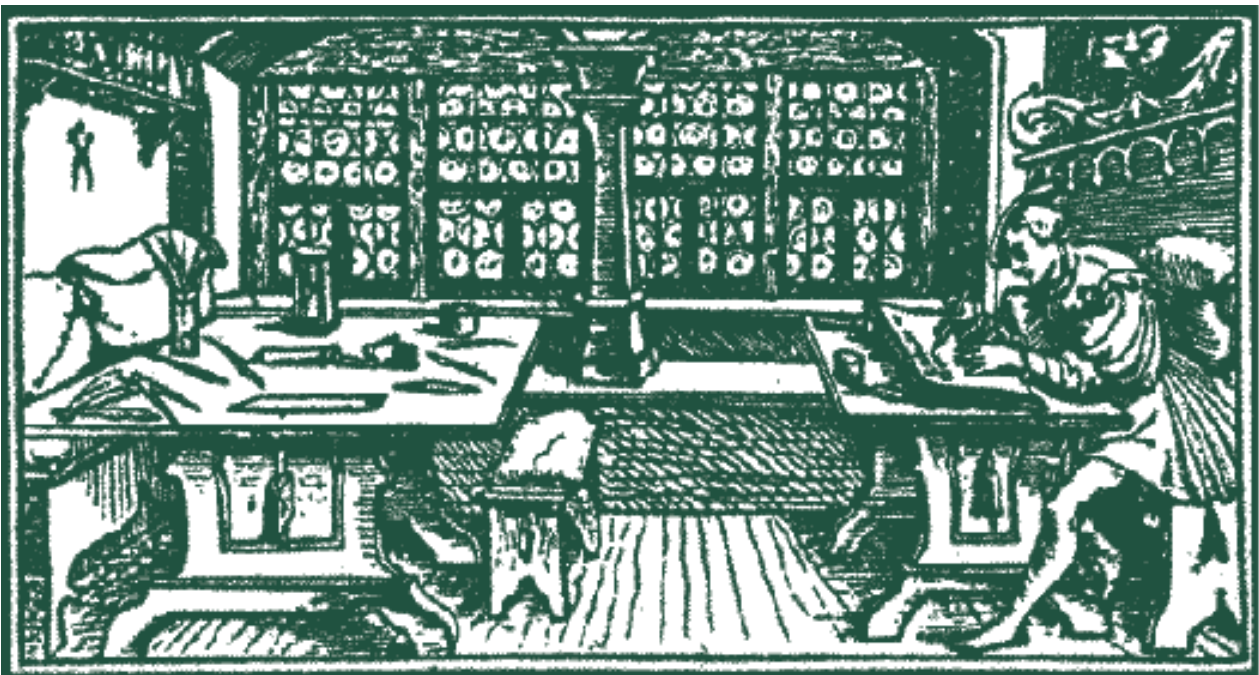




STUDIA UNIVERSITATIS
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 CLUJ-NAPOCA, Romania. 27 - 28 October, 2009**

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Prof. univ. dr. SANDA TOMESCU BACIU

Conf. univ. dr. ȘTEFAN GENCĂRĂU

HAMSUN AS RECENT HISTORY (INVITATIONS, PROGRAM)

 <p>ROYAL NORWEGIAN EMBASSY</p>	 <p>Universitatea BABEȘ-BOLYAI</p>
<p>The Royal Norwegian Embassy in Bucharest and Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca (Faculty of Letters, Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literature) have the pleasure to invite you to the event:</p>	
<p>HAMSUN 2009, 27-28 October in Cluj-Napoca In the „Aula” of the Faculty of European Studies (1, Em. de Martonne St.)</p>	
<p>which marks the 150 year-anniversary of Knut Hamsun's (1859-1952) birth.</p>	
<p>Aiming at preserving the literary legacy of the Norwegian author, winner of the Nobel Prize in literature in 1920, the anniversary year - Hamsun 2009 - is celebrated both in Norway and internationally.</p>	
<p>In Romania, the commemorative project "Hamsun 2009" consists of a cycle of conferences, with interventions from Norwegian and Romanian Hamsun- specialists, as well as a poster and a book exhibition. Old and new films inspired by Hamsun's life and work will also be screened.</p>	
<p>You will find the whole programme for the 2-days event below.</p>	
<p>Øystein Hovdkinn, Ambassador</p>	<p>Prof. univ. dr. Andrei Marga Rector</p>
<p>R.S.V.P. by October 23rd by email: emb.bucharest@mfa.no; idranca@staff.ubbcluj.ro or by phone at: 021/210 02 74; 0264/429762.</p>	



HAMSUN AS RECENT HISTORY (INVITATIONS, PROGRAM)

Programme Hamsun 2009	
Cluj Napoca, „Aula” of the Faculty of European Studies (1, Em. de Martonne St.)	
Tuesday, October 27th <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 10.00-10.30 - Arrival of guests and visiting the Knut Hamsun poster and book exhibitions• 10.30-11.00 – Opening remarks by: Prof.dr. Andrei Marga, Rector of Babeş-Bolyai University H.E. Øystein Hovdkinn, Ambassador of Norway to Romania Prof. dr. Corin Braga, Dean of the School of Letters• 11.00-11.30 – Mr. Jan Erik Holst (Norwegian Film Institute)• 11.30-12.00 – <i>Coffee break</i>• 12.00-12.30 – Mr. Nils Magne Knutsen (Tromsø University)• 12.30-13.00 – Mrs. Sanda Tomescu Baciu (Babeş-Bolyai University)• 13.00-13.30 – <i>Snack buffet</i> (Piramida Restaurant)• 14.00-20.00 – Films. Free entrance	Films schedule: Tuesday, October 27th <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 14.00 <i>Hamsun 2009 in Norway</i> <i>(documentary made by TVR Cultural)</i>• 14.30 <i>The Telegrafist</i>• 16.30 <i>Hunger</i>• 18.30 <i>Hamsun</i> Wednesday, October 28th <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 14.00 <i>Growth of the Soil</i>• 16.00 <i>Pan</i>• 19.00 <i>Wayfarers</i> Free entrance. The films have English subtitles.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF PROFESSOR ANDREI MARGA,
RECTOR OF THE “BABEȘ-BOLYAI” UNIVERSITY,
AT THE “HAMSUN 2009” CONFERENCE IN ROMANIA**

Ladies and gentlemen,

We are celebrating today Knut Hamsun.

First of all we are honored to greet His Excellency Øystein Hovdkinn, the Ambassador of the Kingdom of Norway and his colleagues who are cooperating with him.

We are also proud to celebrate a great writer, a real reference point in world literature, Knut Hamsun. Then we are also proud to notice again the fact that this university has taken some steps towards developing programs devoted to the Scandinavian languages and Scandinavian literatures, to the Norwegian language and Norwegian literature in particular.

As we mentioned earlier, on different occasions, we have at this university the oldest program devoted to a Nordic language. The program of Finnish language and literature from the Faculty of Letters is probably the oldest in the university, dating back to the 19th century.

Besides that we are privileged to have such a solid program devoted to the Norwegian language and literature. And this program remains linked to Professor Sanda Tomescu Baciu, who studied – as we know – in Oslo and after she returned back home she worked hard to create first of all a program devoted to the Norwegian language and literature, and then we worked together at the Rectorate to organize an efficient Department of Scandinavian language and literature studies; this department started its activity in 2001. Now we proudly notice the fact that almost five hundred students have been trained in Norwegian and they are already, to some extent, skilled in discussing Norwegian literature and/or the realities of Norway.

We are talking a lot about the languages which are important and we agree with this maxim saying that there will be two kinds of “illiterates” in the future: the people who don’t speak English and the people who speak only English. I underline this fact because the so called small languages are becoming more and more important. Of course it is impossible to say which are the small languages. Languages are languages. For the graduates it is more and more an advantage to be competent in languages like English, German, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese etc., but also in the so called small languages like Romanian, Norwegian, Danish and so on.

