrevê-las à luz da própria crise de seu poder de representação. O poema de Dunbar se tece, assim, no jogo das ausências: à ausência da amada corresponde a ausência do simbólico que dê conta de dizer do desejo.

Para a literatura menor não se trata, evidentemente, de pretender ingenuamente um espaço a salvo do simbólico, no qual uma relação mais "direta" e "autêntica" com o referente pudesse ser resgatada. Trata-se, ao invés, como no poema de Dunbar, de investir sobre o próprio simbólico, introduzindo-lhe fissuras, forçando-o a seus limites. Para o escritor negro, desnaturalizar sua relação com a língua herdada é uma questão vital, de sobrevivência inclusive. Estranhá-la já no próprio olhar, desterritorializá-la,

num processo pelo qual o próprio sujeito se descentra. Traduzir o branco incessantemente, para além de toda servilidade, até transformá-lo em tradução da tradução. Fazer de Shakespeare, borgianamente, a tradução de Dunbar.

Compreendendo o símbolo, juntamente com Peirce,¹¹ como o primado da lei, a desterritorialização equivaleria portanto ao retorno daquele traço, risco, do balbucio não-

traduzido pelo simbólico. Como no texto do poeta africano:

"O meu poema joga bola despreocupado
no grupo onde todo mundo é criado
e grita
Obeçalte golo golo"¹²

A oralidade é aí reinscrita no corpo do significante. A língua da tribo retorna, abrindo uma fissura na língua do Estado. Reencenando o intraduzível por essa vereda algo feminina da escrita: "A escrita feminina

faz: faz ouvir através da língua pátria — que afinal, é sempre a língua que se escreve nos textos literários — a voz modulada da mãe, esta voz maldita, terrível, e acalentadora, no entanto."¹³ Essa vereda pela qual o texto força brechas, fendas no edifício congelado do símbolo-pátrio. Essa escrita-buraco, paradoxal, cheia de ausência. Como uma rosa envelhecida, desmetaforizada, que não diz de nenhum desejo. □

NOTAS

- ¹ ELLISON, R. apud BAKER, Houston A. *Blues, Ideology, and Afro-American Literature: a vernacular theory*. Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1984, p.1.
- ² DUBOIS, W.E.B. apud MILLIGAN, N.M. W.E.B. Dubois' American Pragmatism. In: *Journal of American Culture*, Bowling Green, Bowling Green Popular Press, Summer 1985. p.36.
- ³ ASCHER, N. O texto e sua sombra (teses sobre a teoria da tradução). In: *34 letras*, Rio de Janeiro, 34 Literatura S/C & Nova Fronteira, n.3, mar. 1989. p.142.
- ⁴ KAFKA, F. apud DELEUZE, G. & GUATTARI, F. *Kafka: por uma literatura menor*. Trad. Júlio Castañon Guimarães. Rio de Janeiro, Imago, 1977. p.41.
- ⁵ NETO, A. *Poemas de Angola*. 2. ed. Rio de Janeiro, Codecri, 1979. p.18.
- ⁶ PORTER, K.A. The Witness. In: KEARNS, F.E. (org.) *Black Identity: a thematic reader*. New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1970. p.40.
- ⁷ Ibidem, p.40.
- ⁸ BARTHES, R. A mitologia hoje. In: *O rumor da língua*. Trad. Mário Laranjeira. São Paulo, Brasiliense, 1988. p.80.
- ⁹ SHAKESPEARE, W. Sonnet XVIII. In: *The Complete Works of Willian Shakespeare*. London, Atlantis, 1980. p.13.
- ¹⁰ DUNBAR, P.L. A Song. In: BONTEMPS, A. (org.) *American Negro Poetry*. New York, Hill and Wang, 1968. p.13.
- ¹¹ Cf. o conceito de símbolo tal como usado neste texto em: PEIRCE, C.S. *Semiótica*. Tradução de José Teixeira Coelho. São Paulo, Perspectiva, 1977. Especialmente dois textos: "Sinopse parcial de uma proposta para um trabalho sobre lógica", p.21-37 e "Ícone, Índice, Símbolo", p.63-76.
- ¹² FORTES, C. Boca a Barlavento. In: FERREIRA, M. (org.) *No reino de Caliban - Antologia panorâmica de poesia africana de expressão portuguesa*. Lisboa, Seara Nova, 1975. p.136.
- ¹³ CASTELLO BRANCO, L. *O umbigo da escrita*. (inédito).

Summary

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the application of semiotics to the instruction of language, particularly foreign or second language. The first section of this paper will deal

primarily with what semiotics is and its implications for education. The

second section will consider criteria suggested by semiotics by which methods of language instruction can be evaluated and discuss applications to the classroom. The final section will

deal with potential applications to teacher

training suggested by a semiotic approach to language instruction. In this approach, semiotic criteria would be used primarily as an evaluative tool to determine whether methods and techniques are viable. This is an approach to language instruction; there is no prescriptive semiotic curriculum.

Resumo

Este artigo discute a aplicação da semiótica ao ensino de língua, especialmente língua estrangeira ou segunda língua. A primeira parte lidará com o conceito de semiótica e suas implicações para a educação. A segunda parte analisará critérios sugeridos pela semiótica através dos quais se possa avaliar

métodos de ensino, bem como suas aplicações em sala de aula. A parte final apresentará possíveis aplicações da abordagem semiótica de ensino de língua no treinamento de professores. Nessa abordagem, critérios semióticos seriam utilizados como instrumento para avaliar a viabilidade de métodos e técnicas. Trata-se de uma abordagem de ensino de língua; não há, em termos semióticos, um currículo prescritivo.

In preparing myself to teach English in Japan, I read Earl Stevick's *Memory, meaning & method*. In it he poses a paradox as follows: in the field of language teaching, Method A is the logical contradiction of Method B: if the assumptions from which A claims to be derived are correct, then B cannot work, and vice versa. Yet one colleague is getting excellent results with A and another is getting comparable results with B. How is this possible? asks Stevick (1976). In a positivistic paradigm such results are not supposed to happen.

I have spent the past six years of my life as a teacher trying to come to terms with what I consider to be a serious flaw in instructional practice. I consider myself a humanist and as such desire that humanism be the driving force behind my actions in the classroom. I sense, however, that humanistic practice in the classroom is at best a spotty affair, at worst, simply given lip service. The primary bug in the works seems to be positivism, in particular its offspring, behaviorism. My personal dilemma was that even when I recognized that I was simply putting my students through the hoops, my training in

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Second Language

Teaching: a

Semiotic Approach

Ensino de Segunda Língua: Uma Abordagem Semiótica

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behavioral methodology was all I had to fall back on; I could not think of an alternative to putting my student through the hoops. I have since been in search of a complete philosophy of instruction within which to structure the instruction I wished to provide.

This lack of a philosophy of education encompassing humanism has led to a situation where there is a number of fine teachers and instructional designers creating excellent alternatives to traditional instruction while there is no structure for these alternatives to fit within – no means for them to become viable to the vast majority of educational planners. Some of these programs find homes for short periods in schools or school systems where they survive on the patronage of some powerful or strong-willed person. The program, however, is likely to disappear when the patron does, because it has no integral place in the curriculum. In Japan, for example, a climate exists where innovation is accepted because there appears to be a number of learning blocks associated with the instruction of English. In general, however, no structure exists to integrate innovation into the formal structure of educational institutions. Programs that are not successful in short periods of time, or programs dependent upon individual patronage (most language teachers stay in Japan only a short time) tend to fade away. This is particularly unfortunate because the effects of any particular program are usually long-term rather than short-term.

I propose that using a semiotic model to structure language education would make room for innovations in instruction, and provide us with some humanistic criteria by which to do formative evaluation of such innovations.

What Is Semiotics and what does It have to do with education?

Semiotics is a philosophy that posits that all knowledge is mediated by signs. A sign is something that stands for something else (Deely 1982). All we can know of the world is signs. This means in effect that we do not see the world as it really is, we perceive signs that make it possible for us to construct a reality – an idea of what the world is. Each individual's construction of reality is his or her *Umwelt*. It is in effect a bubble in which each individual lives (von Uexküll 1981). The *Umwelt* is composed of each individual's inner self, including cognitive potential and the experiences each individual has had. These are used to build a subjective construction of the physical world. Everything we perceive about the physical world is filtered through this *Umwelt*. Because of this filter we cannot know the physical world directly. The *Umwelt* therefore constructs and is constructed by the physical world. The *Umwelten* of individuals are in constant communication with the physical world as well as the *Umwelten* of other individuals.

The notion of *Umwelt* is especially important for education. The *Umwelt* is created through continuous interaction of the individual with the physical world. This interaction involves all the senses; it is both verbal and non-verbal. According to John Deely (1986), verbal language is an extension of non-verbal communication. This is demonstrated by the ability of humans to communicate not only with other humans who speak other languages, but with non-human species as well. It has been estimated that 80% of all communication is non-verbal.

Culture plays an important role in the construction of *Umwelten* in humans because it is an aspect of the

individual's environment. Culture determines in a very dramatic way what experiences the individual will and will not have, let alone the importance attached to experiences that do happen.

Knowledge is an aspect of the present state of the *Umwelt*. Learning, or growth, happens at the juncture of the *Umwelt* and the physical world. A new experience may reinforce current knowledge or it may challenge it. When the *Umwelt* changes because of experience, learning has occurred. Learning is a naturally occurring phenomenon. For an organism to survive, it must constantly learn and change based upon experiences that occur through this constant communication. The process is semiosis. The study of this process is Semiotics.

How do Semiotic assumptions about education differ from Positivist assumptions?

Positivist assumptions concerning education include the notion that the environment is an objective location existing separate from the individual. The environment is the same for all individuals, indeed, all species-it is basically unchanging. It is a physically existing entity that has an impact upon an organism and serves as a source of stimulation. Through manipulation of the environment, learning can be controlled.

Knowledge is located in the physical world and it is the responsibility of the individual to discover it. There is correct interpretation of this knowledge because the world exists in only one way. Hence Stevick's Paradox. Finding this correct interpretation is also the responsibility of the individual. Inability to do so is the result of lack of information due to the

state of the art or some failing on the part of the investigator.

Knowledge is to be transferred from teacher to learner in a manner such that the student understands it in the same way as the teacher, who is a more qualified interpreter. When faulty communication occurs remediation or correction may be required to get the student in line with "truth" (Cunningham 1987: 202). Students are mere receptacles for the information the teacher has deemed important.

Semiotic assumptions concerning education are quite different. In place of the notion of environment is the notion of *Umwelt*. An *Umwelt* of an organism is not independent of the organism but exists only in relation to the organism (Cunningham 1987: 210). This should explain why one cannot structure an environment for learning – it only exists as *Umwelt* – a subjective world, and is controlled by the learner. We can only structure our own personal "environment" although we can certainly have an impact upon the *Umwelten* of others through communication. The *Umwelt* is not static, it is constantly dynamic at both the level of species and level of individual. The planet with its atmosphere is itself a living, changing organism.

Knowledge is created by each individual to account for experience. It exists at the intersection of *Umwelt* and the physical world. Students therefore are not receptacles of knowledge – they are agents in its creation. Knowledge does not exist apart from the learner, and it does not necessarily exist in the same way in two individuals, multiple interpretations are possible.

What would instruction based on a semiotic philosophy be like?

1. Experiential: hands on.

First of all, it would be experiential. Elliot Eisner comments that: "what people become is largely a function of what they have an opportunity to experience" (1981: 466). Nicolas Ferguson likes to say that if typing classes were taught like language classes, there would be one typewriter at the front of the classroom and teachers would invite students to the front individually to show them where the "j" was. His response was to develop a language program where each learner spends about 40% of his time speaking and 50% listening.

There are two aspects to communication experience: receiving and sending. Ferguson attempts to balance the two. What is most important to consider is that the performing talents of the instructor are irrelevant to an experiential education except to the extent that they are interactions with students. This suggests a restructuring of the traditional classroom inasmuch as the teacher would give up center stage — there would be no center stage — a three ring circus, minus the nasty connotations, would be a more appropriate description.

One highly effective means of restructuring the classroom is to divide the class into pairs. This has a number of advantages: Experience of individuals is maximized, much more language is practiced; the instructor can deal with pairs in a similar manner as with individuals, effectively cutting class size in half; peers may be more effective at making corrections than teachers; teachers seem to be "out of the loop" from the perspective of students; the pair is optimal from the vantage point of responsibility – each member must share equally, as groups get larger there is a tendency for

individual members to revert to a passive mode; teacher interactions with small numbers are more likely to be timely and appropriate to the needs of learners; teacher interactions are likely to have a more powerful effect on a small group than on a large group; and teachers get out of the job of handling content and into the job of handling social interactions, they get to know their students better – important to understanding the *Umwelten* of their students. A semiotic approach suggests that without this basic knowledge of the learner's *Umwelt* on the part of the teacher instruction is very much a hit and miss affair.

Instruction founded on experience is primarily concerned with the experiences of the learner. This seems to me a sounder choice than founding instruction on knowledge. This makes it possible to focus on the knowledge constructions of individual learners. Decisions about specific instructional experiences will depend upon the instructor's interpretation of the *Umwelten* of his or her learners.

2. Make use of all senses and potentials available in students.

Experiences should cover all modalities of communication. In the process of learning as a natural phenomenon individuals are not limited to one or two senses with which to communicate, rather all the senses are available for drawing upon. Eisner believes that all individuals should receive education so that they are competent in all forms of communication. He names this literacy and says that learners should be literate in all forms of representation.

There are no coincidences. Forms of representation like mathematics and music exist specifically because they are the only way that the

meanings they convey are made possible. Meanings made possible by dance are different from those made possible by poetry. Literal translations cannot be made from one modality to another without significant loss of meaning (Eisner 1981).

Every individual has the potential to create meaning in multiple modalities, however, the extent to which that individual is capable of such an activity is dependent upon the forms of representation he learns to use. The ability to use these modalities affects both the ability to understand meanings created by others and the ability to create meanings. There is interaction between our sensory systems and forms of representation so that we can conceive an idea in one modality and express it in another. A writer may begin with pictures in his head and end with words on paper (Eisner 1981).

At present, the development of literacy in the many of the forms of representation that are available in the culture is neglected. This neglect denies learners access to meanings that are specific to particular forms and adversely affects the kinds of meanings they can express (Eisner 1981).

This sentiment is echoed by Rockefeller (1977) in his report "Coming to Our Senses: The Significance of the Arts in American Education." We use all of our senses to interpret and convey the complexities of everyday life. While verbal and written language is essential, all our sensory languages need to be developed as well if words are to fulfill their deeper function and deliver both subtle and vivid messages.

Man is by nature a sign manipulator, so it makes sense that the education of man should concern itself with the manipulation of signs. This would lead to a focus on the

"how" or process (how the learner manipulates signs himself in order to make new discoveries). A semiotics-based philosophy of education would deal with the question of the process learners use to create knowledge.

What sign systems are significant to language education? One could certainly argue that all are useful. After all, we attempt to describe experiences, no matter the type, with language. Assuming Deely's conjecture that language grows naturally from non-verbal forms of communication, especially gesture, is correct, dealing with language as a purely verbal entity is somewhat sterile.

For example, the instructional technique of roleplay uses a large amount of one's sensory capacity and requires conjuring up memories of others. It has great potential for use in the classroom, provided that the instructor is willing to take the trouble to make certain that students use their emotions, physical acuity, and ability to visualize, as well as their verbal skills. An added benefit of roleplay is that it is easy to introduce aspects of target culture into instruction through the appropriate use of movement, vocalizing, and emotional display. One way to break through the verbal barrier is to use ambiguous dialogues, those whose meanings are totally dependent upon context. TPR, for example, makes use of the fact that learners know how to walk, throw things, jump on things, etc. It simply demonstrates a new way of talking about these actions. An instructor using the Natural Approach might take students through a procedure they are familiar with: sharpening a pencil, driving a car, planning and taking a photograph, learning a dance. The important message of methods like TPR is that physical actions are involved in first language learning and can be used in second language learning.

Using procedural exercises: activities where one student gives directions while the other follows them are an effective combination of cognitive, verbal and bodily-kinesthetic and/or spatial skills. The use of commonly known procedures described in the target language by the instructor makes use of the students' innate abilities to problem solve. They understand what is happening and this gives them important clues to what is being said.

In an immersion program, school subject matter, especially that with its own obvious sign system (music, math) can be taught totally in the target language.

At more advanced levels, students may discuss examples of art work, cookery, athletic expertise, or emotional experiences in the target language. At this point students can begin to provide support to one another in the target language and hopefully make the language learning environment a special experience for those involved.

3. Purpose: to nurture change in Umwelten

- a. To provide a rich context in which interaction can take place.

It also makes sense to emphasize those experiences that bring about a change in the Umwelten of learners. Opportunity for needed interaction is greater in a rich context than an impoverished one. The more information, the greater the potential that something will catch the attention of some learner, or in Krashen's terms provide the all essential $i + 1$. Pragmatically this means throwing a wide enough net in terms of content that the present knowledge of each learner in the group is covered as well as the $+ 1$. John Oller provides a criterion by which to judge the

richness of language materials. He suggests writing out as many questions about the material as you can come up with. The greater the number of questions, the greater the depth of the material (Oller 1983). In general, it is far more satisfying to a language learner to come to grips with a passage with some meat in it. Lozanov or Ferguson would certainly argue that making something too simple, by dealing for example with only one idea, signals the learner that you have no confidence in his abilities. Even if his language level is low, one should not assume his cognitive abilities are, but rather, make use of his problem solving abilities.

For example, notions of family and friendship are universally common. One can as easily identify Sally as one's sister's best friend as identify her as a girl. In English the question "Is Sally a girl?" would be considered silly. Furthermore it is impoverished enough in information to be quite boring to most learners. The richer the context, the more likely entry points for making the connection that makes growth in the *Umwelt* possible.

b. To provide opportunity for abductive reasoning.

Growth of the *Umwelt* happens when the individual is challenged by some surprising piece of information (experience) that forces him or her to alter his or her *Umwelt* to account for it. This creative activity is accounted for by abduction. Abduction is the process of making educated guesses about the world around us. It is a creative process, a way of formulating hypotheses from the cues we receive from the physical world. These cues are often non-verbal, and our reading of them may even be sub-conscious.

In learning a language, this is potentially the simplest to understand, yet hardest to implement. On the one

hand, the entire vocabulary and structure of the target language has great potential for providing surprising information to the student. The problem is that most teachers explain away the surprises before students get a try at them. The activity turns from one of problem solving to one of trying to remember what the teacher said was happening.

When such opportunities arise, as they definitely do, the instructor should curb her initial desire to explain (especially to an entire class, because not everyone will be ready for an explanation anyway). Rather, offer the students with the question other examples of use of language with the same problem, and let them form hypotheses for surprising information. Finally, help them test these hypotheses.

Instructors should keep in mind that abductive reasoning places a major part in the growth of *Umwelten* and that depriving students of abductive experiences deprives them not only of immediate growth but potentially of developing the skills that make growth possible. One responsibility of a semiotics-based language curriculum would then be to allow students to practice abductive processes.

c. To provide students with evidence that multiple realities exist.