Against this background we invite our students, as Transylvanians also, to learn many international languages, but also small languages. These small languages create advantages on the labor market for the students and in this sense we have an excellent experience at this university. The fact that 80% of our graduates succeeded in getting jobs last year is a very good indicator of the success our programs enjoy and I think that this indicator also includes the lingual competences acquired by the students.

Mr. Ambassador I greet you again and express our satisfaction to have you as guest. I reassure you that we, as university, will continue to support the section of Norwegian language and literature studies and we reconfirm that we, as university, are interested to have such a component in our academic program, and of course we are very interested in seeing more and more investors from Norway taking a flight from Oslo or Trondheim to Cluj.

Cluj-Napoca, October 27th, 2009

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HIS EXCELLENCY ØYSTEIN HOVDKINN,
AMBASSADOR OF NORWAY,
AT THE “HAMSUN 2009” CONFERENCE IN ROMANIA**

It is a great honour and pleasure for me to be present here today at this celebration of the Norwegian author Knut Hamsun .

It is no coincidence that this event takes place in Cluj. Thanks to the unstoppable enthusiasm and tireless efforts of Professor Sanda Tomescu Baciu, Cluj has become what I have begun to call the secret Norwegian capital of Romania. Since 1991 Norwegian culture has been high-profiled in Cluj first and foremost due to the Department of Scandinavian Languages and Literatures within the School of Letters. Here students have the possibility to study Norwegian on a bachelor's level and where an amazing number of young Romanians have used and are still using this possibility.

This is why the university in Cluj feels like a natural place to celebrate Hamsun in Romania. We are happy we came back in your city, at your university, to do exactly that.

I would therefore like to take this opportunity to thank Professor Sanda Tomescu Baciu, as well as the Rector of the Babes-Bolyai University, Professor Andrei Marga, the Dean of the Faculty of Letters, Professor Corin Braga and the Dean of the Faculty of European Studies, Professor Ladislau Gyémánt for having put their premises at disposal and for their cooperation with the Embassy on this celebration.

Why do we celebrate Knut Hamsun and why do we celebrate him in Romania?

First of all because he is a great author, one of the greatest in world literature. The international, formal recognition of his greatness came in 1920 when he received the Nobel prize in literature. By then of course his position as a literary genius was well established. Isac Singer once called him the father of modern literature. His books continue to be read in Norwegian and other languages around the world by new generations.

On a personal note I would like to add that he has been one of my favourite authors since I was a teenager - and not only because I am born in the same valley in the Norwegian highlands as Hamsun was.

It was once said that one of the comparative advantages of being a Norwegian is that you can read Hamsun in his native language. But as Sanda Tomescu has proven: You do not have to be born a Norwegian to be able to read Norwegian.

There are good reasons for celebrating Hamsun in Romania. Outside Norway he was from an early stage especially popular in Germany, Russia as well as Central and Eastern Europe. It was in these countries he had his international breakthrough. A number of his books were translated to Romanian in the 1920ies and later. His popularity was on the increase in Romania but this came to a temporary end with communism coming to power in this country. No further translations of Hamsun appeared until the 1960ies.

HIS EXCELLENCY ØYSTEIN HOVDKINN, AMBASSADOR OF NORWAY IN ROMANIA

Hamsun was politically a controversial man when he lived and he has remained so until this day, almost 60 years after his death. All his life he was pro-German and anti-English, anti-American and anti-Soviet. He supported Germany in both World Wars. Especially his taking side with national-socialist Germany in the Second World War and during the German occupation of Norway came to cost him dearly.

His political role has again triggered passionate discussions in connection with this year's 150th anniversary of his birth. The question has been asked whether we should celebrate somebody who sided with the Third Reich. Hamsun once said that "in hundred years everything will be forgotten." That saying certainly does not apply to himself. Today his great literature but also his radical political incorrectness remain unforgotten. But today we are here to celebrate the author, not the politician, and I suspect that also Hamsun himself - in spite of all his well-known stubbornness - would have preferred it this way.

In addition to this event I would also mention that the Norwegian Embassy in Bucharest has supported a trip to Norway of a journalist team from the cultural channel TVR Cultural in connection with the 4th national Hamsun commemorative event – the one in Grimstad – mid September this year. The concrete outcome was a live transmission from Grimstad and a report film that was broadcast on TVR Cultural and which you also have the chance to see today, starting 2 pm.

As mentioned earlier, each Hamsun celebration in Norway has been based on a novel. The one in Grimstad, where Hamsun died, has naturally been connected to his last work: *On Overgrown Paths*, a title of both a metaphoric and a concrete inspiration. A walk in Hamsun's footsteps, as described in *On Overgrown Paths*, proved to be a real challenge for Mr. Gabriel Rusu, the journalist who visited Norway, as unfortunately he almost broke his leg on the rather uneven ground Hamsun used to climb with no problem at the age of 86. Apparently it is a challenge to keep up with Hamsun even now at his 150 year-anniversary.

I wish you interesting and enjoyable days with Knut Hamsun in Cluj, the secret Norwegian capital of Romania.

Cluj-Napoca, October 27th, 2009

**OPENING STATEMENT OF PROFESSOR CORIN BRAGA,
DEAN OF THE FACULTY OF LETTERS
OF THE BABEŞ-BOLYAI UNIVERSITY,
AT THE “HAMSUN 2009” CONFERENCE IN ROMANIA**

Your Excellency, Ambassador Øystein Hovdkinn,
Mr. Rector,
Distinguished guests, distinguished audience.

The Faculty of Letters of the Babeş-Bolyai University is deeply honoured by your visit. We would like to take advantage of this occasion in order to express our gratitude for the support offered by the Royal Norwegian Embassy and Norway for the construction of our Programme and of our Department of Scandinavian Languages.


Let me briefly present the Faculty of Letters. The Faculty has a turnover of about 3000 students and one of the most complex structures in our country. The configuration of our Faculty reflects the multi-ethnic nature of Transylvania in general. Departments of the Faculty ensure the teaching of the traditional mother tongues in our region: Romanian, Hungarian, and German. In addition, a group of departments offer studies in languages and literatures of the world: English, French, Italian, Spanish, and Russian. The Faculty also offers courses in languages less commonly spoken in Romania: Ukrainian, Finnish, Japanese, Chinese, Korean, and of course Norwegian, whose Department is headed by Professor Sanda Tomescu. Students also have the opportunity to study basic Irish, Portuguese, Danish, Swedish, and Polish. It must also be mentioned that the Faculty includes a Department of Classical Languages: Greek and Latin, as well as Hebrew. Other departments provide studies in Applied Modern Languages, Ethnology, Comparative Literature, the study of Romanian for foreign students, and of foreign languages for the students of the non-philological faculties within Babeş-Bolyai University.

Having integrated the European system of education, or the Bologna system, our Faculty offers 3 year undergraduate degrees, complemented by 13 separate 2-year Master's programmes, and by doctoral studies organized in 3 doctoral schools (Linguistics, Literature, and Hungarian studies), as well as by other forms of study (distance and lifelong learning).

Besides the teaching activity deployed in its 17 departments, the Faculty of Letters boasts a prestigious research tradition, with 4 research institutes and 16 recently founded research centres. The institutes and centres function alongside the departments, and publish 8 reviews and yearbooks, as well as cooperating with numerous universities in Europe and the rest of the world. An important network of libraries and Romanian and foreign cultural centres complete the facilities offered by the Faculty.

We may, therefore, say that through the diversity of its educational programmes our Faculty, alongside the Faculty of Letters in Bucharest, is one of the most complex, poly-dimensional, and dynamic in the country. Finally, let me thank you once again for supporting one of our youngest and most dynamic departments, the Chair of Scandinavian Languages and Literatures.

Cluj, October 27, 2009



**Universitatea
BABEȘ-BOLYAI**



ROYAL NORWEGIAN EMBASSY

**Catedra de Limbi și Literaturi Scandinave
Biblioteca Centrală Universitară „Lucian Blaga”**



Programul HAMSUN 2009

**Aula Facultății de Studii Europene
Str. Em. de Martonne nr. 1**

Marți, 27 octombrie

- 10.00-10.30 – Vernisajul expoziției de afiș și carte Knut Hamsun
- 10.30-11.00 – Deschiderea lucrărilor



Cuvântul Rectorului Universității Babeș-Bolyai, prof. dr. Andrei Marga
Cuvântul Ambasadorului Norvegiei la București, E.S. Øystein Hovdkinn
Cuvântul Decanului Facultății de Litere, prof. dr. Corin Braga

- 11.00-11.30 – Jan Erik Holst (Institutul Norvegian de Film)
- 12.00 -12.30 – Nils Magne Knutsen (Universitatea din Tromsø)
- 12.30 -13.00 – Sanda Tomescu Baciu (Universitatea Babeș-Bolyai)
- 14.00-20.00 Vizionare filme (detalii alăturat)

Miercuri, 28 octombrie

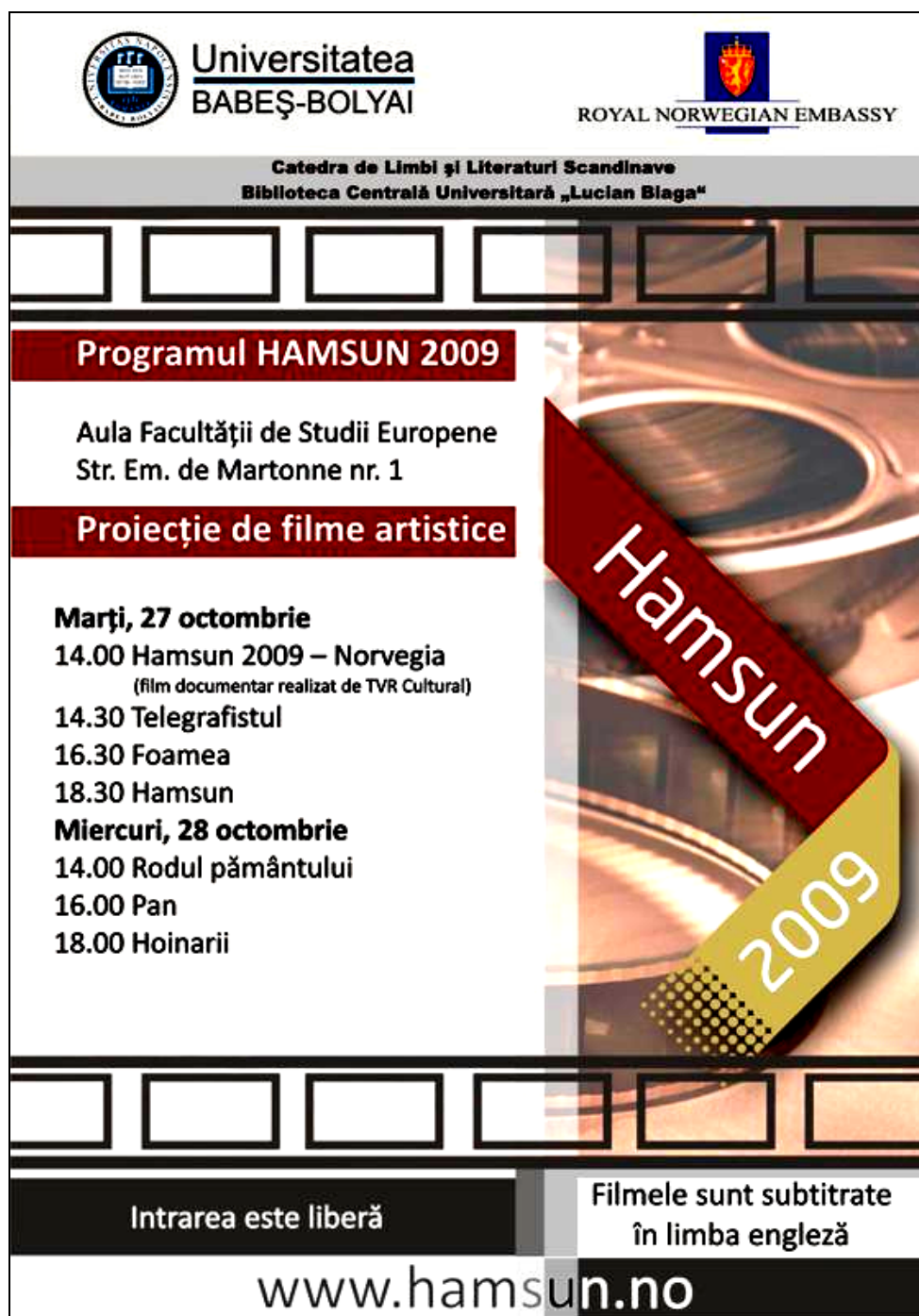
- 10.30 – 12.00 Workshop* Knut Hamsun (în limba norvegiană; participă studenții specializării Limba și literatura norvegiană)
- 14.00-20.00 Vizionare filme


* Workshop-ul va avea loc la Facultatea de Litere, Sala de Studii Nordice




www.hamsun.no

OPENING STATEMENT



 **Universitatea
BABEȘ-BOLYAI**

 **ROYAL NORWEGIAN EMBASSY**

**Catedra de Limbi și Literaturi Scandinave
Biblioteca Centrală Universitară „Lucian Blaga“**

Programul HAMSUN 2009

Aula Facultății de Studii Europene
Str. Em. de Martonne nr. 1

Proiecție de filme artistice

Marți, 27 octombrie
14.00 Hamsun 2009 – Norvegia
(film documentar realizat de TVR Cultural)
14.30 Telegrafistul
16.30 Foamea
18.30 Hamsun

Miercuri, 28 octombrie
14.00 Rodul pământului
16.00 Pan
18.00 Hoinarii

Hamsun
2009

Intrarea este liberă

**Filmele sunt subtitrate
în limba engleză**

www.hamsun.no

HAMSUN ON THE SCREEN

JAN ERIK HOLST ¹

ABSTRACT. At the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century, Knut Hamsun ranks among Europe's leading novelists. His works have been adapted for film and television in many countries. A total of over 20 films have been produced, in addition to several short films, teleplays, 5 documentary films and 2 biographical films about the author himself. The periods in which his novels were adapted for film are: the Scandinavian National Romantic era in the silent film decade of the 20's, the German National Romantic era in the 30's, various independent works in the 60's and 70's, and a new Nordic period in the 90's. Hamsun was filmed also in Russia before 1917, and in the Czech Republic, but the films are considered lost. Hamsun was associated with the Nationalistic Party in Norway during World War II and was accused of being a traitor when peace came to Norway in May 1945. But none of his political ideas can be traced in his writings.

Key Words: *modern novelist, Nobel Prize, film*

In the first period we will, besides *Growth of The Soil*, find the first version of *Pan*, filmed in Melbu in Northern Norway and in Algeria. Harald Schwenzen was the director and the film was produced by the new municipal company Kommunernes Filmsentral A/S, who had been operating as distributor since 1919, starting film production some years later. The film premiered in 1922 and music by Edvard Grieg was used as a score. The third silent film from this area was *Strong wills* based on the short story *Dreamers*. The film was made in Sweden, directed by John W. Brunius and produced by Svensk Filmindustri AB. Besides being shot in the company's studio in Stockholm the film crew also went to Brønnøysund in Northern Norway.

The second period counts two German films, *Victoria* (1935) shot in Bergen and surroundings, and *Pan* (1937) which premiered in Norway in a dubbed version. Leading Norwegian actors gave their voices to the story.

The independent films from the '60ies counts a German version of *The Last Chapter* from 1961, shot in Geiranger, Lom and Gudbrandsdalen and a new version of *Pan* (1962) starring the Scandinavian stars Jarl Kulle, Bibbi Andersson and Liv Ullmann. This film was shot at Kjerringøy, close to Bodø, a place that later should become a frequent place to make Hamsun adaptations. In 1966 came *Hunger*, directed by Henning Carlsen, probably the best and most famous Hamsun adaptation ever. The '70ies include a Dutch-French production of *Mysteries* (1978) and Bo Widerberg's *Victoria* from 1979, also with locations from Northern Norway.