Because of the individualized nature of constructions of the world created through semiosis, it makes sense that the focus of instruction should be in large part at least the current state and potential of the individual student. According to Reigeluth (1987: 3) our group-based, lock-stepped, graded, and time-oriented system is responsible for effectively destroying the inherent desire to learn in all but a small percentage of learners. On the other

hand, this focus must be balanced with the notion that semiosis is the product of interaction, in large part, interaction with other people. Group interaction is required in order for maximum learning to occur. This will first of all bring the student to understand that other constructions than his own exist, and secondly facilitate his learning process by giving him experiences that challenge his present construction of the world.

Discussions with fellow students will provide evidence to individuals that multiple realities exist, especially if reflexive skills (discussed below) are developed. Language instruction, however, offers something more. The foreign or second language is the product of another culture, understanding it is in part dependent upon understanding that culture. The fact that languages are so different suggests multiple realities, as do other aspects of target cultures.

Cultural experiences need to be provided to language learners. If the instructor has lived in the target culture, she can provide some of these experiences, using roleplay, literature, fine arts, films, and other books and recordings. If a member of the target culture could be interviewed by members of the class, all the better. This would have the advantage of providing students experience with methods of inquiry, which they will transfer to other language learning environments, and even to totally different subject fields. If it is possible for students to get the experience of immersion in the target culture, that's even better. In the United States there are ethnic neighborhoods that might serve this purpose. Of course in the second language situation, the target culture is readily available to the student. Field work should be an integral part of instruction, i. e., scavenger hunts, observations, etc.

- d. Provide students with reflexive skills, and nurture empowerment.

For students to come to terms with their own learning processes and with the knowledge they will construct, reflexivity will be important. To know that there are multiple realities should be a liberating realization. To realize then, that you or I am empowered to effect the world around us as a group or as individuals and that knowledge can play a role in how we decide to have that effect is a powerful motivation for the creation of more knowledge. To reach this point responsibly, each learner should engage in a significant amount of soul searching both individually and in groups where his thoughts can be critiqued by others.

There are a number of techniques available for developing skills in reflexivity. Students can be asked to keep personal journals of their language learning experience. Initially, at least, these should be done in the native language. Later the instructor can require that they be done in a mixture of the target and native languages or even the target language alone – the ability to express oneself affectively in another language is evidence of being fairly skilled in that language.

In addition, the instructor would benefit from occasional reflexive debriefing sessions with her students. These will assist the instructor in evaluation of instructional strategies, and if handled skillfully will create a bond of trust in the classroom. To make such sessions work, instructors should be prepared to allow students to express themselves emotionally, should accept what students say, even when disagreeing with them (multiple realities), and should try to reconstruct for themselves the reality of the students through interviewing techniques: asking thoughtful

questions and listening to the responses.

The objective of development of reflexive skills in students is to make it possible for them to realize that when they learn something, they are at the same time changing the world as they know it. Proactive decision-making, then, can affect the world. This realization should help each student come to terms with the stake he has in his own education.

Application to teacher training

1. Being aware of the *Umwelten* of learners

The primary charge of teachers would be to facilitate semiosis or growth. Instructors would be required to be continually aware of the processes of their charges to make certain that they get the experiences they need to grow. This would require the skill of being able to reconstruct in one's own mind the *Umwelten* of other individuals in order to give advice and counsel on how to proceed, or what experiences are likely to be productive. It would be important to keep in mind the level of ability each student demonstrates in the manipulation of various sign systems. The use of naturalistic methods of evaluation and inquiry within a Semiotics-based curriculum seems quite natural. Reigeluth's suggestion that teachers maintain profiles on individual students does as well (Reigeluth 1987).

Of importance in Uexküll's notion of *Umwelt*, is the idea that one can learn about the *Umwelt* of another through what he calls "participatory observation" (Uexküll, T. 1981). Skills in participatory observation should be cultivated in pre-service and in-service instructors. They are of value for reasons of evaluation and inquiry. Teachers should be involved in both

these processes; evaluation in order to remain in touch with how well selected materials, techniques, and resources are helping students, and inquiry in order to contribute to knowledge in the field. The latter can be justified on the basis that a semiotic approach to instruction involves helping students gain the skills they need in order to create knowledge for themselves. Instructors can set examples for their students by modeling techniques of inquiry.

Teacher training should include requirements for completion of case studies (hands on) using naturalistic methods both for the purpose of reconstruction of the *Umwelten* of individuals (inquiry) and for the purpose of analyzing the interaction of individuals with instructional materials (evaluation). Techniques could include ethnographic studies, emic studies, and hermeneutic circles as described by Lincoln and Guba (1985; see also Guba & Lincoln 1985). Execution of these techniques would help instructors develop skills in observation, note-taking, and interviewing (listening as well as question asking).

2. Being reflexive

Instruction would be focused on the student, not content, would unfold as student needs became apparent, and would be oriented toward the individual learner or small groups of learners. Knowledge would be regarded as a process, not a static structure to be learned and remembered. Instructors can be encouraged to reach this conclusion on their own through development of reflexive skills. This would involve small sem-inar size groups, like support groups, where pre-service and/or in-service instructors would meet to discuss their own learning preferences and problems and later, those of their students. This would encourage a constructive interaction

among participants to solve the problems of individuals with their own learning problems and with the learning problems of their students.

As teachers become aware of the multitude of ways they and their colleagues approach learning problems, they will become aware of some of the ways their own students may do the same, and hopefully expect to find even more. This will, it is hoped, prompt instructors to investigate many approaches, methods and techniques of language instruction, in order to deal with the special needs their students may exhibit. As they come to understand that their own learning is unique and under their own control they should come to understand that they do not control the learning of their students, but that they can nurture it.

Instructors should be encouraged to keep reflexive journals to log their own reactions to and thoughts about the instructional processes of their classrooms. This is usually a requirement of naturalistic inquiry, so that the *Umwelt* of the researcher/instructor can be taken into account as an aspect of the study. It would provide the instructor with an account of how she interacted with the instructional environment and provide a basis upon which the instructor might decide to modify her course of action. It should be used as an aspect of course evaluation on the part of the instructor; because a method of instruction is a contract between instructor and student, the instructor must feel confident that the contract has been upheld on her part.

3. Coming to terms with the impact of culture on the individual

Reflexive sessions will also be used to help instructors discover the impact that culture has had on their own *Umwelten*. This is particularly

important in a field that proposes to introduce another culture to their students. Instructors need to know the extent to which they are shaped by their own culture so that they can challenge their students to see the world in new ways. This would put foreign language teachers in an ideal position to confront the encapsulation of their students and nurture their growth.

I would suggest that all instructors have an experience in another culture, have the experience of confronting their own encapsulation as defined by their culture. Again, the experience should be recorded in the form of a reflexive journal. When possible support groups should be formed to encourage the understanding of the target culture and the growth of individual *Umwelten* in the milieu of this culture. Instructors should especially be encouraged to keep track of those things about the target culture they especially liked, disliked, or found surprising. There should be an attempt through a support group to reconstruct the realities of members of the target culture. Here again, inquiry techniques like observation will be very helpful.

4. Learning to deal with the unique needs of students.

In order to accomplish this, instructors will need to be aware of the many resources that are available to them, the many ways people learn, and techniques for providing an instruction that exploits the resources available within students themselves.

Resources available to instructors include the variety of instructional methods and approaches available. These can be assessed using the criteria provided in the previous section of the paper. Instructors should especially search for methods of language instruction that utilize the

potentials of students, all their sensory capacities.

Instructors should attempt to include other senses than auditory in the language learning process. The auditory channel may not provide the easiest route to language learning for all students, those particularly weak auditorily may find language instruction frustrating to the point of giving up on it. Instructors should experiment with instructional activities using various and multiple sensory modalities. A great deal more needs to be investigated in this area. I cannot think of one method of language instruction that truly makes use of all the learner's senses, except possibly role play, and it is not normally used to this end, but in practice usually focuses on verbal intelligence and auditory perception.

Teacher training courses should include language learning experiences with many different methods of instruction. Many schools talk about innovative methods of instruction, but few engage in them. Experienced instructors in the Silent Way, Suggestopedia, Community Language Learning, TPR, and Natural Approach should be utilized to provide significant instruction in a language, rather than short workshops.

In addition instructors should be exposed to methods of instructional design, so that they can set about structuring learning experiences into a system that resembles the whole of the target language. This may mean more keeping track of the skills and experiences of their students in order to suggest further study rather than prescribing learning experiences (at least on a whole group basis, it is expected that experiences may have to be prescribed for individual students). It may also mean making an informed decision not to structure these learning experiences at all. I

would however suggest that such rule breaking should be decided upon by someone well acquainted with the rules and the consequences and benefits of such rule breaking.

In the same vein, instructors should be encouraged to develop their own systems of instruction that go beyond the parameters of presently existing methods, that employ more of the sensory capabilities of students, and that integrate the best of many different methods without creating something that works against itself, that is internally inconsistent. This would require certain skills instructional design, particularly task analysis.

Use of knowledge gleaned from inquiry and evaluation will help the instructor build such systems. In

teams, instructors could engage in simulations that involve the construction of foreign language curricula for public or private schools or for different developmental levels of students.

In summary, instruction in a semiotic approach would emphasize ways of knowing a language not simply in the traditional verbal mode, but in a variety of interconnected modes. In this view, instruction becomes an activity whereby we equip students to deliberately and self-consciously construct the world in which they are to live. In this case, through learning another language students are opening themselves to a world of people, literature, and a way of thinking not necessarily available to them in their own language. Teachers become models of semiosis and

monitors of the student's ongoing semiosis. Classrooms become places where appropriate contexts for knowledge making are provided (Cunningham 1987).

The suggestions provided in this paper are not intended to be total prescriptive systems of instruction either for students or for teachers. Specific instruction is dependent upon the contract between the instructor and her students. This is ultimately the answer to Stevick's paradox, people learn in ways that they are convinced it is best for them to learn and this is determined by student/instructor interaction and negotiation. The suggestions given for teacher training should be integrated into teacher education program, rather than be seen as possible replacements for present practice. □

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Summary

The Three MacBeths of this paper are, first, the real King of Scotland from 1040 to 1057; second, the character from Holinshed's Chronicles, Shakespeare's source; and third, Shakespeare's character in his eponymous play. This

The Three MacBeths: study examines the

Fact and Fiction

interrelationships of fact and fiction in the three MacBeths of history, chronicle, and literature, as well as significant changes made by Shakespeare in the interests of a more dramatic and politically acceptable work.

Os Três MacBeths: Fato e Ficção

Jonathan P.J. Radvan*

Resumo

Os três Macbeths discutidos neste ensaio são, primeiro, o rei da Escócia entre 1040 e 1057; em segundo lugar, o personagem das Crônicas de Holinshed, fonte utilizada por Shakespeare; e, finalmente, o personagem da peça shakespeareana. Este estudo examina as interrelações entre fato e ficção nos três Macbeths – o da história, o da crônica e o da literatura. Examina, ainda, as alterações significativas efetuadas por Shakespeare a fim de criar um texto mais teatral e mais aceitável politicamente.

Imagine a nobleman of eleventh-century Scotland, an accomplished warrior and military leader, yet a man

of exceptional piety and devotion to God, who even made a pilgrimage to Rome. The man in question had the strongest claim to the throne of Scotland, stronger even than the young and irresponsible King Duncan. The bishops and magnates agreed to get rid of Duncan and asked the strongest claimant to the throne to lead an army to depose and kill the king, which was duly done. The new king's main accomplice in the overthrow of Duncan was a certain Banquo, but we must remember that this is an age in which the majority of kings and claimants are murdered, usually much more furtively than in the case of Duncan. His successor manages to establish peace and order, where many monarchs before him have failed. During his seventeen-year reign churches are built, many wise laws enacted, and much of the endemic civil strife is quelled. In the normal course of events, a rival claimant to the throne, Malcolm, son of Duncan, raises an army and succeeds in defeating and killing the king, who, as you are probably all aware by now, was MacBeth, but not the MacBeth of Shakespeare, nor even of Shakespeare's primary source, Holinshed. The man I have introduced to you is a stranger, the unknown MacBeth of modern historical research, king of Scotland from 1040 to 1057. This Macbeth of fact can tell us a great deal about the great MacBeth of fiction, without whom the real MacBeth would long ago have fallen into obscurity.

It is well-known that Shakespeare gleaned most of the plot for *MacBeth* from the *Chronicles of England, Scotland, and Ireland*, to which Holinshed put his name. The preface informs us that the main source for volume five, which deals with Scotland, was the Latin text of Hector

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Boethius translated into Scots (a dialect of English) by John Bellenden, Archdeacon of Murray, and thence into English by Holinshed, who takes credit for the period ending in 1571, after which the *Chronicles* were taken to 1587 by others. Apart from Boethius, Holinshed cites many other named and unnamed sources. Nevertheless, Holinshed is truly the author of the *Chronicles*, which are primarily a literary work, similar in this respect, to the histories of Herodotus, Thucydides and Tacitus and other historical writers, who made use of mythology, personal opinion, legends and a hotch potch of fact and fiction, to record the epic feats of men and nations.

For Holinshed, the truth was subjective and in accordance with his religion and other beliefs. What modern historian nowadays could get away with starting an historical work (as Holinshed does in Volume V of the *Chronicles*) by delivering an excoriating condemnation of intemperance and its evil consequences, of which the worst, he warns us, is sterility? He further admonishes the British people for their slothfulness in not exploiting the abundant resources with which God has blessed their nations. If this sounds like the protestant work ethic that is exactly what it is. Throughout the *Chronicles* protestants are referred to as "the people of the religion" and neither catholics, nor the enemies of England get a fair press. The subjective points of view in such a work are only to be expected in the century of Reformation in which, depending what country you lived in, there was a right and a wrong way of looking at religion, politics and personal morality. Apart from this, historians had to rely on biased and incomplete sources, and objective empirical methods of research were largely unknown.

However, none of this was terribly important to Shakespeare, who only wanted to find a plot for a play in which the action would take place in Scotland and would in some way involve the ancestors of the reigning king, Shakespeare's patron James VI of Scotland and I of England, who was the first Scottish king to rule over both England and Scotland. James' catholic mother, Mary, had been put to death by his immediate predecessor on the English throne, Elizabeth Tudor, who left no direct heirs. James, as protestant and an heir to the throne, was invited to England as king to establish peace and to secure the dominion of Protestantism, which had already once been challenged and briefly overthrown, by the catholic daughter of Henry VIII, Queen Mary Tudor. James, therefore, needed to do everything he could to assure his power and the succession of his line, which was directly threatened more than once. When king of Scotland, before also becoming king of England in 1603, James' life had been threatened by the Earl of Gowrie in 1600. In 1605 James and the entire parliament narrowly escaped assassination from the conspirators in the Gunpowder Plot, who almost managed to blow up the Houses of Parliament.

Shakespeare was greatly indebted to King James. His predecessor, Elizabeth, had outlawed professional actors, unless they obtained the official patronage and protection of a nobleman. James further restricted this by permitting professional actors, only under his own personal patronage. Shakespeare and his actors were chosen, and James was generous to them, increasing the remuneration for each court performance from ten to twenty pounds, more than doubling the number of court performances, and by granting the actors permanent status as grooms of the chamber. It was therefore very much in Shakespeare's interest, as official court playwright, to

adapt his work to the needs and tastes of his patron, and this is particularly clear in *MacBeth*.

Banquo appears as an heroic character without blemish, although Holinshed states that Banquo was MacBeth's chief confederate in the murder of Duncan (269). Banquo was claimed by James VI and I as an ancestor of the Stuart family, and this is corroborated by the witches' prophecy in Holinshed (268), cited in act I of *MacBeth*, that Banquo would not be king, but that his heirs would:

govern the Scottish kingdome by long order of continuall descent (268)

The procession of eight kings in Act IV, Sc. I, the last of them holding a mirror to show infinite succession, and followed by the ghost of Banquo, is introduced by Shakespeare, as an original invention, which serves as propaganda, to affirm the unbroken line of kings of the family of James Stuart through the centuries, although the claim does not bear up to close historical scrutiny. Even in the *Chronicles* Holinshed informs us that Fleance, the son of Banquo, escaped to Wales after the murder of his father. There Fleance was put to death by the Welsh king, for getting his daughter with child without marrying her. This effectively makes the entire line of Banquo and James Stuart illegitimate. It is not surprising to see that, although Shakespeare follows Holinshed closely elsewhere, this entire episode is omitted.

Shakespeare was not concerned with historical truth, which was not as important to his contemporaries as it is to us, but with adapting history to suit his artistic and political purposes. One case in which this is particularly true, is in the treatment of Duncan. We all know the saintly, old king of Shakespeare's creation, who was perhaps modelled on an English eleventh-century king, Edward the Confessor. Holinshed does not state

whether Duncan was old or young, but he does call him a “dull, coward and slouthfull person” and an ineffectual ruler (267) and has very little to say in his favour.

More recent historical scholarship reveals a Duncan diametrically opposed to that of Shakespeare: a young, impulsive king, in the habit of ordering disastrous raids on England, in which many of his finest warriors were slain, without any benefit to Scotland. As I have mentioned, the bishops and magnates of Scotland finally rebelled and sent MacBeth and Banquo with an army to depose Duncan. A battle was fought in the northeast, at Burghead, where Duncan was defeated and killed, either during, or shortly after the battle. This happened in 1040, so it is understandable that Holinshed, writing over five centuries later, should have recorded a rather diluted and unclear version of events. However, despite the primitive methods of research available to him, Holinshed did record that Duncan was a poor ruler and yet Shakespeare portrays him as a saintly, old man, a lamb to the slaughter, for dramatic reasons.

Even if Shakespeare had been aware of the historical facts as we know them, he would probably have ignored or altered them, as he did in many cases with the account given in the *Chronicles*. In the case of Duncan it is not hard to see why Shakespeare made this decision. MacBeth is depicted as a fallen hero, a man of extremes and so his bad deeds have to be truly evil. Therefore Duncan is defenceless, asleep, a friend and kinsman of MacBeth (on this last point, Shakespeare is accurate historically). The murder is plotted and premeditated, and innocent people are inculpated, so that the whole deed reeks of unhealthy ambition, treachery and sacrilege. The remorse felt by MacBeth and Lady

MacBeth and the entire emotional development of the plot can be traced to this murder, but imagine how different and how dull the play would be if the death of Duncan were portrayed exactly as it occurred in history!

The murder of Duncan is described very briefly in the *Chronicles* (269) and, as pointed out by both Kenneth Adger and R. A. Law, it is probable that Shakespeare borrowed episodes unrelated to the story of MacBeth, from elsewhere in the *Chronicles*, such as the murder of King Duffe, in which the murderer intoxicates the king's bodyguards, prior to the murder, or the episode in which the guilt of King Kenneth is described, after the murder of his nephew. While Shakespeare may have borrowed in this way, it seems equally possible for him to have invented these alterations to the historical narrative, as he did so freely elsewhere, notably in the legitimacy of MacBeth's claim to the throne.