¹ JAN ERIK HOLST is Executive Editor and Deputy Director General at the Norwegian Film Institute (NFI) and responsible for Major Film Cultural Events in Norway and abroad, as well as Film Historical publications and lectures. He has been Director at the NFI since 1988, and led the work of Archives, Production and International Promotions since then. In 2006 he published a Film Political Essay called "The Little Circus", dealing with Norwegian Film Policy and Film History since 1945. He was also the Editor of the Norwegian Filmography 1895 – 1995 and is now developing volume II of this publication, dealing with the period 1995 – 2011. E-mail: JanErik.Holst@nfi.no

The new "Hamsun on the screen wave" in the Scandinavian countries started with *Wanderers* in 1989, continued with *The Telegraphist* (1993), the fourth version of *Pan* (1995) and the two biographical films *Hamsun* (1995) and *The Enigma Of Knut Hamsun* (1996). Three short films named *Thirst* were also produced, by Norsk film A/S, based on the short stories *Crimes of the Future*, which you can see the protagonist in *Hunger* is writing.

Why are film directors so fascinated when reading Hamsun? From a literary point of view his writings are challenging to translate to the screen. Behind the stories lies a psychological landscape with no beginning or end, containing no logical or "normal" behavior. The novels *Hunger* and *Pan* made him famous, at first in Scandinavia, later in Germany and Russia. But only *Hunger* turned out to be a master piece on film, although *Pan* has been filmed four times and *Victoria* three. His irrational and double-focused stories, in an often existential framework, require a particular technique of storytelling. In *Hunger*, the director Henning Carlsen used a personal storyteller; the protagonist himself, directly from the novel. But he also provided *Hunger* with the artistic strength of a modern film, with an almost expressionistic film language. *Hunger* turned out to be a genuine film classic. Per Oscarsson received the best male role Award at The Cannes Film Festival, and the film has been screened at numerous festivals and sold to many countries. In style and aesthetic consequence, *Hunger* belongs to the modernist period of European film, along with Antonioni and the Polish and French new waves. The film was important to the new Norwegian film development as well, with Erik Borge, newly appointed General Manager at Norsk Film A/S, as co-producer, with Anja Breien as responsible for the continuity of the shooting and with several Norwegian actors and film workers. *Hunger* has been compared to *Jeanne D'Arc*, a silent classic directed by another Danish master, Carl Theodor Dreyer, in 1927.

Not many writers have been considered great masters immediately after their revival novel, like Knut Hamsun was after presenting *Hunger* in 1890. This was also when modern society, industry and urban life started developing into a psychological, sociological and humanistic challenge. Literature ventured from naturalism into expressionism. The anonymous protagonist of *Hunger* is a lonely young writer in Kristiania, the former name for Oslo. His hunger and despair shatters the normal and logical protective wall surrounding every decent, respectable citizen. The protagonist (Knut Hamsun himself) evolves from a state of ecstatic happiness to utmost despair, alone in the city. The novel was soon translated into many languages and published in many countries. When re-launching the novel in the US in the late seventies, Isaac B. Singer stated in his preface that: "Hamsun is the founder of modern literature. Reading *Hunger* is not only interesting, it is hypnotizing." And Paul Auster, who is also shown in conversation with Henning Carlsen on the DVD of the film, regards *Hunger* as a "starving piece of art," an existential journey into nothingness, into the 20th century.

From the final period of Hamsun's novels, *The Growth of the Soil* proved to be an excellent representative of silent film, produced in 1921, only one year after Hamsun received the Nobel Prize of Literature. The film was the first literary prestige production in the national romantic film area. The landscape as a dramatic tool was widely utilized in this film, as in *Wanderers* from 1989. Also the film *The Telegraphist*, based on the short story *Dreamers* from 1904, should be mentioned in this connection. This film obtained great success both domestically and internationally after being selected for the main competition at the International Film Festival in Berlin in 1993. However, many literates and academics claim this is not exactly an authentic Hamsun film. The film is more the creation of screenwriter Lars Saabye Christensen, a famous Norwegian writer, who worked closely with director Erik

HAMSUN ON THE SCREEN

Gustavson and developed Hamsun's discreet love fantasies into a rather erotic film unfolding in the course of the mysterious Northern Norwegian midsummer nights. Nature and natural scenery was also highly present in the early period, especially in *Pan*, which is available in no less than four film versions. In general most of the Hamsun adaptations have had great importance for the use of nature and landscape as a dramatic tool in Norwegian cinema.

Knut Hamsun was, according to the biographer Øystein Rottem, very satisfied with the results (Knut Hamsun - a filmography, Norsk filminstitutt, Oslo 1995). But according to the film historian Trond Olav Svendsen in the same publication, the film was not a big success. It was shown in the US, and *Variety* noted that "story is unfolded in dull, disoriented style". Luckily a not complete print was kept until 1971 where it was discovered at a University. The restoration process began 20 years later, when a more complete print was found at the Dutch Film Archive.

All films based on Hamsun's novels are challenged by the author's irrational and complex storytelling, his dreams and his yearning for an existential focus on life. These are fascinating love stories, but never logical ones; they are developed through various layers of time, they are subjective, and thus not extremely well suited for the language of a feature film, a language which frequently requires a logical and story-driven form.

Hamsun on the screen includes five documentaries and two biographical films, depicting the life and work of the author himself. *Hamsun*, a film from 1995 directed by Jan Troell, is the most internationally recognized among them. Knut Hamsun, born in Lom in 1859, grew up on a small farm at Hamarøy in Northern Norway, a community which now hosts a Hamsun Centre as well as an annual festival. The beautiful and magic nature in and around Hamarøy, clearly had an influence on him which is reflected in many of his novels. Troell's film does not relate the complete story of his life, as seen in the NRK teleplay *The Enigma*, directed by Bentein Baardson, based on a script by Robert Ferguson, a well known Hamsun biograph. In the Troell film, as well as in the book by Torkild Hansen, *The Process against Hamsun*, the focus is on the problematic years around World War II. Hamsun sympathized with Germany and the Norwegian National Unity Party of Vidkun Quisling, and this was exploited by the German propaganda system in order to facilitate the acceptance of the occupation among good Norwegians. Hamsun was never a member of the party, a traditional farmer's party fascinated by old Norwegian history and romantic, nationalistic rural life. Both the party and the German Occupation Authorities needed him. They approached his wife Marie in order to get him more involved, and to persuade him to travel to Germany to meet Der Führer.

To obtain an understanding of Hamsun's political preferences, one may regard his behavior as typical of many insecure and irrational Norwegian intellectuals at the end of the '30ies and during the occupation. They were yearning for German culture, and resented the Soviet Union and Great Britain and these countries' worldwide imperialism. They also believed that the National Unity Party was the only solution which could save Norway from an even worse German occupation, and that a new Norway could exist within the Great German Reich. But Hamsun's sympathy for "Reichskommissar" Terboven and for Hitler himself was not that strong. He even opposed Hitler in the case of mass deportation of the Jews. When Norway was liberated Hamsun was arrested and later declared having severe damages on his soul, probably the worst diagnosis you could apply to one of the world's greatest novelists. His entire fortune was confiscated by the State.

JAN ERIK HOLST

Already during the trial, Hamsun started writing down observations which eventually grew into a book. It was published in 1949 under the title *On Overgrown Paths*. The book turned out to be a sensation. The famous author, now 90 years old, had once again written a story brimming with charm and poetry, with self-irony and humor. The book was written in self defence, but first and foremost this book is a novel about a lonely human being, with no friends or family, somewhat like his first novel *Hunger*. *On Overgrown Paths* was filmed as a German-Norwegian co-production in 1974 by Peter Zadek, based on a stage play by Tancred Dorst.