Earlier I mentioned how Shakespeare used *MacBeth* as a vehicle to support the succession of James Stuart, but this also depends, in the play, upon diminishing or omitting the historically strong claim to the throne of Scotland which MacBeth had, which is carefully excised by Shakespeare. His contemporaries were used to succession remaining within one family and crowns being passed from father to son or daughter and even Holinshed seems to have been unaware of the system of succession which operated in Scotland in the eleventh century, which followed the Gaelic tradition of tanistry, by which the right to be king fell to the “most worthy” male relative of the reigning monarch. The abuse inherent in such a system can well be imagined, although it was designed to keep those who were too young, or infirm, or in some other way unsuitable, from the throne. This was

a purely practical measure, necessary in a brutal world in which kings had to be strong, cunning, ruthless and lucky, just to survive.

At the end of the tenth century certain kings had tried to establish hereditary succession, but it was not legally recognized in Scotland until well into the thirteenth century. Duncan was nominated by his grandfather (his father being dead) Malcolm II (1005-34), but the former only succeeded to the throne, because two other claimants were murdered shortly before his investiture, and the other, Lulach, was a child, reputed to be simple-minded. The system of tanists (as all the possible heirs were known) effectively established a succession of the fittest, that man being the one who could kill his rivals and avoid being killed himself. Between 943 and 1097 there were fourteen kings of Scotland, of whom ten were murdered. Of course many more tanists were also killed in that period. Compared to other kings MacBeth came to the throne in the least reprehensible of ways, in broad daylight, as it were, and with the full backing of the clergy and nobility. MacBeth was also the most obvious candidate to succeed Duncan, for not only was he the most accomplished military leader, but his claim was actually stronger than that of either Duncan, or his son Malcolm. The genealogy is complex, but suffice it to say that MacBeth was not merely a grandson of Malcolm II, as was Duncan, but was also related by blood and by marriage, to Malcolm II's immediate predecessor, Kenneth III (997-1005). MacBeth would have been unable to rule in peace for so long, had his claim not been recognized by the great majority of the other magnates and tanists. Here again, even if Shakespeare had been aware of these facts, they would not have been used in the plot, as they do not serve either the artistic or the

political purposes of the play of *MacBeth*.

These political purposes are further underscored by Henry N. Paul in his book, *The Royal Play of MacBeth*. He maintains convincingly, that the play was ordered expressly for a court performance to celebrate a visit of the king of Denmark. (James was married to a Danish princess.) This certainly would explain, as Paul asserts, why the Danes of Holinshed's *Chronicles*, vanquished by MacBeth and Banquo in Act I, have been diplomatically transformed by Shakespeare into Norwegians. The Danish king could familiarize himself a little with Scotland and with James through this play and could feel reassured that the protestant succession was secure in England and Scotland.

The play also gives evidence of James' great interest in the occult, which inspired him to write a book on demonology. Shakespeare knew his patron well, and when he read in the *Chronicles* about a Scottish king, ruled by witches and dependent upon their prophecies, and who was also such a fascinating mixture of great good and great evil, it is little wonder that he chose MacBeth as the subject of his Scottish play – a character which could satisfy Shakespeare's fascination with human psychology and at the same time incorporate not only an ancestor of James, but also one of his favorite interests: witches and the occult. Here again Shakespeare borrows what he wants from the *Chronicles* in the form of the witches' prophecies in Act I, Sc. III and again in Act IV, Ac. I. In the latter case though, Shakespeare has fun with the idea, introducing symbolic apparitions, including the procession of kings. Act I opens with the witches concocting a foul brew and the whole play is thereby given a brooding, evil atmosphere which is dramatically most effective, as well as being

appropriate to the subject and pleasing to James Stuart.

Quite aside from the symbolic power of Hecate and the witches and their dramatic effectiveness, we must bear in mind that they were real to most people in early seventeenth century Britain. Women were quite legally put to death for being witches. The weird sisters or faeries or spirits mentioned by Holinshed are worthy material for history, and the common explanation he gives for MacBeth's transformation from a good to an evil king is his association with witches and wizards, who were seen as a real source of evil (274). Although the witches are evil, it is a neat irony to notice that it is through these evil apparitions in Act IV, Sc. I, that James Stuart affirms the ancient, divinely appointed succession of his family as kings, by means of the procession of kings.

Of course those parts of the play which do not derive from the *Chronicles* and which are Shakespeare's pure invention, are arguably more important than the sources from which they ultimately derive. Lady MacBeth for example, possibly one of the greatest female dramatic roles ever created, is mentioned by Holinshed only in the briefest of terms in reference to the murder of Duncan, as the wife of MacBeth thus:

His wife lay sore upon him to attempt the thing, as she that was verie ambitious, burning in inquenchangeable desire, to bear the name of a queene. (269)

Certainly the germ of the entire character is there already, but it took the genius of Shakespeare to develop it to full fruition.

Holinshed may well be correct in his description of MacBeth's wife, whose real name was Gruoch. She was the daughter of Boite, a man murdered by Malcolm II, to assure the succession of his grandson Duncan.

Gruoch's first husband had been Gillacomgain, the virtually autonomous ruler of Moray, who was a cousin of Macbeth. MacBeth's father had also been ruler of Moray, and MacBeth is often called MacBeth of Moray in historical sources. Gruoch's son by her first marriage was Lulach, and she may well have been behind the ill-fated attempt to put him on the throne after the death of MacBeth. She certainly had a reputation as a tough and ambitious woman, so much so in fact, that she is one of the few women who stand out in the sources of early Scottish history.

Shakespeare has such a vivid idea of his characters, that it is tempting to believe them to have been historically, exactly as he portrayed them. In Act II the Porter is pure Shakespeare, comic relief, like the gravediggers in Hamlet, and yet the castle of MacBeth may well have had such a man with such feelings and a similar character. In this way Shakespeare brings history to life by transporting us into another place and another century, while at the same time making us keenly aware of the common bond of humanity which links us all to one another.

One of the great set pieces of *MacBeth* is also Shakespeare's invention: the banquet in Act III, Sc. IV. Of course it is quite probable that such a banquet could actually have taken place, but history is only one colour in the palette which Shakespeare uses to paint countless universal portraits of humanity.

In Act IV, Sc. III, Shakespeare chooses to ignore the evidence of Holinshed, that MacDuff was aware of the slaughter of his family (274-5), before he went to England. The audience has just witnessed the murder of MacDuff's wife, servants and children, and it is dramatically most effective for us to wonder how MacDuff will react when he hears the news. Historical veracity is quite

rightly sacrificed for dramatic effectiveness.

The relationship between history and Shakespeare's drama is complex, because it can be understood on many levels: Shakespeare's use of sources, alterations made to those sources, the accuracy or inaccuracy of those sources, the relationship between history as we see it, as Shakespeare saw it and as Holinshed saw it; but to get things into perspective, it is a testimony to Shakespeare that very few people would have any interest in MacBeth of Moray at all, were it not for the play, written in 1606. It is only a matter of interest to us that MacBeth was in fact slain near Lumphanan near Mar in the Moray country, far from Dunsinane or Birnam Wood, because we know the fictional MacBeth. It is the greatness therefore, of the fictional MacBeth which inspires in us a desire to become acquainted with the real MacBeth of history. Neither Shakespeare, nor Holinshed were aware of the truly historical MacBeth, and there is no way that they could have been, but it is curious to note that the truth about an eleventh-century king, who became a legend due to a seventeenth-century myth, long accepted by many as a real mirror to history, should have had to wait for nineteenth and twentieth-century historical research to come to the light

of day. We know who the different MacBeths are, but I do not think anyone would like to label one of them the "true MacBeth", since each one contains important truths, and it is only when seen together, side by side, that we can begin to see the whole truth about MacBeth.

Of the three MacBeths I have mentioned, even the true MacBeth of history is well-known today, if only to thousands of Scottish school-children. However we must guard ourselves from thinking that we know all that there is to know on the subject, because although all Scottish history books written this century have a better grasp of the truth, than did Holinshed in the 1570s, the life of MacBeth, which occurred nearly a thousand years ago now, is in a period of history for which, although there is evidence, it is scanty and has to be pieced together like a jigsaw puzzle. If another piece is discovered, then the sense we have made from the evidence we possess may become nonsense.

We may be tempted to think that this is not true of the MacBeth of Shakespeare, because he was created once forever. However, successive interpretations of *MacBeth* do reveal new aspects of the work, in a similar way that historical research constantly uncovers new areas of knowledge.

When put together, the historical, literary and dramatic elements of MacBeth are constantly evolving and changing, like images in a kaleidoscope.

The insights of History can enrich studies of Theatre and English, and I wish the converse were true, although I must admit I have read many scornful remarks about Shakespeare's MacBeth in books on Scottish history! Be that as it may, I do believe that a truly interdisciplinary approach within the academic field and an abandonment of the prejudices and superiorities felt between different departments in most universities are long overdue. This can be achieved equally successfully through the study of MacBeth, as by the study of any subject worthy of human attention.

My purpose in examining the different MacBeths of fact and fiction has not been to make any definite parallels, or to establish any fixed relationships between them, but rather to present them in such a way that each one of us may decide their significance, not only in historical, literary, or dramatic terms, but also in terms of the more personal impression that the three faces of this man, presented to us over a period of nearly one thousand years, has on each one of us. □

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Summary

The article provides a background to help understand the educational scene in Cuba and particularly the foreign language policies and practices in that country. Most of the major

structuring

aspects such as

number of

classes per

week, grades in which the

foreign language is

taught and type of

textbook are treated as

well as the general role

and importance of that

discipline for educational

authorities. The questions of

textbook content selection and

methodology are discussed from

sample data collected in Havana

and compared to current trends

in Brasil.

O Ensino de Língua

Estrangeira em

Cuba

Foreign Language Teaching
in Cuba

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Filho*

Agradeço a Olga P. Paes o interesse constante e a participação concreta no levantamento dos dados em Havana, sem os quais este estudo exploratório não teria sido possível.

Resumo

O ensaio apresenta um pano de fundo para a compreensão do cenário educacional em Cuba, particularmente quanto às políticas e práticas no ensino de língua estrangeira. São abordados aspectos como número de aulas semanais, séries nas quais se ensina língua estrangeira e tipo de livro didático, e ainda a função geral e a importância da disciplina para as autoridades educacionais. Questões referentes à metodologia e ao conteúdo de livros didáticos são discutidas a partir de amostragens de dados coletados em Havana e comparados às tendências atuais no Brasil.

Assim que o visitante deixa o aeroporto internacional em Cuba seus olhos não podem deixar de ver um dos personagens mais comuns do cenário cotidiano cubano: o estudante. Camisa branca de mangas curtas, calças ou saias cáqui e o marcante lenço vermelho amarrado em nó na frente do peito.

A presença dos estudantes em toda parte, as escolas abertas em todos os cantos evidenciam a preocupação básica com a educação geral em Cuba. A Cuba revolucionária nasceu sob o signo da educação mediante uma campanha nacional de alfabetização lançada em março de 1959, dois meses após a vitória da Revolução. Em fins de 1961, ano do começo oficial da Campanha, já não se contavam mais analfabetos no país. Mas a educação de adultos seguiu sendo uma prioridade. Em duas décadas que se seguiram à Campanha, estabeleceu-se por todo o arquipélago a Batalha pelo Sexto Grau (ou sexta série no sistema brasileiro). Com auxílio dos meios de comunicação de massa, dos sindicatos, das ligas femininas e Centros de Defesa da Revolução (CDRs), a Batalha cumpriu sua meta básica de elevar o nível global de instrução em Cuba para a sexta série da escola de 1º grau.

Esse esforço incluiu obviamente a produção de material didático que atendessem especificamente às necessidades desse projeto. O livro de leitura 'Leitura Camponesa', reeditado muitas vezes nas décadas de 70 e 80, contém pequenos poemas, histórias, fragmentos literários e biografias com títulos como "A Mulher Cubana", "Momentos do Diário de Che" e "Versos Simples" (de José Mati).

Há no momento em Cuba preparativos para o desencadeamento pleno de uma nova 'Batalha' pelo 9º grau completo.

* UNICAMP

Desses dados educacionais nos interessava especificamente o movimento dentro da área de educação em língua estrangeira moderna, de modo que os dados servissem como uma análise preliminar da situação cubana e para os primeiros contrastes com a política e tendências no Brasil na área de ensino de LEs.

Vejamos primeiramente o que dispõe o currículo das escolas comuns de Cuba quanto à presença de LE e sua carga horária por semana.

	5, 6 Primária	7, 8, 9 Secundária Básica	10, 11, 12 Pré-Univ.
Língua Estrangeira	(3) (3)	3 3 2	2 2 2

A disciplina LE está presente em todo o percurso da escola, desde a 7ª série, em algumas escolas pelo menos duas vezes por semana em aulas de 45 minutos, sempre durante seis anos seguidos. O idioma estrangeiro está dentro dos 36,6% de tempo reservado para as ciências humanas contrastando com 39,2% das ciências naturais e matemáticas.

No ano de 1989, após um período de preparação pedagógica sistemática, será estendida à escola primária o ensino de LE a partir da 5ª série. Por essa razão, houve uma indicativa firme de garantir excelência ao programa de formação de professores primários de LE, que se desenvolveu nas escolas pedagógicas (com status de faculdade) no período de 1987-1988.

Até aqui, temos falado genericamente em termos de LE ou LEM, mas Cuba tem hoje uma opção única pelo ensino da língua inglesa nas escolas de todo o país. É bem verdade que em período anterior se experimentou o ensino de russo na escola pública, mas o esforço de formação de professores e a magnitude do desafio de ensinar uma língua tipologicamente distante

do espanhol levaram as autoridades cubanas a restringirem o ensino de LE ao inglês. Não foi possível obter nenhum documento oficial que justificasse explicitamente essa escolha de língua para preencher a disciplina LEM. Nas escolas visitadas os professores falaram no valor pragmático (ciência, comunicações internacionais, turismo) que esse idioma possui.

É possível estudar russo na escola secundária em algumas poucas instituições de experimentação. Outras línguas, além do russo e do inglês, são estudadas em escolas de nível superior e nos quase cem Centros de Línguas para Trabalhadores em todo o país. Nesses últimos, adultos que trabalham podem optar por estudar quaisquer das seis línguas oferecidas além do inglês e do russo: alemão, checo, chinês, italiano e português. Para ingressar nessas escolas, o trabalhador precisa demonstrar haver concluído a 9ª série, que é a meta nacional para toda a população nos dias de hoje.

Para conhecer de perto algumas das características do ensino de LE que se processa na escola cubana de hoje, houve uma visita demorada à Escola Vicente Ponce, no bairro residencial central de Vedado. A escola não tem aparência de haver sido construída para esse fim. Como muitas escolas cubanas, está acomodada no que parece haver sido um casarão da era pré-revolucionária. Como a grande maioria dos edifícios cubanos, o prédio parece cuidado e tem asseio, mas suas paredes não vêem tinta há bem mais de uma década. Todo o mobiliário parece ter sido bastante usado e o aspecto geral é de uma escola convencional.

A professora de Língua Inglesa da escola informou que os seus alunos da Vicente Ponce iniciam o estudo dessa língua (a única estrangeira da escola) aos 12 anos, na sétima série. Por iniciativas recentes, na escola secundária básica, o professor deve priorizar

o enfoque oral no 1º semestre e o escrito no 2º semestre. Na 8ª série, a ênfase é na compreensão de linguagem oral e, na 9ª série, o foco é centrado nos processos de composição escrita.

Esse sistema de ênfase deve ser revisto após a introdução provável, em 1989, de LE nas 5ª e 6ª séries da escola primária após a consolidação do processo de alfabetização.

Quanto às características da abordagem de ensino preconizada pelas autoridades, o conteúdo curricular é o que mais chama a atenção do profissional visitante. Na 8ª série, por exemplo, anotamos os seguintes títulos de unidades:

- El primer día de classes (previ-
são de 6 horas aula)
- El círculo infantil (6)
- Preparemos el recibimiento a
nuestros amigos soviéticos (6)
- Ajudamos a mamá en la cocina
(solo escritura) (2)
- En el area deportiva (4)
- Los abuelos em casa
- Una fiesta en la escuela
- Héroes revolucionários
- Un viaje en tren
- El diário de Sue: un dia en el den-
tista (6)
- La família Martins
- De excursión (lectura)
- En la tienda de ropa
- Nuestra capital
- Vamos a jugar balonpié
- En fin de curso

A proposta curricular para a 9ª série contém os seguintes títulos de unidades:

- Mother needs help
- No TV
- An accident
- Grandfather knows best

- A big surprise
- A small mistake
- Water

Na unidade 1, introduzem-se os seguintes conteúdos programáticos:

- las preposiciones *on, in, at, under, in, front of*
- vocabulário
- elementos de pronunciación y entonación relacionados con el contenido
- relación entre el fonema /t/ y las combinaciones dela grafema 'ch'

Na unidade 2 estão incluídas:

- las oraciones afirmativas, negativas e interrogativas con el verbo BE seguido de adjetivos
- BE + adjetivos calificativos
- vocabulário con énfasis especial en los adjetivos *old, new, long*

Do livro didático da 9ª série, 1ª unidade, consta o seguinte fragmento de diálogo, que se inclui aqui para ilustração do tipo de textos utilizados:

Mother: Good. Everything is in the refrigerator. You can prepare lunch now. Last night I did guard duty at the CDR ('Comité de defensa de la Revolución') and today I am very tired. Please prepare something nice. I'm very hungry.

Embora todo o currículo mostre evidências de utilização de elementos de vários métodos, tendência essa confirmada por outros profissionais cubanos, há uma clara opção por ensinar elementos formais estruturais. Isso obviamente contrasta com os rumos do ensino e pesquisa na área de ensino de LE nos centros europeus, brasileiros e norte-americanos, com ênfase estes no ensino humanístico-comunicativo.

Mas a escolha de tópicos e temas das unidades possui uma característica coerente com a vida pós-revolução e bastante distinta enquanto critério de seleção de tópicos para as amostras de

LE. Trata-se da dimensão político-cultural de muitos dos textos, que empresta um tom cubano contemporâneo para as amostras de língua-alvo.

Nessa linha, tratam-se dos círculos infantis e centros de defesa da revolução que promovem a reflexão ideológica sobre os temas revolucionários. Prepara-se o aluno para receber os soviéticos (em inglês) e para falar sobre os heróis revolucionários na língua estrangeira. Introduzem-se tópicos de reeducação para os papéis masculinos e femininos em casa e para a compreensão dos avós.

Tudo bem aninhado ainda numa estrutura de curso que se preocupa com pontos gramaticais. Esse traço vigoroso do ensino mais tradicional não se apagou nem com o ímpeto devastador da Revolução.

Essa herança gramaticalista, contudo, não tem imobilizado as iniciativas de avanço na área de ensino de línguas. Dentre as indicações gerais do ministro da educação, J. R. Fernandez, para o desenvolvimento do trabalho educativo durante o ano escolar 1987-1988, consta a de *fortalecer o tabalbo do ensino de idiomas estrangeiros*. Dentro dessa perspectiva recomenda-se que:

- seja ampliada a extensão do ensino de línguas estrangeiras a alunos da escola média;
- seja dada mais atenção ao trabalho metodológico dos professores e, em especial, ao aperfeiçoamento do domínio desses idiomas;
- seja prestada especial atenção ao plano de formação de professores primários de inglês nas escolas pedagógicas a partir de 1988;
- seja garantida nos institutos pedagógicos uma maior qualidade na formação dos professores de línguas estrangeiras;

- seja estendido nas escolas de línguas do país o curso de leitura em inglês e em francês e espanhol como língua estrangeira.