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KNUT HAMSUN, A POPULAR PROGRESSIVE REACTIONARY

NILS M. KNUTSEN¹

ABSTRACT. Starting with Knut Hamsun's first novel, *Hunger* (1890) this paper tries to explore the reasons why Hamsun even today, 150 years after he was born, has such strong impact on his readers.

A number of reasons for his popularity is mentioned - e.g. his unique and poetic style of writing, his humour, his intense and tragic love stories, his renewal of European poetry of nature. Special emphasis is put on his complex and modern and independent female characters, for instance Edvarda Mack in the novel *Pan* (1894). In several ways the young and left-wing radical Knut Hamsun developed into a more conservative, some would say reactionary, author. But even in his more conservative novels there are many progressive tendencies to be found. In spite of his sympathy for Germany during World War II, Knut Hamsun is today one of the most widely read authors in Norway, and some of the reasons for this seem to be his youthful and modern mixture of humour and desperation, of pain and happiness.

Key Words: humour, *Hunger*, modernity, *Pan*, style of writing.

Knut Hamsun is considered to be one of the greatest writers in world literature, and *Hunger* (1890) is one of his most celebrated novels. With *Hunger*, Hamsun gained an undisputed place among the most gifted writers of the day. When the author turned 70, in 1929, a Festschrift to his honour was published, and in this publication we find greetings from some of the leading European writers of that time - Thomas Mann from Germany, André Gide from France, Maxim Gorki from Russia, etc. For these writers, *Hunger* was Hamsun's greatest artistic effort. So, if some of you here today have not read anything by Hamsun before, I think that *Hunger* is a perfect start.

So, why is *Hunger* so interesting and so fascinating?

In short, it is a story about a young author's struggle against hunger and death. The struggling artist lives in Kristiania (Oslo) in the 1890s where he tries to survive as a freelance writer. He is not very successful, in fact, when we meet him in the beginning of the book, he has not eaten for a couple of days. He wakes up in a cold and empty room, he is afraid to meet the landlady because he has not paid the rent. He walks aimlessly around in the streets of Kristiania, finding rest on benches throughout the city where he is trying to write something he can sell to a newspaper. But he is hungry and he is weak and he is not able to concentrate. All kinds of details distract his mind and the result is that he becomes a victim of strange and irrational impulses. He is telling stories to people he meets, he is fantasising about food and he is applying for various jobs without getting them. All along we

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hear his voice talking to us, his stream of consciousness, or even: his stream of unconsciousness, reporting his movements, his emotions, and we feel his desperation; feel how madness is starting to invade his mind. But we also get a very strong impression of his mental energy, and most of all: we get a strong impression of his humour. In many ways it is a painful story about a desperate man in a desperate situation, but at the same time it is a story about the richness and the creativity of the human mind.

The book is divided into four parts and at the end of every part the hero manages to find some food so that he can survive for a few more days. The city is depicted as a hostile environment and the alienation of man in an unfriendly world is the leitmotif of the novel. In the end the hero is forced to leave the city on a ship bound for England and we understand that he will survive – although the city has “marked” his soul in fundamental ways.

Even for readers today *Hunger* is a very intense novel, and for readers in Europe in the 1890s, it came as a shock. But it was a positive shock. *Hunger* represented a new and intriguing way of writing. It was both painful and desperate and entertaining and funny at the same time, and the critics loved it. A new European star - Knut Hamsun - was born.

Who was Knut Hamsun?

We might call Knut Hamsun the *enfant terrible* – (the black sheep) of Norwegian literature. He was born in 1859, and he grew up on a small farm in Hamarøy in the Northern part of Norway.

From the age of 15 he had to support himself. He moved around from job to job, daydreaming about becoming an author. 17 years old he published his first book, a rather naive story of only some 30 pages about a young man who incidentally is called Knut, and who is successful both with business and love.

In real life things were more difficult. When he was 20 years old, in 1879, he brought his new manuscript to a publishing house in Copenhagen – at that time the cultural capital of the Scandinavian countries. But the manuscript was refused, and that was the beginning of 10 very difficult years for Knut Hamsun. He spent a winter starving in Kristiania (Oslo), the capital of Norway. Then he borrowed money to go to the US, where he worked as a farmhand in the Mid-West. After two years in the US he returned to Norway again. He had no success there either, so he returned to the US again, spent another two years there before he went back to Norway again. He then spent another winter almost starving to death until he in 1888 published one chapter of *Hunger*, which became a sensation among the critics. When he completed the novel and published it in 1890, it made him famous all over Scandinavia, and in a few years famous all over Europe.

Hunger marked the start of Hamsun’s long and fabulous career as a writer - his last book was published 69 years later, when he was 90 years old. *Hunger* is considered to be such an important work because it marked the start of what we usually call *modernism* in European literature.

In the two previous decades – the 1870s and the 1880s – European literature was dominated by realism or naturalism. This literature was strongly influenced by natural sciences and social sciences. This was a literature that wanted to play a political role and that wanted to discuss social and political issues – like female emancipation, prostitution, marriage, business morale, etc. Today, August Strindberg from Sweden and Henrik Ibsen from Norway are probably the two most famous authors from the period. Their naturalistic dramas from the 1880s are still being performed all over the world. Hamsun and Ibsen were thus contemporaries and in many ways Hamsun challenged the tenets of naturalism.

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As already mentioned, Hamsun's *Hunger* portrays a young man who slowly and painfully almost starves to death. The intention of the novel is not, however, to argue that there should be more scholarships for young writers or that freelance writers should get higher salaries for their work. The aim is "just" to describe a human being caught in an extreme existential crisis, or rather: to describe with extreme subjectivity the mixture of rational actions and irrational impulses rushing through the mind of the protagonist.

And there is another very important quality with this young man, typical for modernism: He is all alone. There is no security net of people around him, no family, no relatives, no friends - well, there are a few so-called friends, but they all withdraw when they see his poverty, his hunger, and his lack of success.

As he keeps walking around in the streets of Kristiania for a few weeks, the city is depicted as a kind of labyrinth, there is no way out of it, no escape. This situation is also typical for the existential situation in many modernist novels, and the American writer Jack Kerouac 50 years later put it this way: You cannot go home again. You cannot go home again, because there is no home anymore, no security net. You are all alone in a cold and unfriendly and unfair world and that is something you have to understand and to accept and to cope with. And one way to cope with it is to use your imagination and to mobilize black humour and self-irony, that is - to lift yourself over your destiny, lift yourself over the misery and the poverty that holds you down.

And there is no help and no comfort in religion. As the protagonist is roaming through the streets he constantly addresses God, having some sort of dialogue with a divine power. But as there is no help to find, he denounces God in a scene that is strongly blasphemous, crying out that God, who has created him, should know that a man like him is so stubborn that he would rather break than bend. In his later books Hamsun sometimes describes people who bend to the difficulties in life, but the protagonist in *Hunger* is of a different kind, and so was Hamsun himself.

Many of Hamsun's later novels have been very influential and have inspired writers in many countries to write similar books in a similar style. But nobody has ever copied *Hunger*, probably because writers, who have had such painful experiences with extreme hunger and need, simply did not survive. And if they survived, they have not been able to combine the pain and the desperation with such glittering, playful humour and creativity as Knut Hamsun managed to do.

Let us have a quick glance at Hamsun's production after *Hunger*.

During the 1890s Hamsun published five more novels, three volumes of short stories and three dramas. In most of these works we meet his favourite figure, a lonely, young man, talented, but not very successful, because the world does not really understand and appreciate him. And he is always involved in some tragic love story: He can seduce any woman, but not the one he is in love with, and he can solve any problem, but not the problems invading his own life.

Among these novels from the 1890s, the novel *Pan* from 1894 is internationally best known. It is an intense and tragic love story from the area in Northern Norway where Hamsun lived in his youth. It is a story about a young man, Thomas Glahn, who spends a summer up North as a hunter, and who falls in love with the young daughter of the local merchant. Their love affair starts beautifully, but it soon deteriorates into painful jealousy and struggle, and in the end the young man commits suicide. He cannot live with the woman he loves, but he cannot live without her either, so he chooses to die. In that respect he is a relative of the protagonist in *Hunger*: He would rather break than bend.

In *Pan* we can find some of the most ecstatic and beautiful nature poetry in European literature. Here Hamsun's worship of nature and man's relationship to it finds a clear and artistic voice. Although there are modernist aspects in this novel, we usually see *Pan* mainly as a neo-romantic work, far from the political problems and social issues in naturalism.

After 1900 Knut Hamsun kept publishing novel after novel, along with one volume of poetry, two volumes of short stories and a couple of dramas. Gradually the modernistic and neo-romantic aspects disappeared and what we call neo-realism started to influence his writing.

In 1917 Hamsun published the novel that probably is his greatest international success, *Growth of the Soil*, a seemingly quite simple story about a simple farmer, Isak, who in the beginning of the book comes from nowhere and starts walking into the forest, looking for a suitable place to establish a farm. And then we hear the story of his life - how he builds up the farm, gets a wife, raise children, and take care of animals. They live a simple but secure and meaningful life, described with wonderfully simplistic poetry.

One important reason for the enthusiastic reception of the book was that the novel about Isak life was published during the First World War – at a time when hundred thousands of men and women were killed – in contrast to Isak's peaceful life.

This novel was the main reason why Hamsun in 1920 was rewarded with the Nobel Prize in literature, and this prize officially confirmed his status as one of the leading writers in his time.

We can't talk about Hamsun without mentioning the Second World War, although this aspect of Hamsun's life should not be overemphasised when we speak about his literature. Hamsun sympathised with Germany from an early age. He felt that the country had been treated unfairly after the First World War. He even sympathised with Germany after Hitler had seized power and continued to do so after Germany occupied Norway in 1940. After the war he was charged with treason and heavily fined. His support of Germany was a great disappointment for the Norwegian public and it has caused an intense debate about how this could have happened. Was he really a Nazi? Did he not understand what Nazism was all about? Can we find traces of Nazism in his books? The general opinion is that we cannot, but his support of Germany still provokes debates in Norway today.

Despite Hamsun's support for Germany during the war, he is probably the most popular and widely read author in Norway today. Moreover he is very influential in Norwegian cultural life. Many film directors have chosen to make films based on his novels. So far, about 20 movies and television series have been made. Most of these are Norwegian, but some are from other European countries. Contemporary composers are writing music to his poetry, his novels are dramatised and put on stage, he is constantly debated in the newspapers, a new Hamsun-centre has just been built, and Hamsun-festivals are arranged every year, one in the North of Norway, near the place where he grew up, and one in the South of Norway, where he lived the last part of his life.

What are the reasons for his popularity?

First of all he writes good, exciting and engaging stories. His novels often present interesting love themes that captivate and absorb people.

Secondly, many readers find his humour charming and entertaining. Even his dark and pessimistic stories are filled with humour.

Thirdly, his poetic and special style of writing is singled out as one of the reasons why people like his novels so much. In fact, he is one of the great renewers of the Norwegian

language. Some of his best books are more than a hundred years old, but his style of writing is still perceived to be youthful and modern. (Both his humour and his poetic language have been a challenge for translators all over the world.)

Fourthly Hamsun's portrayal of nature is unique. Hamsun renewed the ways in which nature was represented in European literature. In his work, nature is not only there as a beautiful backdrop, it also reflects the psychology of the characters involved.

So, how is Knut Hamsun perceived today?

In his youth Hamsun was a left-wing radical. When he started his literary career, he constantly criticised other authors for their moralising tendencies. Henrik Ibsen was a prime target. Gradually Hamsun became more and more conservative, and it can be argued that he later in life became a moralist himself. This is particularly evident in his critique of modern life, which he considered to be superficial and materialistic. The general view today both nationally and internationally is thus that Hamsun's later novels are reactionary and conventional. This view was frequently repeated in the media during the centenary of Hamsun's birth in 2009.

The *Growth of the Soil* has, for instance, generally been perceived as a conservative novel. The protagonist, Isak, is not concerned with making money. He is hard working and he enlarges his house and grows his land in accordance with his growing family's needs. Isak is sceptical about modern technology and the values that modernity represents. For him it is important to be self-sufficient and to avoid the pitfalls of economic dependency. In contrast to his neighbours, who is supporting modern advances, Isak then represents traditional views and values. Industrialism saw nature almost as an enemy, as something that should be conquered, whereas Isak lives in harmony with his natural environment. Hamsun's clear sympathy with Isak has been read as a proof of his reactionary views.

This novel can, however, be read differently.

In the light of contemporary discussions about the environment, *Growth of the Soil* can be read as a *progressive* novel. An ecological reading of the story will emphasise the ways in which the characters listen to and have respect for nature. In many ways Isak can be perceived as a man who supports the values of sustainable farming.

Another thing I would like to say something about is Hamsun's representation of women.

In the 1890s sex and gender roles in Europe were changing drastically. Feminists were battling for female emancipation from oppressive norms and regulations. Feminists all over Europe demanded greater personal and political rights and more freedom. Traditionally Hamsun has been perceived as a reactionary male chauvinist – an author who actively fought against the new ideas about women's liberation that were expressed during this time. Hamsun does express some conservative views and he is certainly sceptical about the demand for female suffrage and what he perceived to be the emancipated woman's desire to become more like men.

On closer scrutiny, however, it is clear that many of Hamsun's women are progressive and empowered individuals. In *Pan*, Edvarda challenges society's views about how an upper-class woman should behave. At the time it was not deemed acceptable for a woman to express her sexual desire. Edvarda nonetheless takes the initiative and instigates amorous action with lieutenant Glahn, and there is no modesty, uncertainty or reticence in her behaviour. Edvarda is thus embodying characteristics that traditionally have been associated with masculinity such as sexual assertiveness and initiative.

This year it is 120 years since Hamsun wrote *Hunger*, but it continues to affect us in profound ways. It is 116 years since he wrote *Pan*, but we still find new ways to interpret this masterpiece. In other words, Hamsun's work still speaks to us today, not only in Norway, but all over the world.

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KNUT HAMSUN: THE ARTIST AND THE WANDERER

SANDA TOMESCU BACIU*

ABSTRACT. Redefining the concept of the novel not only in Norwegian literature but also in world literature, Knut Hamsun - whose literary mastery is celebrated internationally in 2009 on his 150 anniversary – is a forerunner of the *stream of consciousness* technique with his novel *Hunger*. This article presents a brief description of the main elements connecting this novel to Hamsun's theoretical views on literature, but also to his later literary work, with accent on the model of the *wanderer*.

Key Words: *modernism, stream of consciousness, hunger, unconsciousness, wanderer*

Outline

Kristiania 1891. The town was astounded by an almost unknown young man, who, in a public lecture, attacked the most prominent Norwegian author of the time, Henrik Ibsen, who was personally attending the conference hall, on a bench, that surprisingly became the bench of the “accusation”¹.

The major theme of the lecture was the psychological literature, at the time, according to the great Russian novels, an innovation in the literary Europe.

”hvad det fortrinsvis interesserer ham (Ibsen) er Spørgsmaal, individuelle og sociale Spørgsmaal. Men lægg Mærke til, at naarsomhelst Ibsen behandler individuelle Spørgsmaal, som altså da skulle være psykologiske, saa er det kun forsaavidt, som de staar i Forbindelse med de sociale”².

The young man that sustained these allegations, on his real name, Knud Pedersen, became later famous under the name of Knut Hamsun and received the recognition of his literary genius by being awarded in 1920 the Nobel Prize for literature for the novel *The Growth of the Soil / Markens Grøde*.

*Hunger/Sult*³, the first novel that drew the attention on the literary personality of the Norwegian author represents an original experiment whose importance for the history of the modern novel consists in the negation of the poetics of naturalism and of a social type

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¹ R.N.Nettum: ”Generasjonen fra 1890-årene”, in *Norges Litteraturhistorie*, Ed. Edvard Beyer. Cappelen, Oslo, 1975 vol. 4, p.130.