(Ministério da Educação de Cuba, 1988)

Em contraste com essas tendências de crescimento de oferta e importância das línguas estrangeiras, no Brasil, a situação permanece endemicamente estagnada ou degenerativa em várias decisões oficiais. No Estado de São Paulo, a secretaria da Educação promulgou a Resolução 01 de 07/01/85, que torna LE obrigatória em apenas 2 anos da escola de 1º grau, retirando-lhe, ao mesmo tempo, o status de disciplina promocional como as outras matérias do currículo oficial. Generaliza-se a apatia e um sentido de menos valia desmoralizante para o profissional do ensino de LE na rede pública de ensino.

Iniciativas que poderiam ser saudadas como alentadoras nesse cenário de crise, tal como a criação dos Centros de Ensino de Língua em São Paulo e no Paraná, esbarram nas conveniências políticas de governantes sem a contribuição de professores especialistas. Os materiais de ensino no Brasil, representados pelo livro didático nacional de ensino de LE, na sua imensa variedade constituem um quadro pobre de inovações baseadas no conhecimento empírico e explícito sobre aprendizagem de outras línguas. Os conteúdos, diferentemente dos cubanos representados no livro único de iniciativa oficial, são flagrantemente alienantes e despreocupados com o mundo real das pessoas.

Quanto aos aspectos gramaticais, há, provavelmente, uma sensível convergência de preocupações em ambos os países, o que retrata possivelmente a força de nossa tradição clássico-humanista de apresentar sistematicamente as noções gramaticais ao aluno. Persiste a crença de que um sistema potencial de formas gramaticais deve ser aprendido e deixado em estado

latente na esperança de que haja oportunidades de fazê-lo fluir quando apareçam as oportunidades de uso comunicativo real.

Na esteira das mudanças profundas que se operam em Cuba, dentro do quadro educacional, permanece a conclusão de que o ensino de LE é atividade importante na reconstrução

da nova Nação cubana na medida em que prepara seus cidadãos para, na superação via LE, se encontrarem com outros povos do mundo. □

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Summary

A reading of Mary Shelley's novel Frankenstein, under the perspective of the Fantastic and taking as a starting point psychoanalytic theories.

Resumo

O Olho, o Narrador e o Monstro

Leitura do romance Frankenstein, de Mary Shelley, sob a perspectiva do Fantástico e a partir de um instrumental teórico da Psicanálise.

Me dijo que su libro se llamaba el Libro de Arena, porque ni el libro ni la arena tienen ni principio ni fin.

(Borges, *El Libro de Arena*)

The Eye, the Narrator and the Monster

Leopoldo Comitti.*

1. O narrador e a corrente

A criatura de Victor Frankenstein é, hoje, uma das mais conhecidas personagens das histórias de horror veiculadas em cinema, televisão e quadrinhos. Contraditoriamente, o romance que lhe deu origem, *Frankenstein*, de Mary Shelley¹, foi praticamente esquecido. O tempo tornou quase anônima sua autora, da mesma forma que se encarregou de nomear aquele que nasceu anônimo: o monstro passou a ser chamado de Frankenstein, roubando o nome de seu criador.

Mais que um fenômeno comum à grande massa, esse fato implica numa leitura do texto, sugerida não apenas por seu conteúdo, mas também por sua própria estrutura. Já na abertura do livro, a condução do narrador denota uma lacuna. Iniciado por um discurso epistolar, o romance vai incorporando depoimentos em seu percurso (depoimentos esses sempre

encadeados aos fatos narrados), entregando a palavra a personagens que se sucedem. A trama é estruturada por um recurso que poderíamos chamar de composição "em corrente", na qual cada alternância de narrador comporia um elo. Evidentemente, uma composição circular, já que, no desfecho, a palavra é retomada pelo autor das cartas, Robert Walton.

A seqüência é lacunar, exatamente como acontece numa troca de correspondência. Cada segmento da narrativa surge como o preenchimento de um espaço temporal interrompido, onde os acontecimentos são recuperados pela memória, sob a forma de linguagem. Robert Walton, a princípio, parece ter como única função realizar a costura das diversas narrativas encadeadas, já que, até o desfecho da trama, manifesta-se apenas como ouvinte e depois testemunha. Na introdução, o relato de sua vida e expedição é breve e sintético.

No entanto, seria ingênuo pensar que a transcrição de um relato oral não traz as marcas daquele que a realiza. Mesmo que a palavra seja dada a Victor Frankenstein, teremos que analisar tal enunciado com olhos de suspeição. A simples assinatura, no final do relato, torna-se um filtro que denuncia um deslocamento de sentido, ainda que o narrador se pretenda fiel:

Resolvi registrar durante, quando não estou ocupado com minhas obrigações, tudo o que ele me contasse durante o dia, conservando ao máximo suas próprias palavras.²

Ora, a própria expressão "ao máximo" já nos mostra que há uma transposição de um discurso para o interior de outro, subordinando o primeiro ao segundo.

Nesse aspecto, *Frankenstein* lembra *Pierre Menard, autor Del Quijote*³, de Borges, diferenciando-se, porém,

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pelo fato de que a obra latino-americana enuncia e analisa o fenômeno. Da mesma forma que o *Quijote* de Menard modifica o de Cervantes, apesar de reproduzi-lo palavra por palavra, o depoimento de Victor Frankenstein, bem como aqueles que nele se encaixam, é modificado ao passar pelo crivo de Walton.

Assim, as narrativas se espelham e se reproduzem a partir de caracterização de personagens semelhantes. Como fragmentações de Walton e Frankenstein, as personagens secundárias passam pelo romance encenando traços da caracterização desses, bem marcada nas cartas iniciais. A partir de homologias mais evidentes, é possível o estabelecimento de pares simétricos, mas esses se multiplicam em um novo confronto, repetindo a estrutura em corrente em foco na narrativa. Formam como que uma configuração de espelhos, cada qual repetindo parte de uma imagem única e somando a ela as distorções de outros espelhos vizinhos. No entanto, a imagem primeira (o narrador) que se oferece às diversas superfícies também se revela puro reflexo, que por sua vez reflete todos os outros. Assim, Walton, que praticamente se exime de narrar, compõe sua carta de excertos da fala de outros; mas, ao fazê-lo, assume duas falas e se monta enquanto narrador. O texto expõe a falta de um elemento unificador e ao mesmo tempo a preenche; da mesma forma que a criatura, composta de pedaços de mortos e criada para preencher o vazio de Frankenstein, expõe esse mesmo vazio. A trama repete a estrutura da obra e ambas só existem enquanto um discurso criado que se nega radicalmente a referir-se a um sujeito externo e a imersão desse num possível "real".

2. Identificação oscilante

Como já antecipamos, o romance parece se desenrolar em torno de

vazios, que se preenchem transitóriamente, mas que ressurgem logo após, intensificados. As personagens, por mais que se tente exaustivamente, não podem ser agrupadas em séries, como se faz normalmente em abordagens psicanalíticas. Elas oscilam constantemente entre o domínio paterno e o materno e parecem buscar, "ad infinitum", uma identificação.

Dessa forma, não é de se estranhar que o tema da orfandade esteja muito presente. Ele parece, primeiramente, em Walton e se projeta, implicitamente, na também implícita Margareth. Victor Frankenstein, apesar de referir-se aos pais, remete-os totalmente para um segundo plano: ele é o indivíduo que cria a si mesmo a partir da busca científica. Em termos de relacionamento interpessoal, sua posição é altamente ambígua, repetindo a mesma caracterização de Walton. Ambos oscilam entre o masculino e o feminino, não encontrando em nenhum dos pólos (Pólos?) o preenchimento do vazio existencial. Na amizade, externam uma admiração quase enamorada por Clerval (Victor) ou pelo marinheiro não nomeado (Walton). Neles, o que os encanta e atrai é também a falta, ou seja, a impossibilidade de desenvolver-se intelectual e a perda da amada, respectivamente. Neles, vêem a perfeição e um modelo.

Em relação ao elemento feminino, a atitude de ambos é de sacralização da mulher. Em Walton, essa é elevada ao estatuto de irmã e se comporta como um olho invisível que o observa. Em Frankenstein, Elisabeth se torna a realização impossível, interdita pela presença da criatura. Essa alienação do objeto amado impregna todo o texto e acaba por marcar todos os personagens. Elisabeth encontra a morte, bem como Justine, seu "alter ego"; orfãs, privadas de família, não chegam a instaurar um lar ou instaurar-se em algum. Até mesmo as rela-

ções de amizade ou amor fraterno são interditas pela morte, como ocorre a Clerval e a William.

Assim, a constelação de personagens apresentada pelo romance fantasmaliza uma incessante indagação pela origem e sentido da vida e, consequentemente, pelas relações familiares e pessoais que as propiciam. Até mesmo nessa questão Walton e Victor se revelam homólogos. O primeiro defronta-se com o problema de explicar o princípio orientador da navegação (aqui uma evidente metáfora do percurso existencial) a partir do magnetismo terrestre. Parece-nos evidente, até mesmo pela proximidade no espaço textual, uma relação com a atração exercida nele pelo elemento masculino: O Pólo Norte é o modelo de identificação inutilmente procurado.

Frankenstein, por sua vez, volta-se para a pesquisa de uma origem biológica, com um mal disfarçado traço de metafísica: alquimistas e naturalistas convivem em sua bibliografia.

Sua problemática está centrada no momento da concepção, e a criação do monstro nos apresenta uma fusão dos papéis materno e paterno: ele é pai e mãe de uma criatura engendrada em seu exterior, a partir de material estranho a ele; o monstro é criado por ele, mas não dele. Temos condensada aí a problemática da rejeição à origem sexual e aos papéis exercidos pelos indivíduos nela envolvidos. Dessa forma, o horror a sua criatura incide também na impossibilidade de uma realização amorosa; o momento das núpcias esbarra no recalque, fazendo surgir o "monstro" por ele (de)negado.

Como se pode observar, a problemática das personagens/narradores se sobrepõe, fato esse observado por Frankenstein e que deflagra seu depoimento:

"Homem infeliz! Você quer compartilhar minha loucura? Será que você também bebeu do líquido que embriaga? Escute-me; deixe-me contar-lhe minha estória, e você afastará o cálice de seus lábios!"⁴

A nível de estruturação do foco narrativo, tal fato também se repete. Da mesma forma que a problemática existencial enunciada por ambos se soma e se sobrepõe, também o discurso de um é somado ao do outro e filtrado até atingir uma sutil sobreposição. A imagem do espelho, usada por nós anteriormente, pode ser novamente utilizada aqui sem constrangimentos. Um e outro se encontram em trajetórias opostas e se olham como se vissem a si mesmos em posições invertidas: onde começa um é onde termina o outro. No entanto, não há sujeito; são os dois apenas reflexos, e a procura da identificação com algo externo a eles resulta no vazio. Se Walton se aproxima do "je" lacaniano, o eu alienado, Vitor Frankenstein remete-nos ao "moi", pois sabe, não compreende e nega. O que os liga é a fricção, o atrito entre *conhecer e desconhecer*. No espaço entre esses dois planos cria-se o "monstro", o horror recriado verbalmente pelo discurso duplo e instalado no espaço vazio da corrente mencionada na introdução deste trabalho.

3. A criatura

Uma das características dominantes da criatura é seu aspecto exterior, jamais descrito detalhadamente, mas sugerido pelo material utilizado em sua composição. Formado por fragmentos de cadáveres, surge à imaginação do leitor como figura repelente, bem como horroriza a quem o vê, no desenrolar da trama romanesca. Nele, a dramatização é a do "não-ser", pois a questão do olhar do outro polariza sua ação. A criatura jamais adquire um conhecimento de seu próprio corpo,

pois lhe falta o olhar que o unifique, já que ele é um "não-nascido". Sua falta é, portanto, radical. Em seu desenvolvimento, soma as etapas da formação do "eu", como as entende a psicanálise atual, sem que um estágio ceda ao outro. A criatura é a síntese de um processo não resolvido; nele convivem o momento do "corp morcelé" (Lacan, *Escritos*) e o estágio do espelho.

Em relação a Walton e Frankenstein, o ser é um mergulho no processo identificatório, o momento em que todo o espelhamento se desfaz, para que se perceba que além dele há apenas o elo entre vida e morte, de onde emanam as pulsões. É o "ça", que no fantástico se manifesta pelo aparecimento do monstro. Esse esvaziamento é percebido por Roger Dadoun, em artigo dedicado ao filme *King Kong*:

*Avec Frankenstein e King Kong, le principe du Vide fonctionne selon d'autres règles. Le registre scientifique sur lequel se déploie l'histoire de Frankenstein – le créateur est ici savant – fait que la plénitude humaine est assumée par l'Intelligence; cadavre défermé ou pièces rapportées et cousues ensemble, Frankenstein n'accédera jamais à l'Intelligence, à la plénitude. Comme l'homme invisible est vidé de sa chair, et Dracula de son sang, Frankenstein est vidé de son intelligence. N'accédant pas à un statut humain, il n'a pas de nom, il n'est rien, et comme il faut bien désigner toute chose, c'est le nom de son créateur, Frankenstein, qui lui sera appliqué.*⁵

Evidentemente, Dadoun não se refere, especificamente, ao romance, onde sua colocação sobre a inteligência não cabe; além de que, em seu artigo, *Frankenstein* é mencionado de passagem, como exemplificação de uma análise radicalmente diferente desta. No entanto, sua observação é arguta ao compará-lo a *King Kong*. Também a criatura é uma superfície

de inscrição, uma rede de significantes que envolve um buraco não preenchido pela linguagem e que permanece "mancante".

4. O olho implícito

Já por diversas vezes fizemos notar que o singular foco narrativo do texto é homólogo ao desenvolvimento da trama. A forma epistolar, com encaixes, além de elidir um narrador unificador, deixando-o implícito, cria um novo receptor, diferente daquele que a Teoria da Literatura convencional chamou de "implícito", que poderíamos nomear de "virtual". Trata-se de Margareth, irmã de Walton. O texto se dirige a ela, como a um interlocutor mudo. Sua presença se faz sob a forma de um olho que vê, lê e unifica o discurso fragmentário, da mesma forma que o olhar da mãe totaliza e identifica a criança. Também o romance é uma criatura que procura a transitividade.

O lugar de Margareth, porém, é uma simples palavra muda. A leitura dela constrói o texto, mas, como um projetor de cinema, não se manifesta, permanece invisível. Numa sala de projeção o foco desloca-se para o olho do espectador; no romance, o lugar de Margareth é preenchido pelo leitor. Como destinatário, esse leitor passa a ser personagem, portanto criatura; como unificador de fragmentos assume o lugar do narrador implícito; portanto, criador.

Em *Frankenstein*, o Fantástico não se encena pelo aparecimento do monstro, mas pelo ilusionismo. A hábil técnica narrativa manipula o "efeito real" (como o compreende Barthes)⁶ para melhor denunciar a encenação. Isso tudo é discurso, diz a obra; descentramento, diríamos nós. □

NOTAS

- 1 SHELLEY, Mary. *Frankenstein*. Trad. Miécio A. J. Honkis. 2ª ed. Porto Alegre: LP&M, 1985.
- 2 Ibidem, p.29.
- 3 BORGES, J. L. *Ficciones*. 13ª ed. Barcelona: Alianza/Emecé, 1986.
- 4 SHELLEY, M. *Op. cit.*, p.27.
- 5 DADOUN, Roger. "King Kong: du monstre comme dé-monstration", *Littérature* (8), déc. 1972, p.117.
- 6 BARTHES, Roland. "O efeito de real". In: *Literatura e semiologia*. Petrópolis: Vozes, 1972.

Summary

The aim of this work is to make an analysis of the translation of Djavan's song Esquinas into English. It endeavours to show how the theoretical demands made on translations prove problematic when put into practice,

Dynamic Equivalence

mainly when concerning the translation of songs.

versus Formal Resumo

É objetivo do presente artigo mostrar, através de uma análise crítica da tradução

Correspondence in the Translation of Songs

para o inglês da canção Esquinas de Djavan, como as exigências teóricas

que se fazem às traduções se revelam, na prática, problemáticas, principalmente no que se refere à tradução de canções.

Equivalência dinâmica versus correspondência formal na tradução de canções

Maria Helena Lott Lage*

The most recent approaches to translating emphasize the importance of giving priority to the preservation of content over the preservation of form, to dynamic equivalence over formal correspondence. This means that a translation must reflect and reproduce the content and style of the author's message, and at the same time sound as natural as possible in the receptor language, so that "the receptors of the message in the receptor language respond to it in substantially the same

manner as the receptors in the source language."¹

While in theory this seems a reasonable requirement, in practice it is a matter of much debate and controversy. Many factors are involved that cause variation in language, and each language is a reflection of its speakers' culture, perception of reality, and view of the world. The impact that any message has upon an audience is directly proportionate to and dependent on each individual's background and experience, much more in interlingual than in intralingual communication. The response of receptors, moreover, cannot be evaluated apart from a consideration of the type of text or discourse in question and the purpose of the communication.

It is well recognized that different types of texts present different kinds of problems to translators. Within the category *literary*, the translation of poetry has received special attention. According to Theodore Savory (1968): "it is almost the only aspect of translation in which a high proportion of the experts show agreement among themselves; but even so they agree only in the opinion that adequate translation of a poem is impossible. They disagree in the usual way about the best methods by which the impossible may be attempted, as well as in their criticisms and appraisals of the attempts that have been made."²

The general claim about the impossibility to satisfy all the demands for equivalence in poetic language relies on the fact that form and content are intrinsically related and mutually dependent on each other in poetry more than in any other literary genre of text. A song is a kind of artistic expression which has many features in common with a poem — there is

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rhythm, rhyme, figurative use of language, and unconventional order of lexical and syntactic components — which are combined mainly for the purpose of creating impact and arousing sensuous emotion. Furthermore, a song has characteristics of its own because there is also melody. Whatever level of poetic language is used in a song, it is accompanied by music.

Music is a universal phenomenon, and there are different kinds of music and songs associated with different ethnic and cultural groups. A great number of songs is translated into one or more different languages every day. Usually, the melodies are kept intact or only adapted a little bit here and there. Nevertheless, it is amazing to see how much the messages in the songs are changed, to a point that most of the versions are not even considered translations proper. The fact that there is hardly any literature at all about the topic may even lead one to conclude that this is not considered a translation problem. It is usually said that “total liberty” is allowed in the translation of the words in songs. This so-called “liberty”, however, does not appear to be the result of a consensual belief that the messages in songs need not be preserved but rather, a consequence of the difficulty to preserve both form and content in the translation of a song.