² Knut Hamsun: ”Norsk Literatur” in *Paa Turné*, Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, Oslo, 1971, p. 32.

...what it preferably interests him (Ibsen) are questions, individual and social questions. But notice that anytime Ibsen treats individual questions, which in other words should be psychological, it is only in so far as they are related to the social. (our transl.)

³ A fragment of *Hunger* was anonymously published in the Danish journal *Ny Jord* in November 1888, R.N.Nettum: *op.cit*, Oslo, pp.140-141.

of realism, being in favor of a poetics of an entirely psychological character and a realism of the individual soul, thus creating a poetry of the unconsciousness - "det ubevisstes poesi" - as Jørgen Haugan points out.⁴ Hamsun's explicit goal is to create a new literature that should be *true* in terms of "Sjælemaleri"⁵.

Atle Kittang places *Hunger* in the tradition of the psychological naturalism, but still, he point out that

"...the motif of starvation goes far beyond the mere 'Naturalistic' or physiological level of meaning. In Hamsun's book hunger is also a metaphor, signifying a more fundamental lack or emptiness, which is a central aspect of the psychological deep structures investigated by the writer"⁶

The character of the novel is not a "character", he is not a "typology" as it is the case of Balzac's realism, he is an "individuality".

The Becoming of a Novel

The first fragment of what became *Sult (Hunger)* was published as early as 1888 in the Danish literary periodical *Ny Jord*. It drew the attention of the critics for both the theme and the unexpected form.

It is only later that Hamsun formulated the poetics of the individual's psychology in a programmatic essay entitled *Fra det ubevidste Sjæleliv*⁷ published in the journal *Samtiden* in 1890. The literary program, explicitly formulated, came after he had put it into practice in *Hunger*, his gesture being dictated by the imperative to defend his novel, and to attack, at the same time, also due to the fact that even the great Danish literary critic Georg Brandes blamed *Hunger* for monotony.

As one can notice from the very title of Hamsun's literary program, *Fra det ubevidste Sjæleliv*⁸, the Norwegian author did not write *about the life of the unconsciousness*, but **from within** the life of the unconsciousness. The expression *from within* indicates a direction, a *continuous movement* whose poetic representation is the novel *Hunger*.⁹

When Hamsun pleads in his essay in favor of the description of the individuality in his deepest irrational pulsations, he does it not with the intention to merely investigate the unconsciousness, but with the intention to create the poetry of the unconsciousness that should have an artistic impact on the reader.

For this reason Hamsun is not interested in the social aspect of *hunger* but in the irrational state of mind that hunger engenders. The end of the 19th century was dominated by the natural sciences, and he does not leave this approach, pleading in his poetics for a scientific approach to the unconsciousness, respectively for a scientific analysis of the human soul under the *loupe* ("under luppen" as he says in Norwegian). He rejects the biologic determinism promoted by naturalism in favor for a psychic determinism, leaving aside the biological and the social perspective.

⁴ Jørgen Haugan: "Knut Hamsun. Det ubevisstes poesi", i *Nordisk Tidsskrift*, 1973, p.49.

⁵ Knut Hamsun: "Psykologisk Literatur", i *Paa Turné*, *op. cit.*, p.62.

⁶ Atle Kittang: "Knut Hamsun's *Sult*: Psychological Deep Structures and Metapoetic Plot" in *Facets of European Modernism. Essays in honour of James McFarlane presented to him on his 65th birthday*, Ed. Janet Garton, University East Anglia, Norwich, 1985, p.295.

⁷ Knut Hamsun: "Fra det ubevidste Sjæleliv". *Samtiden* Vol. I, 325-334. 1890 ("From within the Life of the Unconsciousness", in our translation).

⁸ "From within the Life of the Unconsciousness", in our translation.

⁹ Jørgen Haugan: *op.cit.*, p.49.

In his attempt to analyze - under the magnifying glass – the psychic consciousness starting from within the unconsciousness, Hamsun becomes both in theory and practice, one of the forerunners of the *stream of consciousness technique*, forecasting modernism in literature.¹⁰ Contemporary to Hamsun, William James used for the first time, in 1890 in *Principles of Psychology*, the phrase “*stream of consciousness*” characterizing the modern novel, and giving a definition close to Hamsun’s theoretical views.

The novel *Hunger*, that Hamsun regarded as a series of analyses without an epic, represents, at the same time, a process of unintended remembrance, with Kristiania harbour playing the role of Proust’s “*madelaine*”. Tore Hamsun, the son of the famous Norwegian author, claimed that the first pages of *Hunger* were written in 1888 when Knut Hamsun was on board of “Thingvala”, anchored shortly in the Kristiania Harbour, on its way from America to Copenhagen.¹¹

The view of the city in the distance might have awakened memories from the two hunger winters (between 1879-1880 and 1885-1886) that Hamsun experienced in:

“Kristiania, denne forunderlige by som ingen forlater før han har fåt mærker av den.”¹²

“Christiania, this singular city, from which no man departs without carrying away the traces of his sojourn there.” (George Egerton’s translation)¹³

The Wanderer and the Plot

It is commonly asserted that the novel consists of a succession of four analyses of four different critical periods of a first person narrator, short of means of living, a succession without any apparent logical chronology. From this reason the novel obviously neglects the periods of “normality” of the wanderer’s life, considered unimportant from a literary point of view by the author.

In spite of his theoretical program that rejects any element of realism in the novel, *Hunger* does not give only a psychological insight, but it reveals - indirectly - a social context. The four parts of the novel become connected not merely by the character himself and the geography of Kristiania, but also by a connection between cause and result that builds the plot, thus giving *Hunger* the structure of a novel: the character does not find work, suffers from hunger and, in order to save himself, leaves Kristiania on board of a ship.

“Ute i fjorden rettet jeg mig op engang, våt av feber og matthet, så ind mot land og sa farvel for denne gang til byen, til Kristiania hvor vinduerne lyste så blankt fra alle hjem.”¹⁴

“Out in the fjord I dragged myself up once, wet with fever and exhaustion, and gazed landwards, and bade farewell for the present to the town -- to Christiania, where the windows gleamed so brightly in all the homes.” (Translated from the Norwegian of Knut Hamsun by George Egerton)¹⁵

¹⁰ See James McFarlane: *Ibsen and the Temper of Norwegian Literature*, London Oxford University Press, Toronto, 1960.

¹¹ R.N. Nettum: “Generasjonen fra 1890-årene”, in *Norges Litteraturhistorie, op. cit.*, p.140.

¹² Knut Hamsun: *Sult*, in *Samlede verker*, 1, Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, Oslo, 1976, p.7.

¹³ <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext05/8hng10h.htm>

¹⁴ Knut Hamsun: *Sult*, *op.cit.*, p 140.

¹⁵ <http://www.gutenberg.org/dirs/etext05/8hng10h.htm>

The character fights and survives. Although the horizontal social axis seems to have faded away, in favor of a vertical psychological one, it is still present in the background.

In *Hunger* there are all the germs of Hamsun's future psychological novels in which the social axis would become, to a greater extent, the preoccupation of the writer. The following novels are mostly centered on the *wanderer* who is deeply rooted in the emblematic first person narrator of *Hunger*, namely the Kristiania-wanderer escaping on board of a ship from the confined geography of the city "where the windows gleamed so brightly in all the homes".¹⁶

From *Hunger* to the *Growth of the Soil*

Hamsun's work, as a whole, expresses the tension between nature and civilization, between nature and society. This dichotomy nature-civilization prevails in Hamsun's work through **the wanderer-perspective**. The Norwegian word "vandrer" has often been translated into English and Romanian with "vagabond"/ ("vagabond"), a sort of outcast in contradiction with the society. In the progress of his novels this perspective is subdued to several metamorphoses.