The constraints imposed on the translation of a song are even greater than those imposed on the translation of a poem due to the very fact that there is music involved and that words have to be selected so as to “fit” the melodious lines of the song. Consequently, the preservation of the form is given priority and very often the content of the message is lost or changed in varying degrees.

I am going to illustrate the problems related to the translation of songs with *ESQUINAS*; a song

originally composed and written in Portuguese by Djavan, a well known Brazilian composer and singer. An American band called ‘The Manhattan Transfer’ has recently recorded an English version of *ESQUINAS*, together with other Brazilian songs (most of which by Djavan), in an album named ‘Brasil’. For this work, the group won a ‘Grammy’ this year, an award which is as prestigious to music as the ‘Oscar’ is to the movie world.

The English version of *ESQUINAS* received the title *SO YOU SAY*, inspired by the phrase which is most repeated in the original Portuguese version — *só eu sei* — which means ‘only I know’. There is almost a total phonetic correspondence between the two phrases:

[‘sow yu ‘sey] ‘so you say’
[‘so ew ‘sey] ‘só eu sei’ (‘only I know’)

However, in spite of the phonetic similarity, the meanings of the two phrases are totally different in the two languages. It seems to me that it was exactly the preservation of this phonetic similarity — a formal correspondence — which led the message of the English version to an almost opposite direction due to the shift in perspective:

— In the Portuguese original, the speaker uses the first person singular pronoun to claim, “only I know” (that is, “I am the one who knows all I’ve been through and I am telling you what I have learned”);

— In the English version, the speaker uses the second person pronoun to claim, “so *you* say” (that is, “you are the one who knows and who’s telling me something which I’m not convinced of yet”).

The title of the original version in Portuguese highlights one of the words used in the Brazilian song — *ESQUINAS* — which means ‘corners’ in English. The word is used

figuratively, with an extended connotation of “place where one meets the unexpected and where significative changes may occur.” It actually refers to the “corners” one passes by in the “walks” of life or, more specifically, to the “paths” of love.

I attempted to translate the song *ESQUINAS* into English with the purpose of producing the closest natural equivalent in terms of content of the message, while at the same time trying to preserve the author’s style. I followed the three basic steps suggested by Nida and Taber (1982) namely, *analysis*, *transfer*, and *restructuring*. What follows is a generalized comment of the process which led me to the final version of my translation.

The original song in Portuguese consists of three explicit statements and four complete questions. The first two statements (S1 and S2), followed by English glosses, and then by my translation, are

S1: *Só eu sei as esquinas por que passei*
(Only I I-know the+fem+pl corner+pl by which I-passed)
Only I know all the corners I have passed by

S2: *Só eu sei os desertos que atravessei*
(Only I I-know the+masc+pl desert+pl which I-crossed)
Only I know all the deserts I have travelled through

In order to convey the extended, abstract meaning that is implicit in the original statements, I decided to include the quantifier “all”. I have also substituted “travelled” for “crossed” in the second statement for reasons of semotactic appropriateness.

Each of those statements, in turn, is followed by two types of parallel questions (Q), the first type beginning

with '*sabe lá...*' and the second type beginning with '*e quem será...*'

Q1: Sabe lá o que é não ter e ter que ter p'ra dar?

(You-know there the what is not to-have and to-have what to-have in-order-to-to-give?)

Do you know what it means not to have and yet to have to have to give?

Q2: Sabe lá o que é morrer de sede em frente ao mar?

(You-know there the what is to-die of thirst in front of-the+masc sea?)

Do you know what it means to die of thirst right by the sea?

'*Sabe lá*' is an idiomatic expression in Portuguese which proved to be extremely difficult to translate into English. Questions introduced by '*sabe lá*' are rather rhetorical questions and have, altogether, the following connotations: "can you imagine...", "do you understand..." and "who really knows..." The subject, which is omitted, cannot be easily recovered because it is deliberately ambiguous. It could be either '*você sabe lá*' ('you') or '*sabe-se lá*' (an impersonal 'clitic' — a technical term used by Chomsky meaning "a form that cannot stand alone but must attach to some verb").³ The closest, or rather, "least furthest" natural equivalent in English that I was able to find was "do you know what it means..." for '*sabe lá o que é...*' but I am not totally happy with my selection.

Q1 shows an interesting "play on words" with the verb *ter* ('to have'), and I introduced the adverb "yet" to capture the intended meaning of the original. Q1 immediately follows S1 and it is clear that both are used in a figurative sense. However, an idea occurred to me which can also show some relation between Q1 and the more basic component of meaning of 'corners' in S1 — it is usually in street corners that one is most likely to be

stopped by robbers, and then one is somehow forced to have something in order to give them.

Q2 also shows some relation to S2, but the extended meaning is carried much further. The speaker poses a situation in which he is craving for drinking water with the whole sea right in front of him... so much water in the sea but it is not the kind of water that he needs. The sea is a symbol for love in the song: love is supposed to fulfill everyone's needs, but the love that the speaker found was not the kind of love that he needed then.

The next two questions, Q3 and Q4, which follow Q1 and Q2, respectively, can also be considered rhetorical questions. They are rather impersonal and indefinite in Portuguese, and are usually used in contexts where no answer is expected from the interlocutor. Both questions are long and complex constructions, with multiple embedding of relative clauses. The adverbial phrases (or adjuncts) used are foregrounded for focus, since they establish both the place and the circumstance of the events. It is also in these adjuncts that the word *amor* ('love') is mentioned for the first time — the underlying theme of the song.

Q3: E quem será, nos arredores do amor, que vai saber levar que o dia nasceu?

(And who will-it-be, in-the+masc+pl surrounding+pl of-the+masc love, that is-going-to to-know to-take that the+masc day it-was-born)

Whoever will, in the realm of love, know how to handle it — a new day has begun?

Q4: E quem será, na correnteza do amor, que vai saber se guiar?

(And who will-it-be, in-the+fem stream of-the+masc love, that is-

going-to to-know clitic+refl guide?)

Whoever will, in the stream of love, know how to find his way?

Q3 contains the word *arredores* (literally 'surroundings' or 'outskirts'), which is related to *esquinas*, but which now gives a hint as to the real theme of the song. My translation preserved the syntactic word order of the original as well as the intended message, but I had to make some lexical adjustments for the sake of semotactic appropriateness. I also decided to use a dash (—) in order to avoid another repetition of the relative pronoun "that".

The greatest problem with Q4 was the clitic *se* used as a reflexive in *se guiar* (literally "guide oneself"). Since the reflexive is being used anaphorically, the only way to translate it into English was with a pronoun that shows a gender distinction, a solution that does not please many English speakers (This kind of problem does not show up in Portuguese because the pronouns usually agree in gender with the following nouns, and not with the 'possessor'). In my translation, I opted for "find his way", which is more idiomatic in English.

The image of water recurs in Q4 through the word *correnteza* ('stream'), and is carried over to the third and final statement in the song (S3):

S3: A nave em breve ao vento vaga de leve e traz toda a paz que um dia o desejo levou.

(The+fem ship in soon in-the+masc wind it-drifts of light and it-brings all the+fem peace that one day the+masc desire it-took).

The ship will soon drift softly in the wind and bring back all the peace that, one day, desire took away.

S3 is a very marked line in the original — phonetically, syntactically, and semantically marked for focus. The intense repetition of the sound [v] intermingled by [a] and either [e], [ɛ] or [i], results in a very sonorous and yet harmonious combination in the original song. There are four adjuncts in this complex construction. The first three modify the verb *vaga* ('drifts'), and two of them are foregrounded for special effect: *em breve* ('soon') and *ao vento* ('in the wind'). There is a coordination with a transitive verb whose object has a relative clause as attribute. The adjunct of the relative clause is also fronted for focus: *um dia* ('one day'). The kernel sentences in S3 are:

- *a nave vaga* ('the ship drifts') with three adjuncts —
em breve ('soon', indicating near future)
ao vento ('in the wind')
de leve ('softly')
- *a nave traz a paz* ('the ship brings back the peace')
- *o desejo levou a paz* ('the desire took away the peace') with the adjunct — *um dia* ('one day')

S3 also contains a lot of semantic information which is cohesively linked to the previous sentences in the song —

- the uncontrollable stream mentioned in Q4 can now be identified with desire, the passionate love which once took away the speaker's peace. But life goes on and there is hope...
- the ship, which symbolizes the speaker's destiny, will soon meet soft winds and return, bringing back the peace — things will return to normality...

The song ends with more repetitions of the line *só eu sei* ('only I know'), which gives unity and cohesion to the message all along in the song.

I have also noticed that most of the lines in the original end with the syllabic sounds [e] or [a], either followed by the glide [y] or by the fricatives [x] or [s]. These sounds are also found in the great majority of the words, with [e] sometimes changed to [i] or [ɛ], both front vowels. Of course, the translation which I made does not reflect these phonetic features. Since my aim was to preserve the message,

I had to sacrifice the equivalence in form. Interestingly enough, the English version — *SO YOU SAY* — did manage to reproduce many of these formal features and phonetic equivalences, but for that reason, it changed the message completely. My translation also has an additional problem — some of the lines contain more syllables than would "fit" the melody, but I believe that with some effort it can still be sung except for line 6.

Through this experiment, I have been led to agree with de Beaugrande (1978), who stated,

whatever demands for equivalence one makes upon a translation, they cannot all be completely satisfied. For example, it is necessary in order to maintain an equivalence of sound patterns (rime, for instance, and onomatopoeia) to disregard some demands for syntactic or semantic equivalence, and *vice versa*.⁴

On the other hand, in spite of the difficulties and constraints, I still believe that the translator is the only one who can build the bridge between the minds of authors and the minds of readers who do not share the same linguistic and cultural background. □

Translation of the Song: *ESQUINAS*

CORNERS

Only I know	Do you know
All the corners I have passed by	What it means to die of thirst right by the sea
Only I know	Do you know
Only I know	Do you know
Do you know	Whoever will
What it means not to have and yet to have to have to give	In the stream of love
Do you know	know how to find his way
Do you know	The ship will soon drift softly
Whoever will	in the wind and bring back
In the realm of love	All the peace
Know how to handle it —	That one day desire took away
A new day has begun	Only I know
Only I know	All the corners I have passed by
All the deserts I have travelled through	Only I know
Only I know	Only I know
Only I know	

Appendix A

ESQUINAS (Djavan)

Só eu sei
As esquinas por que passei
Só eu sei
Só eu sei
Sabe lá?
O que é não ter e ter que ter p'ra dar
Sabe lá
Sabe lá
E quem será
Nos arredores do amor
que vai saber levar
Que o dia nasceu
Só eu sei
Os desertos que atravesssei
Só eu sei
Só eu sei

Sabe lá
O que é morrer de sede em frente ao mar
Sabe lá
Sabe lá
E quem será
Na correnteza do amor
que vai saber se guiar
A nave em breve ao vento
vaga de leve e traz
Toda a paz
que um dia o desejo levou
Só eu sei
As esquinas por que passei
Só eu sei
Só eu sei

Appendix B

SO YOU SAY (Djavan / Amanda MacBroom)

So you say
it's a feeling I'll get over someday
So you say
So you say
I should try
Just to let the flame inside me die
I should try
So you say
Against the wind
With my face turned to the empty side
of loneliness
Midnight black and blue
So you say
That the world will keep on turning
So you say
So you say
Tell me why
All the stars have lost their mystery now
Tell me why
Tell me how
Where love has been

The taste of wine
seems to linger on like distant perfume
And all of the memories
carelessly left behind
Ghosts and lies
They haunt me wherever I go
So you say
That the pain of love will pass away
So you say
So you say
Before goodbye
I look for the fire behind your eyes
But they're cold as ice
I hear in your voice
The echo of love that's gone by
Now I cry
I'll love you for all of my life
So you say
it's a feeling I'll get over someday
So you say
So you say

NOTES

- ¹ Eugene A. Nida and Charles R. Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Leiden, The Netherlands: E. J. Brill, 1982) 24.
- ² Theodore Savory, *The Art of Translation*, New and enlarged edition (London: Jonathan Cape, 1968) 75.
- ³ Noam Chomsky, *Language and Problems of Knowledge*, the Managua Lectures (Cambridge, Mass.: The MIT Press, 1988) 18.
- ⁴ Robert de Beaugrande, *Factors in a Theory of Poetic Translating* (Assen, The Netherlands: Van Gorcum, 1978) 91.
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Summary

Increasing feminist attention to Willa Cather's The Professor's House has resulted in interpretations that view the novel's main character, professor Godfrey St. Peter, negatively. An extreme example of this tendency is Doris Grumbach's portrait of his as a frustrated homosexual misogynist. While

The Deeper Role

of Gender Conflict in

Willa Cather's The

Professor's House

gender conflict is an important element of the novel, an exaggerated and distorting emphasis on it trivializes the cost of the professor's struggle and the significance of his final decision.

Resumo

O romance The Professor's House de Willa Cather despertou a atenção crescente dos interessados na teoria do feminino, suscitando, muitas vezes, interpretações negativas a respeito do personagem principal, professor Godfrey St. Peter. O trabalho de Doris Grumbach, que o retrata como um homossexual misógeno frustrado, é exemplo extremo dessa tendência. Embora o conflito dos gêneros seja elemento essencial no romance, a distorção desse conflito banaliza o significado da decisão final tomada pelo professor.

O Papel do conflito masculino/feminino em *The Professor's House* de Willa Cather

Stephen L. Tanner*

The professor's house has been thoroughly searched. It is as though search warrants had been issued wholesale. The attic study has been exhaustively examined for clues. The dress forms in particular have been subjected to minute laboratory analysis by a variety of forensic experts. Even the garden has been combed for the slightest intimation of evidence. The result is a substantial and surprisingly disparate body of testimony.

I use the metaphor of criminal investigation advisedly, for a dominant pattern in recent critical discussion of this novel is to view Godfrey St. Peter as reprehensible in one measure or another. This negative view has evolved in tandem with the development of feminist criticism. Critics sensitized to gender conflict have turned a suspicious eye on Cather's charming professor, and their scrutiny of his relationships with women has produced rather scandalous discoveries. Professor St. Peter, formerly considered one of Cather's most admirable and sympathetic characters, has now been identified as a frustrated homosexual misogynist.

Margaret Doane asserts that Cather "established an antifemale bias as a dominant aspect of the book," as major a concern as the negative effects of materialism (302, 299). Doane views the professor as "remarkably obtuse and unfair to his wife, who emerges as generally kind, sympathetic, and long ago abandoned by her husband." St. Peter, like the rest of the men in the novel but in greater measure, displays a view of women as "petty, materialistic, and a distinct threat to the higher values of males" (300).

Doris Grumbach is considerably more subtle in attempting to explain

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the apparent anti-female bias. She explains that the novel is as close as Cather would come to what Grumbach delicately describes as "the question of sexual choice outside accepted social patterns" (338). Her thesis is that Cather transferred her pain at losing Isabelle McClung to St. Peter's loss of Tom. In plainer terms than Grumbach uses, both relationships were homosexual. St. Peter made a mistake in the first place by marrying a woman and has led "a life of marital escape almost from the beginning" (333). His love for Tom has what she considers a tragic dimension because it was not physically consummated and remained "private, unconfessed, sublimated" (339). Consequently, the professor's problem "lies in his late and blinding realization that the life he had been leading, the life of father and husband, is, and always has been, a false one for him, that his existence within these roles is no longer bearable, and that death is preferable to living any longer in the stifling, elaborately furnished, and *false* (for him) house of women and marriage".

This kind of narrow emphasis on gender conflict prompts obvious and fundamental questions ignored by these critics. For example, why would a female novelist write such an anti-female novel? Why should a character who shares so many characteristics of his female author be portrayed as such an unmitigated misogynist?¹ Why would a writer who has treated family relations positively elsewhere in her fiction come down so hard on them here? In short, what is the point or the larger significance of the professor's deteriorating relationship with his wife and family? An inordinate focus on gender conflict spawns distracting ambiguities in a novel already generously supplied with them. This is demonstrated in Thomas F. Strychacz's "The Ambiguities of Escape in Willa Cather's *The Professor's House*." Assuming that the

key to the professor's personality is his retreat from "an appressive domesticity" and "long-standing sexual conflicts with wife and daughters" (51), Strychacz argues that St. Peter indulges in "impossible fantasies of a male paradise" prompted by Tom and the Mesa and that his creativity "depends upon the absence of female and familial ties." He describes the attic study as having "overtones of Gothic horror" and suggests that the dress forms "express the stagnation of his relationships with wife and daughters – even a morbid, repressed sexuality" (53). Such assumptions naturally lead him to construct ambiguities because they preclude viewing Tom, the Mesa, St. Peter's creative work, and St. Peter's very survival at the end as truly positive things. How can they be genuinely positive when they are linked with the anti-feminine?

The fact is that a relevant and potentially useful concern with gender conflict has been myopically applied to this text in a way that distorts and trivializes its larger themes. This novel provides significant, often profound, treatment of universal human problems such as the perennial tension between solitude and society, establishing a proper relationship with nature and the past, coping with the challenges of materialism and technological advancement, and adjusting to the diminishment ineluctably linked with aging. St. Peter's estrangement from his wife and family is obviously a central element of the story, but the degree of that estrangement should not be exaggerated. Marriage and family have been a great deal more satisfying to the professor than the critics mentioned would have us believe. Moreover, this tension in family relations should be recognized as a condition subsidiary to Cather's larger concerns. It is a situation that serves instrumentally to illuminate human problems transcending those

of this particular man and his family, including any gender conflicts that might be involved.

Was St. Peter's marriage a mistake from the very beginning and his domestic life been a resented and regretted obstacle to his creativity? Not at all. He was "very much in love" with Lillian when they married (31), and as he reflects on their nearly thirty years together, he concludes that "joyful years they had been, nothing could ever change that" (281). On occasions when thoughts of the loneliness of death had oppressed and terrified him – moments that occur in most lives – "he used to feel that if his wife could but lie in the same coffin with him, his body would not be so insensible that the nearness of hers would not give it comfort." (272)

Like any writer he needed solitude in which to work, but

When he was writing his best, he was conscious of pretty girls in fresh dress – of flowers and greens in the comfortable, shabby sitting-room – of his wife's good looks and good taste – even of a better dinner than usual under preparation downstairs. All the while he had been working so fiercely at his eight big volumes, he was not insensible to the domestic drama that went on beneath him. His mind had played delightedly with all those incidents.... the most important chapters of his history were interwoven with personal memories. (101)

The drama of domestic life that went on below him while he worked is described as "engaging" and his sense of it as "pleasant" (26). He didn't want to go down for oil because "he would almost surely become interested in what the children were doing" (27).

St. Peter had been deeply attached to his family and they were in his thoughts even during periods of intensest creativity. This is why he now, returning to his attic, must muster his courage and resignation in order to face the unpleasant

awareness "that under his work-room there was a dead, empty house" (15-16). He misses rather than begrudges that past domestic life. It was blended with creativity not alien to it. This is symbolically reinforced by the way the professor's notebooks and manuscripts share the same box with Augusta's patterns, those "notched charts which followed the changing stature and figures of the Misses St Peter from early childhood to womanhood" (22). Furthermore, the dress forms the professor's playful allusion to M. Bergeret in Anatole France's *Le Mannequin D'Osier* notwithstanding² — are not symbols of misogyny. Although they subtly intimate the ambiguities of St. Peter's relationship with the women of his family, they are primarily mementos of a happy domestic past. As he tells Rosamond, "They remind me of the times when you were little girls, and your first party frocks used to hang on them at night, when I worked" (6).

During those years of writing he didn't go to his study at all if someone in the family happened to be ill. "Two evenings of the week he spent with his wife and daughters, and one evening he and his wife went out to dinner, or to the theatre or a concert" (28). A contemporary family counselor wouldn't insist on more than this, particularly of a writing scholar and teacher. St. Peter "had burned his candle at both ends": "By eliminations and combinations so many and subtle that it now made his head ache to think of them, he had done full justice to his university lectures, and at the same time carried on an engrossing piece of creative work". And his family was not sacrificed in this process. As he tells his wife, "I wasn't willing to slight anything — you, or my desk, or my students. And now I seem tremendously tired" (163). This "diminution of ardour" (13) is introduced from the beginning as central element in the novel. He is confronting the universal question

posed in Robert Frost's *The Oven Bird*: "What to make of a diminished thing?" — a question that ultimately must be answered by the solitary self in response to "the unpleasant effects of change" (15). He had attempted to balance family, teaching, and writing. Family life had not been a mistake, but rather a vital part of his life, as much a joy as his history. To discount the efforts and satisfactions of his previous domestic life, which were inextricably linked with those of his creative life, is to reduce the significance of his crisis. They are an important part of what he must let go at the end of the novel. His confrontation with a diminished thing loses weight and poignance when his marriage and familial ties are viewed as a mistake from the beginning.

As the professor reflects on past domestic joys — "family festivals and hospitalities, little girls dancing in and out, Augusta coming and going, gay dresses hanging in his study at night, Christmas shopping and secrets and smothered laughter on the stairs" — he asks himself, "when a man had lovely children in his house, fragrant and happy, full of pretty fancies and generous impulses, why couldn't he keep them?" (125-26). The final phrase is the important one and resonates through the novel. The professor is not simply between two houses as the novel begins, he is between two families. One of "the unpleasant effects of change" that plague him is that family relationships often evolve in unfortunate ways. It is remarkable that Cather, who had no children of her own, could capture so movingly the experience of a parent confronting his children's adulthood and all the changes that involves. The closeness and dependency of the early years is gone. The children, now independent adults, harden into their own molds, which are seldom exactly what the parent admires or desires. It is an unsettling phase in parent-child relations and affects husband-wife

relations as well. Moreover, husband-wife relations evolve in their own right, sometimes in regrettable ways. The professor himself reflects on this: "people who are intensely in love when they marry, and who go on being in love, always meet with something which suddenly or gradually makes a difference" (49).

It is of course Tom who has made a difference in this marriage, both directly and indirectly through the money his invention generates. Husband and wife drift apart, not, as Doane contends, because the professor is "remarkably obtuse and unfair to his wife" and had long ago abandoned her, but because they have reacted differently to change. Godfrey has turned to the past and the values reflected in the Tom Outland section. Lillian has adapted to the future (94). Since her daughter's marriage to Louie, Lillian has "changed and hardened" and become worldly (160-61). "With Louie, Lillian seemed to be launching into a new career, and Godfrey began to think that he understood his own wife very little" (78). Louie and Scott, her sons-in-law, have replaced the professor in her affections and with them "she had begun the game of being a woman all over again" (79). Lillian is at the beginning of something, Godfrey at the end. The differences in perspective prevent their understanding each other. She thinks he has become inhuman; he thinks she has hardened; each finds the other intolerant. Lillian is a woman of "very vehement likes and dislikes which were often quite out of proportion to the trivial object or person that aroused them." For many years her "prejudices" had been "the most interesting things in St. Peter's life" (50). But his interest in the trivial has, largely through the influence of Tom, greatly diminished and the prejudices now strike him as perplexingly materialistic.

This rift in the family, interesting in itself as a study of the way the human self retains a certain independence and isolation even in the most intimate union with others, corresponds with a rift in American civilization. James Schroeter has observed that Tom is associated with effort and Louie with reward, a pairing that corresponds to two phases in America's history—a noble idealistic past and an ignoble materialistic present (504-5). Effort and reward are both part of the professor's life. He treasures the effort and his wife and the Marselluses treasure the rewards. The point behind the gender and family conflict is that it encapsulates and illuminates a much larger conflict of values. And, incidentally, the tensions in family relations are not simply a matter of gender—St. Peter against the women of the household. Kathleen is clearly aligned on the side of Tom and her father, and the professor's relationship with Augusta has always been cordial and is ultimately pivotal.

Godfrey and Lillian have a moment of tender understanding at the opera, which prompts him to reflect that "the heart of another is a dark forest, always, no matter how close it has been to one's" (95). Man and woman remain alone even in the most intimate union. They cannot

penetrate each other's innermost center. Each person is ultimately solitary and aware of it. This is the universal predicament Cather explores in this novel. Susan Rosowski notes a pattern of surrogate selves (258): St. Peter lives first through Lillian then through Tom; Lillian lives first through St. Peter and then through her daughters (Rosamond is like her "second self" (66) and sons-in-law; as children the daughters lived in Tom's stories; Kathleen looked to Rosamond as "a kind of ideal"; and later Rosamond has "become Louie" (86). The case of St. Peter makes clear that "the unfortunate effects of change" and "diminution of ardour" ultimately force the reflective mind to recognize its fated solitude and the futility of surrogate selves. As Paul Tillich explains in "*Loneliness and Solitude*,"

The creation of the woman has not overcome the situation which God describes as not good for man. He remains alone. And the creation of the woman, although it provides a helper for Adam, has only presented to the one human being who is alone another human being who is equally alone, and from their flesh all other men, each of whom will also stand alone. (16)

For Tillich aloneness, though a burden, is also a blessing, for "it is man's greatness that he is centered within himself" (17). He therefore makes a distinction between

"loneliness" and "solitude" and suggests that the former can be conquered only by those who can bear the latter. A person's character is determined by what he does with his inevitable aloneness. Cather certainly understood both the pain and the glory of solitude. Her professor rediscovers his primitive child self, his primary or "realest" self, which remains when the effects of chance and change are cleared away. He is tempted to lapse into "eternal solitude" as "a release from every obligation, from every form of effort" (272). But in the end he opts for a wise and courageous solitude among the living, a solitude that separates him from his family but enhances the significance of his humanity and provides a sense of human purpose that endures where career and creativity and even family fail. It involves a principle that Tom discovered on the Mesa and that Augusta embodies. His family will neither understand his epiphany nor realize he is not the same man. His qualified contentment must remain private and solitary.

An exaggerated description of and emphasis on gender conflict in the novel trivializes the cost of the professor's struggle and the significance of his final decision. □

NOTES

¹ James Woodress provides an extensive list of parallels between Cather and St. Peter in *Willa Cather: A Literary Life*, Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1987: 368-69.

² Alice Bell Salo's "*The Professor's House and Le Mannequin D'Osier: A Note of Willa Cather's Narrative Technique*" (*Studies in American Fiction* 8 (1980): 229-31) is the most extensive exploration of the allusion. To view M. Bergeret's violent destruction of a dress form as an indication that St. Peter has a repressed violent hatred for his wife, as several critics have done, is to take the playful allusion too solemnly and depreciate the subtlety of Cather's using it. James C. Work provides an entertaining warning against taking the novel's allusions too seriously in "Cather's Confounded conundrums in *The Professor's House*" (*Western American Literature* 18 (1984): 303-12).

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Huck and

'Sivilization'

Huck e 'Sivilização'

Thomas LaBorie Burns*

Summary

Mark Twain's major novel has been read as an opposition between life on the Shore and life on the River. This paper expands on that opposition to discuss a set of categories (home, family, education, wealth, companions, national mode, and ethics) in relation to the contexts of Nature and Civilization.

Resumo

O principal romance de Twain tem sido interpretado como uma oposição entre a vida na terra e a vida no rio. Este trabalho usa esta oposição básica para apresentar um conjunto de categorias (lar, família, educação, riqueza, companheiros, modo nacional e ética) em relação aos contextos da Natureza e Civilização.

Huckleberry Finn can be read as a tension between the two opposing poles of "sivilization" and nature. That civilization spelled with an S is Twain's way of indicating that his two unschooled heroes view the traditional benefits of civilization (spel-led with a C) with a certain well-founded suspicion. They see it mainly as an abstract term that signifies repression in all kinds of ways: wearing shoes, eating meals at a table and at fixed hours, going to school and the bizarre practice of "book-larnin", all the way to most extreme forms of physical and spiritual repression involved in the civilized institution of slavery. If slavery is at the spiritual center of the novel, as some critics believe, and if it is Huck's confrontation with one of the givens of his culture that comes up against his

native decency, then it is no accident that Mark Twain has tried to turn upside down our usual assumptions of the relative value of life in towns and in the wilds. Normally, of course, we assume that sleeping in a bed is better than sleeping on the ground, and going to school — for all its pains — has educational advantages that an untutored existence lacks. There must be something besides bright lights that attracts yokels to cities the world over. Yet it is basic assumptions like these that the novel calls continually into question.

As one might expect in a complex work of art, the novel does not simplistically say: nature is good, civilization is bad. Twain does not romanticize nature like Fenimore Cooper. His response is not typically traditional and literary but one born of his own youthful interaction with a midwestern 19th century American environment in the process of transformation. Here is Huck in his room at the Widow's, right before he accidentally burns the spider:

The stars was shining, and the leaves rustled in the woods ever so mournful; and I heard an owl, away off, who-whooping about somebody that was dead, and a whippowill and a dog crying about somebody that was going to die; and the wind was trying to whisper something to me and I couldn't make out what it was, and so it made the cold shivers run over me. Then away out in the woods I heard that kind of a sound that a ghost makes when it wants to tell about something that's on its mind and can't make itself understood...

Nature here is not benevolent Mother Nature, though there are a number of lyrical passages in the novel, especially in the flight section, which describe Huck and Jim living contentedly in her bosom. The terms of Huck's discourse in this passage are "mournful", "dead", "going to die", and his mental state, a powerful

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feeling of presentiment and fear. The leaves and wind, the owl and the dog are all heard in anthropomorphic tones and put on nearly equal terms with a ghost, but their voices are messages from the world, a code that Huck can't "make out" or decipher, but that needs to be done for his safety and peace of mind. The interaction in the passage is total — physical, psychological, and spiritual.

The noted Twain scholar, Henry Nash Smith, has stated in his introduction to the Riverside edition (1958) of the novel that Twain abandoned his original plan for the narrative of Huckleberry Finn and substituted a "different structural principle". The linear movement of the journey on the raft becomes bipolar, as it becomes clear that, as Smith says, the river journey "literally leads nowhere". The bipolar contrast is between the raft and the life in the towns along the riverbank, "the River versus the Shore". This bipolarity can be extended throughout the novel — beyond the satirical middle section of the novel dealing with the antics of the King and Duke — and it can, I believe, be expanded to embrace a fuller range of contrasting categories. Changing Professor Smith's terms slightly, one could schematize the novel in the bipolar contexts of Civilization and Nature, and relate them in turn to various pervading categories.

CONTEXT

CATEGORY	'SIVILIZATION'	NATURE
1. HOME	house	River
2. FAMILY	the Widow	Pap
3. EDUCATION	school	woods
4. WEALTH	money	fish, game, rafts, etc.
5. COMPANIONS	Tom	Jim
6. MODE	Romantic/European -tradition	common-sense/ American - innovation
7. ETHICS	conventional morality	pragmatism & survival

The first category, Home, contrasts living in a house, where Huck unhappily finds himself at the beginning and the end of the novel, to the River, where he escapes. It seems a simple opposition of domestic repression versus natural freedom, and that is the way Huck interprets it. The stakes are higher when Jim begins to partake of Huck's destiny, since for Jim slavery and freedom are to be taken literally depending on whether he dwells in a house or on the River, i. e. with or without white folks. That the River is never named and is spelled with a capital letter suggests that Twain means us to take the journey of their flight to freedom as symbolic and universal. This category can be closely combined with the second, Family, to complicate the distribution of advantages and disadvantages. Huck prefers going barefoot to wearing shoes, a bed of leaves under the star to the comforts of a real bed and lamp, and the uncertainty of irregular meals to the three square meals of the widow's house. And yet, domestic things are not perceived as necessarily bad in themselves. The problem is that they are confining to what he perceives as his natural freedom, his ability to come and go as he pleases and make the hundred little quotidian choices without which a man may become a slave to comfort. Twain may want to make us aware of the negative side of these creature comforts, that we have given up a harder, simpler, freer life as their price. This is, of course, the message of that other native genius, Thoreau, in his cry for "Simplicity" in Walden.

What ties a man to his home is his Family and this category shows the ambivalence in Huck's choices more clearly. The Widow is a kind old lady, while his real father, Pap, is an ignorant and cruel tyrant, jealous of his son's civilized advantages and anxious to deprive him of them. That Pap is also the town drunk and Huck has neither mother nor siblings increases

the boy's social alienation. When Pap goes through his phony miraculous reform for the judge, we are meant to see the hypocrisy of trying to reform people for whom (as Huck says) the shot-gun may be the only remedy. The old reprobate kidnaps his son and carries him off to the woods (chapt. 6), which again reverses the value of the terms. Hucks really enjoys his new-found communion with the natural life: "It was kind of jolly, laying off comfortable all day, smoking and fishing, and no books nor study." But then that freedom turns into an even worse form of domestic slavery, and we are reminded of how bad tyrants unrestrained by any kind of law can be: "...by and by Pap got too handy with his hick'ry, and I couldn't stand it. I was all over with welts. He got to going away to much, too, and locking me in." The beatings and confinement are much worse than what he underwent at the Widow's, so the terms are reversed after all: life in the woods, but on Huck's own terms. With respect to the category of Wealth, the balance tips back to the side of nature. Huck and Jim need no money; they live on fish and game, which the woods and river supply with lavish abundance. Even Pap can get an easy living by gathering the logs offered free by the River, but it is significant that he sells the logs — and buys whiskey with the money. Money is, of course, the object of the Duke and the King's greed and the cause of all the human suffering they are prepared to inflict for its sake. Huck, for his part, cares nothing for the treasure that he and Tom found. The judge is keeping it in trust for him whenever he should need it, and his no-good father expends a lot of energy trying to get it away from him.

In his killing of the pig, his own symbolic death, Huck thinks he has finally found a way to have freedom on his own terms. He has died to the civilized world and has found in Jim an ideal companion for a new and

more natural life. In this flight section of the novel, the language is lyrical in its praise of life in the outdoors. The River and woods are shown to be full of arcane lore of the sort not found in the conventional Education, category 3. That Twain and Melville, major novelists of 19th century American literature, and Whitman, its greatest poet, were all self-taught men is a point worth remembering. But again, education is not unambiguous, especially when we consider it together with Huck's two Companions, category 5. Jim is superstitious, but his beliefs come from the slave culture for whom portents and supernatural signs were as real as the sun and moon. As uneducated "white trash", Huck shares many of these beliefs, and what is more he respects Jim's superior knowledge about them. Chapter 14 is a comic paean to Jim's intelligence, as Huck even bows to his weird logic of the comic dialogue on the French language.

As Huck admits, and this is the beginning of his perception of Jim as a human being, "he was almost always right; he had an uncommon level head for a nigger." That final qualification introduces what is to become the basic conflict in Huck's character, which he is to triumphantly overcome in his transformation into a moral being. The crisis comes in chapt. 31 when the conflict between "sivilized" values and natural decency take on their full meaning. Conventional morality says: "It would get all around, that Huck Finn helped a nigger to get his freedom; and if I war to ever see anybody from that town again, I'd be ready to get down and lick his boots for shame" — this from a boy who couldn't care less for the opinions of respectable people. The irony is that Huck has run away from the town and rejected its values, but he is to a certain extent a product of those values, as every rebel reflects, if only negatively, what he rebels against.

Now, here is the voice of the natural man, who once he feels "all washed clean of sin" in his sense of conventional virtue decides therefore to write a letter and turn in his companion as a runaway slave:

But I didn't do it straight off, but laid the paper down and set there thinking — thinking how good it was all this happened so, and how near I come to being lost and going to hell. And went on thinking. And got to thinking over our trip down the River; and I see Jim before me, all the time, in the day, and in the night-time, sometimes moonlight, sometimes storms, and we a floating along, talaking, and singing, and laughing. But somehow I couldn't seem to strike no places to harden me against him, but only the other kind.

Fellow-feeling and human solidarity prove to be stronger than the hypocrisies of conventional morality, and Huck makes his great moral decision: "All right, then, I'll go to hell" — and he tears up the letter and thinks no more about reforming, a word which ironically recalls his father's pseudo-reform earlier in the novel.

Compare Huck's other companion, Tom Sawyer, who unlike Jim the outlaw, comes from a respectable family, goes to school, etc. Compared to Jim's creative superstition, there is Tom's perverted imagination, the product of book-learning, or at least book-reading. Jim and Huck's forebodings usually come true, but Tom's fantasies, like his raid on the Sunday School Picnic, are notable mainly for their unreality. Like Don Quixote, Tom reads too many romances and often comes to grief because he believes what he reads. Tom's Mode, category 6, is the Romantic one of the European literary tradition. If Twain turned his back on that tradition and is the product of the nativist heartland culture, as Bernard Devoto claims, Tom would be Twain's warning of the price of ignoring the plain common-sense of the plains which Huck so beautifully embodies.

Tom's distortions are anything but innocent, as shown in his elaborate plan for effecting Jim's escape, based, it should be noted, on his wide reading in European romance. Jim is nearly recaptured and Tom himself catches a bullet as punishment for giving away the game, but the whole artifice is revealed as perverse when we learn that it was unnecessary all along and Tom had known of Jim's freedom from the beginning. Right before this sordid revelation, however, the business in chapt. 35 of how to free Jim's leg iron from the bed-post is illustrative of the traditional and common-sense approaches to experience. Tom thinks they ought to saw Jim's leg off because "that's how it's the custom in Europe" and one mustn't argue with authority. Huck is respectful enough towards what he perceives as his betters, but wouldn't it make more sense just to lift up the bed and slip off the iron? Tom says, in unconscious praise of his friend: "Huck, you don't ever want to do anything that's regular; you want to be starting fresh all the time." The grim humor of the episode does not conceal the lesson of the relative values of a corrupt and exhausted tradition and the fresh and pragmatic spirit of innovation that Whitman and others saw as distinctively American.

The last category, Ethics, concerns Huck's relation to virtue. I have suggested that Huck's basic virtue is decency. One might also add a natural truthfulness, which may seem paradoxical when applied to such a prodigious liar. What I mean by truthfulness is his truthfulness to himself, his facing up to it when he does something he feels isn't right, as in the fine scene when he humbles himself to a "nigger" for playing a mean trick on him on the raft. After his apology, Huck says: "I done it, and I warn't ever sorry for it afterwards, neither." Huck is upright and honest in the important things. When he lies, it is for survival, as when he is caught

dressing up as a girl and has to compound "stretcher" upon "stretcher" to get out of a tight spot. His lies often have the purpose of protecting Jim from discovery and in that way serve a higher truth.

The motif of relative truth is, in any case, introduced in the very first paragraph of the book, when Huck the narrator comically presents Mr

Mark Twain, the author, as one who "told the truth, mainly." There are two noteworthy things here: the presentation of the artist as artificer, one who lies in fiction to tell greater truths about life, and the mention of Tom Sawyer as being "mostly a true book." The sequel — and *Huckleberry Finn* seems to have started out as a sequel — will be related by Huck himself and, despite tall tales and

bizarre adventures, will leave behind the fables of childhood in Tom Sawyer and come to deal with an adult world of moral ambivalence. This is a World for which a child of nature — whose very name, Huckleberry, signifies a wild fruit — a Rousseauian man largely uncorrupted by civilization but wary of its follies, is fit to live in and narrate. □

The Use of Clichés in Advertising Discourse*

O Uso de Clichês no Discurso
Publicitário

Vera Lúcia Menezes de
Oliveira e Paiva**

"falar é incorrer em tautologias."
(...)

"A certeza de que tudo está escrito nos
anula ou nos fantasmagoriza."

Jorge Luiz Borges

Summary

This paper aims at studying the cliché in advertising discourse, having as starting point the idea that language is made up of a set of clichés which work as vehicles of ideology, thus affecting human behavior.

The signs found in clichés, either verbal or non-verbal, will be analysed as an intertextual phenomenon and their renewal as an attempt to counterattack a dominant ideology and prevent the predictability of the paradigmatic/syntagmatic axis.

Resumo

Este trabalho se propõe, a partir da idéia inicial de que a língua é um grande conjunto de clichês, veículos de ideologia e portanto norteadores de comportamento, a analisar os clichês no discurso publicitário, presentes em forma de signos verbais e não-verbais, como um fenômeno intertextual, e sua renovação como uma tentativa de contra-atacar uma ideologia dominante e impedir a previsibilidade do eixo paradigmático/sintagmático.

1. Definition

The word cliché is defined by the Princeton Encyclopedia of Poetry and Poetics as

A phrase or figure which from overuse, like a dulled knife, has lost its cutting edge; a trite expression. Cliché in verse results when the poet's imagination arises

from other poems rather than from a fresh response to experience.

Versiani (1981:53) defines cliché as

"todo grupo de palavras que se situe no ponto de maior previsibilidade do contínuo de combinabilidade das palavras desde que haja nele um mínimo valor metafórico."

According to Bakhtin (1981: 159), "toda atividade verbal consiste em distribuir a 'palavra de outrem' e a palavra que parece ser de outro." Both the Encyclopedia definition and Versiani's convey the idea of somebody else's word. When Versiani talks about "predictability," it should be understood that one is only able to predict what he already knows, what has already been said. The Encyclopedia talks about overuse, that is to say, the same phrase has been used by many people and repeated many times. When the cliché in verse is seen as repetition of another artistic creation, once more we see the appropriateness of Bakhtin's statement. It is Bakhtin (1981:121) again who says that

O centro organizador de toda enunciação, de toda expressão, não é interior, mas exterior: está situado no meio social que envolve o indivíduo. Só o grito inarticulado de um animal procede do interior do aparelho fisiológico do indivíduo isolado. É uma reação fisiológica pura e não ideologicamente marcada. Pelo contrário, a enunciação humana individual, é, do ponto de vista de seu conteúdo, de sua significação, organizada fora do indivíduo pelas condições extra-orgânicas do meio social. A enunciação enquanto tal é um puro produto de interação social, quer se trate de um ato de fala determinado pela situação imediata ou pelo seu contexto mais amplo que constitui o conjunto das condições de vida de uma determinada comunidade lingüística.

A man does not create his own speech, he just repeats the language

* Adapted from part of my M.A. dissertation "Reading ads with critical eyes". UFMG, 1987.

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imposed upon him by society. The language (parole) as a whole becomes then a big cliché, the opposite of a hypothetic "speech zero degree." Whorf's hypothesis that a person's world view and behavior depends on his native language seems reasonable when we analyse the metaphors which pervade our world view. The repetition of these metaphors will create the clichés and it is in the world of native language, full of clichés, that a person looks for his or her identity, accepting or not the values established by the society he or she lives in.

2. The role of clichés

In daily discourse, the dominator's voice reveals itself through the ordinary man's repetition of clichés which produce ideas and values accepted as undeniable truths. People go on repeating such imposed concepts without any criticism. Paradoxical concepts live side by side. Take, for instance, "Time is money" and "Money does not bring happiness." While "Time is money" heightens the value of money and measures time by means of a monetary unit, the other one, "Money does not bring happiness", undervalues money, and emphasizes the christian concept that "heaven belongs to the poor." Obviously, such clichés never come together. They appear whenever society requires them to explain its material contradictions. According to Soares (1986:22), the use of clichés "... dispensa o exercício da reflexão e simplifica pelo empobrecimento a tarefa da troca de idéias em sociedade." Alienation arises out of this intertextual phenomenon as the world is seen through alienating lenses.

Artists are the ones who manage to cheat the dominant ideology underlying the clichés by disrupting either their syntactic or semantic structures. Speech play, in contrast

with the use of efficient language, keeps the object of discourse itself but, looking for an immediate aim, breaks the ideological structure. Thus proverbs such as "What can't be cured must be endured" receives the complementation "but not until you take an aspirin" and "No use crying over spilt milk" is complemented by "Have your cat lick it."

Clichés work as a kind of sacred language. As we know, the language used in religious rituals is not supposed to undergo any change. Any alteration, even in pronunciation, may be interpreted as a threat to the effectiveness of the ceremony. By the same token a change in the structure of a cliché may represent a threat to its ideological structure. It is true that whenever one breaks an ideological structure, another ideology is born, but our intention is not to interpret the phenomenon with manichaeistic eyes.

3. Clichés in advertisements

Clichés are widely employed in advertisements. This statement is reinforced by a metalinguistic ad from the British Airways which says "The one first class service for which no claims, clichés or superlatives are necessary". The apparent criticism underlying this statement is in fact the acknowledgement of advertising language as a code made up of claims, clichés and powerful linguistic devices used to persuade consumers to buy such and such products. The overuse of clichés in advertising is by no means due to lack of creativity. It is an effective way of fulfilling the consumer's expectation as it is the kind of language people want to listen to. Some of the clichés found in the majority of advertisements are adjectives such as: better, comfortable, different, famous, higher, incredible, lighter, modern, natural, new, practical, pure, reliable, safer, special,

successful, super, wonderful, etc. We also find phrases like: feel the difference, half the price, high efficiency, lasts longer, the gift of love, visible action, win one of the prizes, etc.

According to Riffaterre (1973), clichés, in general, can be renewed by means of four rules which are: substitution, addition, grammatical change and metalinguistic remark.

Substitution occurs when one of the components of the cliché is substituted by one or more words. The remaining component is responsible for the context which makes the reader predict the other element(s). As the expectation is not fulfilled the reader is surprised. An example of substitution is an ad of HAWAIIAN punch with the caption "Everything ventured. Nothing gained" which comes from the proverb "Nothing ventured, nothing have." The indefinite pronoun "nothing" was substituted by "everything." Another ad presents the following caption: "Sears Lady Kenmore / The do-it-yourself dishwasher." The cliché "do-it-yourself," a ready-made sentence, is renewed when "yourself" is replaced by "itself."

In *addition*, new components may be added and the statement then becomes unusual. An ad of KODAK is a good example. The picture shows a man holding the photograph of a girl and a sentence just above the photo says "I think I'm in love." One expects the man to be in love with the girl, but below the photograph another sentence complements the first and we read "with this new camera." In this particular example the surprise is even greater because the photograph of the girl reinforces the predictability that the sentence "I'm in love" will be normally followed by *with + a person*.

Grammatical change occurs when one or more word in the cliché change from one grammatical class to another.

The example is another ad of KODAK which presents the following caption: "How to pick your father's pocket." The word "pocket" in this ad is different from the one in the well known expression "To pick someone's pocket," which means "to steal from the pocket." In the ad, "pocket" is not a noun but an adjective. That is, "pocket" is not a "small bag forming part of an article of clothing, for carrying things in," but a KODAK pocket camera, one whose size is suitable for a pocket. The construction thus strikes the reader and consequently motivates him or her to read the rest of the text.

At last, a *metalinguistic remark* can be made on a metaphorical element in order to warn the reader that the cliché is to be literally understood. Some examples will make it clear.

In the first one (Fig.1),¹ the metaphorical expression "We beef d-up the flavor" is to be literally understood as well. The metaphorical verb "beef up" means "to add weight, strength, or power to." In our example, there is a photograph of a box of dog food where we can read "chunky beef flavor." This caption works as a metalinguistic remark and leads us to understand that "beef d-up" is also to be understood as something having more taste of beef.

In the second example (fig.2) the cliché "A ray of hope" keeps its metaphorical meaning as long as it advertises a product which promises the solution for a problem which seemed insoluble. But the iconic representation of sun rays around the name of the product tells us that the word RAY may be also understood as sun ray. The signifier ray has two different signifieds: ray (light) and ray (small sign, a sign of hope). Although the product cannot sell sun rays, it does not work without them. Any tanning product will work only if there

is sunshine. The pun makes the ad interesting and calls the reader's attention.

"I can't believe my eyes" is the cliché presented in the third example (fig.3). The photograph shows beautifully made up eyes and the cliché divides itself into two meanings:

1. I can't believe what I see (or read)
2. I can't believe my eyes may look so beautiful.

Under the main caption there is a smaller one telling us that the product is at bargain price. Besides being cheap the consumer can get nine eye shadows at one time. This reading restores the basic meaning of the cliché, that is, "It is incredible". So the signifier "eyes" will have two different meanings: when someone reads the caption linked to the picture, he or she does a different reading from that of the person who reads it associated with the small text. The written expression is associated with a picture which ignores the metaphor presented in the cliché and calls the reader's attention to the literal meaning. Surprisingly enough, communication is not broken, on the contrary, the reader gets so surprised that the simultaneous presentation of two different meanings through different codes does not make him or her confused, but urges him or her to decode the verbal language and enjoy the visual code.

In the fourth example (Fig.4), we have an ad of DURACELL batteries. In this ad, the word track (the parallel rails of a railway) is, of course, a metaphor which means "a line of action." Nevertheless, the picture shows two male dolls on a toy vehicle, which requires batteries in order to work. The text states that over the years, they have kept trying to find ways to improve the batteries, which last up to twenty per cent longer than the ones they made just three years

before. The text adds that they intend to go on improving the product to which they have been giving all their attention (one-track mind, another metaphor with the word track). The verbal metaphor — track as a line of action — is ignored by the picture, but another metaphor is born, a visual metaphor — the track as a preestablished route which must necessarily be followed because those who are "off the track" can have an "accident." It is worth observing that the picture shows the track going upwards, which stands for the future in the visual code.

These examples show us that the apparent disruption of the clichés via visual devices makes them actually more recognizable, bringing out the effect of surprise and humor.

4. Tearing the masks off the clichés

New jargons are constantly created by advertising and other mass media. The text repeated by comedians is immediately copied, adapted, repeated, quoted and many times renewed. Cury (1982:119), quoting Laurent Jenny, reminds us that

"a intertextualidade é pois máquina perturbadora. Trata-se de não deixar o sentido em sossego — de evitar o triunfo do "cliché" por um trabalho de transformação."

The ideological masks are sometimes torn off by means of substitutions, additions, grammatical changes and metalinguistic remarks. By raising objections to this "ready-made," non creative language, man has the possibility of seeing the world with different eyes.

Marjorie Boulton (1978:103) says that

Because when we have a habit of hearing things we tend also to acquire a kind of habit or at least readiness to believe them, we can usually examine the meaning of some quite unfamiliar

statement more critically than that of a statement we have often heard before. It follows that since we are more likely to be misled by repeated assertions, precisely the assertions we most often hear are those we should examine most carefully with regard to their meaning, in order to consider whether or not they are true. Our most dangerous errors are probably the ones we take for granted.

As clichés tend to make people uncritical, teachers should work with this kind of language in the classroom

in order to make people aware of the unconscious repetition process they have been undergoing. Clichés in the form of slogans create automatic habits of consuming although they are often meaningless and sometimes mere tautologies. Uncritical minds are always ready to accept orders, to behave and act without stopping to think. The study² of clichés will make students aware of the amount of ready-made sentences they read and

repeat all the time without thinking about the ideology conveyed by them. An analysis of different clichés in advertising will reveal the myths and false beliefs which makes up the dominant ideology in our society. As advertising belongs to the students' real world it will prove to be an excellent example of concrete material for them to handle and analyze. □

NOTES

¹ Reproductions of the ads will be found in appendix 1.

² Appendix 2 presents an example of an exercise to be developed during a conversation class.

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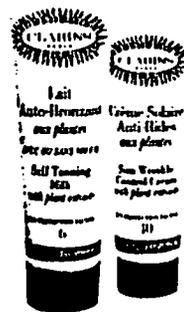
APENDIX 1

Figura 1



Figura 2

Tan vs. Skin Damage: A ray of hope!



1. Les rayons UVB sont les plus dangereux pour la peau. Ils sont responsables de la majorité des dommages causés par le soleil. Ils pénètrent plus profondément dans la peau que les rayons UVA. Ils provoquent l'apparition de taches de soleil, de rides et de vieillissement prématuré de la peau.

2. Les rayons UVA sont également dangereux. Ils sont responsables de la majorité des dommages causés par le soleil. Ils pénètrent plus profondément dans la peau que les rayons UVB. Ils provoquent l'apparition de taches de soleil, de rides et de vieillissement prématuré de la peau.

3. Les rayons UVB sont les plus dangereux pour la peau. Ils sont responsables de la majorité des dommages causés par le soleil. Ils pénètrent plus profondément dans la peau que les rayons UVA. Ils provoquent l'apparition de taches de soleil, de rides et de vieillissement prématuré de la peau.

4. Les rayons UVA sont également dangereux. Ils sont responsables de la majorité des dommages causés par le soleil. Ils pénètrent plus profondément dans la peau que les rayons UVB. Ils provoquent l'apparition de taches de soleil, de rides et de vieillissement prématuré de la peau.

5. Les rayons UVB sont les plus dangereux pour la peau. Ils sont responsables de la majorité des dommages causés par le soleil. Ils pénètrent plus profondément dans la peau que les rayons UVA. Ils provoquent l'apparition de taches de soleil, de rides et de vieillissement prématuré de la peau.

6. Les rayons UVA sont également dangereux. Ils sont responsables de la majorité des dommages causés par le soleil. Ils pénètrent plus profondément dans la peau que les rayons UVB. Ils provoquent l'apparition de taches de soleil, de rides et de vieillissement prématuré de la peau.

- 1. Ne pas utiliser de produits à base de soleil pendant plus de 15 minutes.
- 2. Éviter l'exposition directe au soleil pendant les heures chaudes (entre 11h et 15h).
- 3. Porter des vêtements protecteurs et un chapeau.
- 4. Éviter l'exposition directe au soleil pendant les heures chaudes (entre 11h et 15h).
- 5. Porter des vêtements protecteurs et un chapeau.
- 6. Éviter l'exposition directe au soleil pendant les heures chaudes (entre 11h et 15h).

CLARINS PARIS 110 PRINCE ALBERT EN AIN (L'AR) - PRINCE EN FRANCE!
 MACYS • WANAMAKEYS

B. Now read the text and answer the following questions:

1. What kind of machine is SOLOFLEX?
2. What is SOLOFLEX designed for?
3. Does SOLOFLEX require much space?
4. What is the purpose of the "free Soloflex Brochure"?
5. What is the ideology underlying this ad?
6. Now that you have interpreted the picture and the text, try to justify the title *No pain, no gain*. Do you agree with this proverb?

C. Observe how the following proverbs were altered:

- a) "What can't be cured must be endured. But not until you take an aspirin."
- b) "No use crying over spilt milk. Have your cat lick it."

Now try to modify the following proverbs:

1. No pain, no gain.
2. People who live in glass houses shouldn't throw stones.
3. Barking dogs don't bite.
4. After rain comes fair weather.
5. It's a sad house where the hen crows louder than the rooster.
6. Silence gives consent.
7. All cats are grey in dark.
8. The end justifies the means.
9. One rotten apple spoils the barrel.
10. Laugh and your troubles will melt away.
11. A closed mouth catches no flies.
12. Everything comes to him who waits.

Byron's Don Juan:

El Burlador de Sevilla by Tirso de Molina, there is no direct

imitation of the original in Byron.

Source and

Imitation

Don Juan de Byron: fonte e imitação

William Valentine Redmond*

Summary

Byron's Don Juan tells of the adventures and conquests of the hero. But, although there are some elements in common with the original play on the subject of Don Juan,

El Burlador de Sevilla by Tirso de Molina, there is no direct

imitation of the original in Byron.

Resumo

O Don Juan de Byron conta as aventuras e conquistas do herói. Mas, apesar de ter alguns elementos em comum com a peça original sobre Don Juan, El Burlador de Sevilla de Tirso de Molina, não parece ser uma imitação direta desta peça.

1. INTRODUÇÃO

Don Juan is an unfinished satirical poem in sixteen cantos written by Byron between 1819 and 1824 and was left uncompleted at the time of his tragic death in Greece, where he died from disease while fighting for the independence of his second fatherland. The story records six major episodes, and contains as many verses as six of Shakespeare's plays. He starts by describing with malicious good humour Juan's childhood and the strange educational system employed by his mother, the priggish Donna Inez (so like Byron's own mother) to keep him sexually pure. Despite her efforts, Donna Julia, with the "darkness of her Oriental eyes",¹ and despite her close friendship with the mother, seduces

the susceptible sixteen year old because, as Byron points out, "What man call gallantry, and the gods adultery, is much more common where the climate's sultry".² To her credit, she did resist a little to the temptation: "a little still she strove, and much repented/ And whispering 'I will ne'er consent', consented".³ But her husband, Don Alfonso discovers that she was "sleeping double" and Donna Inez has to send her son off from Seville and Spain to avoid the scandal:

She had resolved that he should travel through

All European climes, by land and sea
To mend his former morals and get new
Especially in France and Italy.⁴

Then begins his second adventure. He suffers shipwreck and after hunger and exposure in an open boat (spiced with cannibalism), he eventually lands on a small Greek island which is ruled over by Lambro, a successful pirate and slave trader. He is found on the beach by Haidée and so to his third adventure. The two young people become lovers and while her father was away from his base and home, the two have an idyllic romance marked by naturalness and innocence. But the father returns unexpectedly, thus causing the death of Haidée and the selling of Juan as a slave in Constantinople. Gulbeyaz, the wife of the sultan, buys him with an idea of keeping him as her secret lover. However, Juan resists the seduction although he does have an affair with one of the women of the seraglio, Dudù. Eventually he escapes from the Turks and enlists in the army of the Russians who at that moment were at war with the Turks. His fifth adventure follows as he contributes to the capture of Ismail and he is then sent by the Russian general with a dispatch announcing the victory. This he takes to St. Petersburg and becomes the

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lover of the notorious queen, Catherine II, who had a special liking for young foreigners. Because of a deterioration in his health, Catherine sends him off to England on a diplomatic mission. While mixing with society, he attracts the attention of three women: the lavish Duchess of Fitzfulke, Lady Adeline Amundeville, wife of a politician, and Aurora Raby, a beautiful young Catholic heiress. The first of these disguised as a ghost makes herself his lover just before the poem breaks off.

The five women in the poem are clearly distinguished one from another. Julia is sentimental and very self-deluding while Haidée is simple, natural and affectionate. Dudù is shy and undemanding while her unsuccessful mistress is domineering before and vindictive after her frustration. Catherine of Russia is insatiable and the English Duchess is playful and able to use unusual means to obtain her ends. However, *Don Juan* is not just a love story: it is also full of action and adventures — a shipwreck, a period of slavery, battles and various diplomatic and social occasions and an apparent supernatural haunting.

Byron had, however, a much more ambitious plan for the poem than this. He assured Murray, his editor in a letter that he intended a vast comic epic:

I meant to take him the tour of Europe, with a proper mixture of siege, battle and adventure, and to make him finish as Anarcharsis Cloots in the French revolution. To how many cantos this may extend, I know not, not whether (even if I live) I shall complete it. But this was my notion: I meant to have made him a Cavalier Servant in Italy, and a cause for a divorce in England, and a sentimental "Werther-faced man" in Germany so as to show the different ridicules of the society in each of those countries.⁵

But *Don Juan* was not nearly as popular as the previous poems of Byron. *The Corsair* was an amazing

success and he wrote to his publisher, Murray, "I have sold, on the day of publication, a thing perfectly unprecedented, 10.000 copies."⁶ In 1816, he had sold the booksellers, in one evening at dinner, seven thousand copies of *Childe Harold* and a similar sale of *the Prisoner of Chillon*. *Don Juan* sold badly and, even among his closest friends, there was opposition to its publication. Hobhouse, Moore, Kinnaid and others had advised against the publication of Canto 1 on the grounds of its blasphemy, its bawdry and its personal satire against people especially Southey.

Despite the reception at the time of publication, *Don Juan* has come to be recognised as the masterpiece of Byron. T.S.Eliot, who has shaped the critical opinion of this century, states: "All things worked together to make *Don Juan* the greatest of Byron's poems".⁷ Jump, a leading authority on Byron and the Romantic period, also agrees with this opinion:

For those who do not insist upon too purposeful an organisation and to strict an economy, *Don Juan* is Byron's masterpiece. Untidily and unpredictably, it shows us life as viewed by a brilliant exponent of worldly commonsense. He is disillusioned and sceptical; impatient of cant, robust, high-spirited, and humane.⁸

At the present time, the majority of critics accept the comic epic poem as his masterpiece.

However due to the insularity of English criticism, very little attention has been paid to the source of this poem. Great attention has been given to the narrator and his relationship with Byron, to the Italian origin of the ottava rima, to the irony and satire and to the autobiographical elements of the poem. But little attention is given to the source of the title "Don Juan". Even Byron is very blasé in his reference to the name given to the hero:

I want a hero: an uncommon want,
When every year and month sends forth
a new one
Till, after cloying the gazettes with cant,
The age discovers he is not the true one;
Of such as these I should not care to vaunt
I'll therefore take our ancient friend Don Juan.⁹

Byron takes Don Juan as his hero flippantly and it is necessary to study the real origins and the true character of Byron's old friend.

2. TIRSO DE MOLINA

The literary creator of the character Don Juan Tenorio was Tirso de Molina, the pen name for the religious Fray Gabriel Telléz, member of the order of the Merces, who lived in Spain from 1584 to 1648. He wrote over 300 plays besides living a very active life as a religious superior and chronicler and we have still over 85 of his plays in manuscript (a high number for an author of this period). He was one of the three great playwrights of the Golden Age of Spanish Renaissance drama and contrasts clearly with the other two Lope de Vega and Calderón. Lope was interested in intrigues and presented characters with national connotations and in his plays was more preoccupied with the portrayal of the physical appearance than with the stage personality of his characters. Calderón, on the other hand, was much more reflexive and dealt with a notional and metaphysical presentation of his characters so that they became abstractions. Tirso de Molina, in turn, was interested in the psychological study of the characters in his plays and the vital impulses which made them act. His personalities are therefore much more real men and women than those of the other two.

Tirso de Molina is remembered in a special way for the brilliance of his female characters: Ruth, Tamar,

Jezabel, Maria de Molina and Marta: this is a strange quality for the religious who lived an exemplary religious life and had no love affairs, unlike the other two famous contemporaries. He also goes down in the history of world literature as the man who gives literary expression to the myth of Don Juan, one of the four great myths of European literature, the other three being *Hamlet*, *Faust* and *Don Quijote*. Don Juan had had a long existence as a legend in both the Nordic countries and the Latin speaking communities of Southern Europe. But it was the genius of Tirso which made him into the literary figure that spread much more rapidly and widely than the other.

El Burlador de Sevilla, the play by Tirso de Molina, tells the story of Don Juan Tenorio and his amorous conquests in various countries of Europe: Isabela in Spain, Tisbea in the village where he was shipwrecked and Dona Ana de Ulloa. The father of the last one challenged Don Juan to a duel in which the defender of the girl's honour was killed. The second part of the play tells the story of the Invited Statue of Don Gonzalo, which, after going to supper with Don Juan, invites him in turn to go to supper with him in the cemetery. There the statue of the father becomes the punishment of God and carries Don Juan off to hell, pulling him by the beard through the open grave. The manner of the punishment was obviously suggested by the possibilities and limitations of the open stage of the period and shows a chilling version of the chastisement of God against the ungodly. The moral aim of the play is very clear and no later version has thrown the same emphasis on the presence of the statue. The play is of course in the tradition of the medieval morality plays:

Está es justiça de Dios
Quien tal hace, que tal pague.¹⁰

Ramón Menéndez Pidal in his *Estudios literarios* analyses the source

of the play of Tirso and updates the studies of the great Farinelli and J. Bolte. He points out that like so many literary characters, Don Juan was born out of the folklore legends and fertilised by the creative genius of a great writer. The folklore origin was obviously a version of the legend which existed in Seville about the "convidado de piedra" and not as had been claimed a version of the legend of Leonicio nor the "Convite a la calavera".

A later study of Dorothy Eppelen Mackay, published in 1943 throws further light on the origin of the double invitation legend of Don Juan. Using the method of motive analysis popular to the Finnish school of folklorists, the author looks for the archetype or first version of the legend in the various versions of the European tradition. She sees that there are basically three elements in the legend: the challenge of a living man to a dead one by giving a supper invitation; the appearance of the dead man at the supper and the return invitation; and the appearance of the living man at his rendezvous with the dead and his punishment or warning. Mackay finds that there were innumerable versions of this legend throughout Europe and that the double invitation existed in many. Her findings were principally that all the versions of the legend existing in Spain fell under the archetype established and therefore had a considerable degree of unity. The only stories in which the dead man appeared in the form of a statue belonged to the Spanish peninsula - 4 in Spain and 1 in Portugal. The Spanish folk tales are predominantly religious in their moral. These factors obviously contributed to the play *El Burlador de Sevilla*. There is a strong religious moral, the statue is the form that the dead father takes and the double invitation is clearly present in the play. The genius of Tirso de Molina added the vivid

characterisation, the element of Don Juan as the conqueror of women, the local colour of places and of course the brilliance and beauty of the poetry.

The findings of Pidal and Mackay made obsolete the search for an historical figure who might have inspired Tirso in the creation of the character of Don Juan. The theory of Gregorio Marañón about the Conde de Villamediana and other attempts are outdated. The contribution of the legends is clearly established.

Having been given life by Tirso de Molina, the spread of the character of Don Juan was much more dramatic and much more far-reaching than that of the other three, Faustus, Quixote and Hamlet. Soon there were masterpieces in many countries and such great names as Molière, Mozart, Zorilla, Lenau, Pushkin, Byron and Shaw produced their versions of the famous literary work. From being a play, it took various other forms of literary and musical creation and the character of Don Juan changed according to the ideas and the periods of literature into which it was adapted. Don Juan became a major literary figure in France, Italy, England, Germany as well as in Spain and Portugal.

But we must now come back to our subject. To what extent can we say that the play by Tirso de Molina is the cause and source of Byron's *Don Juan* and what evidence is there in the work itself about this interdependence? To exemplify more clearly the imitation, we will compare and contrast the use of the play of Tirso by Byron, Lenau and the other English writer, Shaw, who have created a version of value of Don Juan.

3. IMITATION

There is no direct evidence in *Don Juan* that Byron knew of the text of Tirso de Molina. He tells us playfully:

If any person doubt it, I appeal
 To history, tradition and to facts
 To newspapers, whose truth all know
 and feel
 To plays in five and operas in three acts;
 All these confirm my statement a good deal
 But that which more completely faith
 exacts
 Is that myself and several now in Seville
 Saw Juan's last elopement with the
 devil.¹¹

There is explicit reference to plays and operas on the subject. But the plays are in five acts. This eliminates the play of Tirso which is divided into three "jornadas" and that of Zorilla, which is anyhow posterior, being published in 1840, which is divided into two parts and seven acts. It must refer to Molière's version and maybe to Musset's. The opera is obviously that of Mozart finished in 1787. Even the actions in the poem of Byron have little to do with the play of Tirso. There is the shipwreck and the travel to Italy and France but this seems to have to do with the tradition of classical epic poetry as he tells us in stanza CC. There is therefore no proof that Byron knew of the play of Tirso.

Something quite distinct may be observed in Shaw and Lenau. Shaw published his *Men and Supermen* in 1903 and included a special scene (Act 3 Scene 2) which is known as Don Juan in Hell, which is often detached and performed as a one-act play. It was conceived as a dream experienced by John Tanner in which he appears as Don Juan, Ann Whitefield as Dona Ana and Roebuck Ramsden as the statue. In the preface which is an "Epistle Dedicatory" he states clearly that he conceived this scene as a twentieth-century version of Don Juan of Molina:

You once asked me why I did not write a Don Juan play. The levity with which you assumed this frightful responsibility has probably by this time enabled you to forget it: but the day of reckoning has arrived: here is your play!¹²

This scene of the play is a Don Juan play in the tradition which began with Tirso:

The prototype Don Juan invented early in the XVI century by a Spanish monk

was presented according to ideas of the time as the enemy of God.¹³

But the public could not accept the damnation of Don Juan and later versions changed the tragic ending:

Don Juan became such a pet that the world could not bear his damnation. It reconciled him sentimentally to God in a second version and clamored for his canonization for a whole century.¹⁴

This is a very perspicacious summary of the progress of Don Juan from Tirso, through Molière to Zorilla and Mozart. But Shaw was aware that the Romantic version would not do for the twentieth century. He was well aware of what he had to do when he wrote his "Shavio-Socratic dialogue with the lady, the statue and the devil";

You see from the foregoing survey that Don Juan is a full century out of date for you and for me; and if there are millions of less literate people who are still in the eighteenth century, have they not Molière and Mozart, upon whose art no human hand can improve. You would laugh at me if this time of day I dealt in duels and ghosts and womanly women... Even the more abstract parts of the Don Juan play are dilapidated past use: for instance Don Juan's supernatural antagonist hurled those who refused to repent into lakes of burning brimstone, there to be tortured by devils with horns and tails.¹⁵

Shaw therefore sets out to write a modern version of the correct idea of Don Juan, not as a libertine but as

a man who though gifted enough to be exceptionally capable of distinguishing between good and evil, follows his own instincts without regard for the common statute or canon law; and therefore while gaining the ardent sympathy of our rebellious instincts finds himself in mortal conflict with existing institutions and defends himself by fraud and force.¹⁶

This is a good definition of Don Juan as the man who refuses to respect social, moral and religious codes.

In fact, Shaw goes on to write a play which respects very little these intuitions and he makes his Don Juan into a superman who refuses to obey the laws of marriage because they chain him down to such things as distract the superman from his mission

of forging the future of the human race:

Invent me a means by which I can have love, beauty, romance, emotion, passion without their wretched penalties, their expenses, their worries, their trials, their illnesses and agonies and risks of death, their retinue of servants and nurses and doctors and school-masters.¹⁷

Don Juan is therefore the man who frees himself from all this and lives as a superman satisfying his simple "impulse of manhood towards womanhood" whenever it is convenient for the Life Force which inspires the true superman.

However, there is no doubt that in all this, Shaw knew his history of literature and had a first hand close knowledge of the other plays on Don Juan especially that of Molina.

The case of Lenau is a little less clear because he did not share Shaw's passion for preface writing. The poem of Lenau was finished in 1884 and entitled *Don Juan*. A specialist on Lenau tells us explicitly that he knew and read the German version of the play of Tirso de Molina published by C. A. Dohrn in 1841. This fact is supported by a close reading of the play: the names of the minor characters such as Catalinon are the same in the poem of Lenau and in the play of Tirso. The scene in which Don Juan deceives the Duchess Isabelle and the scene in the cemetery are very close to Tirso's version. There is also evidence of elements taken from the play by Molière and the opera by Mozart.

We can therefore conclude that while Byron showed no knowledge of the play of Tirso de Molina, both Shaw and Lenau followed the play closely and since they were both geniuses, they were able to create something new and different with what they borrowed as Eliot would demand.

We must therefore try another approach to see if Byron's portrayal of the central character shows understanding of the essential elements of this character as handed

on by Tirso. In the Spanish play, Don Juan is both the conqueror of women and the challenger of a dead person in such a way as to insult him and all the supernatural. He is a man who disrespects the laws of God and man. In Byron's *Don Juan* there is not any element that could be considered as a challenge to a dead person. In fact whereas Don Juan Tenorio kills the father of Dona Ana, Don Juan of Byron flees from Don Alfonso and puts up no opposition to the father of Haidée. There remains only the element of the conqueror of women in the poem of Byron but in a form that is significantly different. T.S. Eliot was the first to put his finger on this difference in his classic essay on Byron of 1937:

It is noticeable — and this confirms, I think, the view of Byron held by Mr Peter Quennell — that in these love episodes, Juan always takes the passive role. Even Haidée, in spite of the innocence and ignorance of that child of nature, appears rather as the seducer than the seduced... The innocence of Juan is merely a substitute for the passivity of Byron.¹⁸

The opinion of Mr Quennell is of course that Byron, as essentially homosexual, was always passive in his relationship with women. This is rather a strange doctrine coming from Eliot, the defender of the impersonality of poetry. But the fact is true in the poem. Don Juan is the aggressive conqueror of women of the Spanish tradition. In Zorilla, he arrives at the point of killing thirty-one people in a year and seducing seventy women in the same period. The method used was described briefly:

Um dia para alicia-las
 Outro para consegu-las
 Outro para abandoná-la
 Mais dois para substituí-las
 E uma hora para olvidá-las.¹⁹

The Spanish Don Juan is certainly very different from the passive Don Juan of Byron.

This theory of Eliot would seem to be confirmed by the statements of Gregorio Marañón who states that the true Don Juan is a man of "equivocal

virility", physically feminine in appearance, but this is not the place to examine this theory. Suffice it to say, that the Don Juan of Byron is not really a character with the qualities or the ideas of the original hero of this name.

Shaw's hero is also passive in a sense, but in quite a different way from Byron's hero. Shaw maintained that all men are the quarry of women and not the huntsmen and that "a woman seeking a husband is the most unscrupulous of all the beasts of prey"²⁰ So Shaw's Don Juan is passive like all men. Lenau's Don Juan is the true romantic lover seeking many women in order to cling to passing beauty and enjoy it while it remains. But his hero is not passive like the hero of Byron.

4. CONCLUSIONS

After examining the direct and indirect evidence for a dependence of Byron's Don Juan on the original play by Tirso de Molina, we must conclude that Byron had no direct knowledge of it. We must agree with Shaw who comments on Byron's Don Juan:

Our vagabond libertines are no more interesting from that point of view than the sailor who has a wife in every port; and Byron's hero is, after all, only a vagabond libertine. And he is dumb; he does not discuss himself with a Sganarelle-Leporello or with the fathers or brothers of his mistresses: he does not, even, like Casanova, tell his own story. In fact he is not a true Don Juan at all; he is no more an enemy of God than any romantic and adventurous young sower of wild oats.²¹

Shaw, clear-sighted as usual, points out that Byron's Don Juan has nothing in common with the first Don Juan except for the fact that he is a libertine.

The same opinion is shared by Salvador de Madariaga in the preface to his BBC play *Don Juan y la Don Juánia* in which he examines the true nature of Don Juan and concludes that the essential characteristic of the character must be its spontaneous and aggressive, unreflective virility that

disrespects the law of man and God in order to satisfy itself. Byron's Don Juan is something quite different:

El Don Juan de Byron no oculta su índole insolente, displicente, altanera, de inglés perseguido por el spleen. Pero es demasiado blasé, fin de siglo, para armonizar con el símbolo que procreó nuestro gran fraile. No es Don Juan. Es Sir John.²²

Madariaga puts his finger on an extremely important point in this passage: the identification of Don Juan with Byron himself. The close identity of the narrator of the comic poem and the author is the reason for the failure of the poem as a Don Juan poem but it is at the same time the reason for the success of the poem as the great masterpiece of Byron. Finally he had found an objective correlative in the sense of Eliot, in which he could give expression to all the experiences and opinions he had in a free medley poem describing the travels of a character which he turns into his real self. The cause of the failure of the poem as one of the true series of Don Juan literary works is the real cause of its success on another level.

Byron gives us a hint about the origin of his knowledge of the character of Don Juan in two telling verses:

We all have seen him. In the pantomime,
 Sent to the devil somewhat ere his time.²³

Here, we have the true explanation in all probability. He had seen Don Juan in the pantomime and for someone who had been living in Italy from October 1816 and was to leave it only in July 1823, Byron had surely had constant contact with the Italian pantomime on Don Juan. Soon after the creation by Tirso de Molina, the Commedia dell'arte had seized on the comic possibilities of the play and Don Juan had become one of the constant characters of their presentations. So here we find the contact that probably inspired Byron and explains the lack of real understanding of the true nature of Don Juan. □

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NOTES

- ¹ Byron, p.642
- ² Ibidem, p.644
- ³ Ibidem, p.649
- ⁴ Ibidem, p.658
- ⁵ Jump, p.105
- ⁶ Marchant, p.162
- ⁷ Eliot, p.202
- ⁸ Jump, p.150
- ⁹ Byron, p.637
- ¹⁰ Molina, p. 241
- ¹¹ Byron, p.659
- ¹² Shaw: Prefaces, p.149
- ¹³ Ibidem, p.151

¹⁴ Shaw: Prefaces, p.152

¹⁵ Ibidem.

¹⁶ Ibidem, p.151

¹⁷ Shaw: Plays, p.383

¹⁸ Eliot, p. 202

¹⁹ Bandeira, p.45

²⁰ Shaw: plays, p.382

²¹ Ibidem, p.150

²² Madariaga, p.30

²³ Byron, p.637

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