In *Pan* and *Mysteries*, the wanderer appears in an archaic world and lacks in many ways any connection to the social life, seeking a refuge in nature. In the following novels, *Under the Autumn Star* (*Under høstsjernen*) and *A Wanderer Plays on Muted Strings* (*En vandrer spiller med sordin*), and *Seafarers/Vagabonds, August, The Road Leads on*, (*Landstrykere, August, Men livet lever*), *Children of the Age* and *Segelfoss Town* (*Børn av Tiden* and *Segelfoss By*), the wanderer appears in a completely new position: the wanderer seems to integrate in the social life, and even more, *the wanderer transforms the social life*.

The dichotomy *nature/civilization* reaches its mastery in the standpoint of Isak from *The Growth of the Soil* (*Markens Grøde*) and August in the *Vagabonds'* or *Seafarers'* trilogy: Isak is the metaphor of the traditional values, and August is the symbol of the modern values. Isak himself is a growth of the Soil, the telluric essence of the human being, while August embodies the essence of the artificial life, lacking the mythical horizon of the former. The seafarer August comes from the sea, for ever changing and moving. He is a growth of the Sea, like Isak is a growth of the Soil. Between Isak and August, these opposite poles that do not own a self consciousness; there is the fascinating and probably the most complex character Edevart, the seafarer friend of August.

Edevart is the hero aware of his tragic destiny; he is a hypostasis of an Isak, who lost his roots and became a wanderer/seafarer, but without reaching the lack of consistency and the instability of the utmost wanderer, August. Edevart is a complex character aware of his tragic emigrant destiny, giving the reader the impression that he might be a projection of Hamsun's emigrant experience in America, of Knut Hamsun the wanderer.

Hamsun 2009

The artist and the wanderer are both represented by the Norwegian stamp edition marking the 150-anniversary of Knut Hamsun's birth. The portrait represents Knut Hamsun in the period he was awarded the Nobel Prize for *The Growth of the Soil*, and it is engraved by artist Sverre Morken. A fragment from *Mysteries*, published in 1892, can be seen in the background. The Hamsun-stamp itself will wander through the world, reaching remote places on the planet: from Hamarøy in the North of Norway to Copenhagen, from Oslo (the former Christiania) to Chicago, from Lom to Turkey, from Bodø to Paris ... And, on the occasion of the *Hamsun-2009* events in Romania, from Nørholm – Hamsun's last residence in Norway – to Cluj-Napoca, in Romania.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

KNUT HAMSUN: THE ARTIST AND THE WANDERER



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FORHOLDET MELLOM MENNESKE OG NATUR, NATUR OG KULTUR I ROMANEN *PAN*

CRISTINA VIȘOVAN¹

ABSTRACT. *The Relationship between Man and Nature, Nature and Culture in the Novel Pan*. *Pan*^{*}, one of Knut Hamsun's most famous novels, is a strange story about the love between lieutenant Glahn and a young woman, Edvarda. The following article is an attempt to answer to several questions such as: What is the relationship between Glahn and the nature that surrounds him and what is his relationship to the society of Sirilund? Is Glahn a true son of nature? How does he feel when he's close to people and what is Glahn's attitude towards women and love? Last but not least, how far can we go and assert that Glahn is actually a mirror image of Hamsun himself in the novel *Pan*? Conclusions: Lieutenant Glahn seems to be a good representative of Hamsun's splitting between nature and culture. In the end, he chooses nature over culture and love. Even though Glahn falls in love with Edvarda, he seems to love his feelings more than he loves the woman these feelings are directed towards. This article was presented at the *Hamsun 2009* Conference during a workshop organized for young researchers.

Key Words: *nature, culture, love, splitting*

Pan er en roman som forteller en merkelig historie om kjærligheten mellom løytnant Glahn og den unge Edvarda. Romanen er knyttet til Hamsuns opphold i Paris, fra april 1893 til mai/juni 1894. I denne artikkelen vil jeg gjerne prøve å finne ut hva forholdet mellom Glahn og naturen som omgir ham er og hva forholdet mellom Glahn og samfunnet i Sirilund er. Er Glahn naturens sønn? Hvordan føler han seg i nærheten av mennesker og hva er Glahns holdning til kvinner og til kjærlighet? Hvor mye kan vi si at Glahn er et speilbilde av Hamsun selv i romanen *Pan*?

Det ser ut at *Pan* er resultatet av selve situasjonen som Hamsun var i, i Paris. Der var han som i et slags eksil, i hjertet av den europeiske sivilisasjonen, i en by som for Hamsun selv var inneberegnet av last, korrupsjon, skjønnhet og kraft². Han følte seg som en outsider, det marginale mennesket i Paris, på samme måte som Glahn føler seg mens han ikke er i skogen. Uansett, for å kunne skape sine mesterverk, hadde Hamsun alltid behov for å være andre steder enn hjemme; hans kreativitet krevde det.

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* *Pan* er ett av Knut Hamsuns mest kjente verk, en roman som avspeiler på en måte forfatterens liv, hans dyrkelse av naturen og forakt for samfunnet og industrialiseringen. Knut Hamsun (1859 – 1952) er en av Norges mest kjente forfattere. Mange kritikere oppfater ham som nazist på grunn av at Hamsun var på Tysklands side under krigen; men, selv om han gjorde det, kan vi ikke forminske hans betydning som forfatter. Hamsun var Norges første modernist, han innførte i litteraturen splittede personer med et kompleks indreliv. Han var opptatt av grunnleggende eksistensielle problemer som Livet, Døden, Kjærligheten. Hamsun selv påstod at han var mest interresert i 'nervernes poesi, tankernes brøk, følelsernes vage mimoser – i et ord: sindsbevægelserne' (se Harald S. Næss, 'Knut Hamsuns brev 1879-1859', Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, Oslo, 1994, brev 44).

² Se Rottem, Øystein 'Hamsun og fantasiens triumf', Gyldendal Norsk Forlag, Trondheim AS, 2002, ss.91

Narasjonen i romanen *Pan* er en skrivehandling som foregår to år etter at handlingen i Nordland (det vil si historien om Glahn og Edvarda) er avsluttet, altså i 1857. Vi kan da snakke om to tidsrom som eksponeres samtidig – skriveperioden, når Glahn føler seg deprimert etter den ulykkelige kjærlighetshistorien med Edvarda og nå-tiden, eller skriverens tid, som eksponeres både i innledningen og sporadisk i teksten: *'jeg husker endnu'* eller *'jeg tenker ikke mere på det'*³.

Romanen forteller om en fremmed mann som kommer en dag til Sirilund men ingen vet hvorfor eller hvorfra kommer han. Løytnant Glahn lever et isolert liv i skogen, sammen med hunden Æsop. Han framstiller seg som hjemmehørende i natur-sfæren. Glahn slår seg ned som jeger i en liten hytte ved kanten av skogen med utsyn både over sjøen og handelsstedet Sirilund: *'Fra min hytte kunne jeg se...litt av sjøen...handelsstedets store hvite bygninger, Sirilunds brygger, kramboden hvor jeg kjøpte mit brød...'*⁴. I skogen og i hytten, kjenner Glahn seg fri og hjemme, som en del av naturen selv og dens rytmiske vekslinger. Her er alt i ham i stillhet og sjelen hans blir *'egal og full av magt'*⁵.

I begynnelsen lever Glahn et tilbaketrukket liv i naturen, uten selskap. De eneste ganger han kommer i kontakt med omverden er når han må kjøpe brød i kramboden. Han er en eneboer som tilbringer dagene med å rusle omkring i skogen så godt som uten mål og mening: *'...jeg drev bare omkring i min frihet, og lot tiden gå.'*⁶ Glahn eier ikke stort mer enn det han står og går i, samt en borse som han bruker for å besørge de basale livsbehov. Han viser heller ingen tegn til kjønnsdrift og lever i en nesten ekstatisk harmoni med naturen som omgir ham. Glahn opplever dypt slektskap med tre, steiner og fugler: *'Fra min hytte kunne jeg se et virvar av øer og holmer og skjær, litt av sjøen, noen blånende fjældtinder, og bak hytten lå skogen, en uhyre skog. Jeg blev fuld av glæde og tak ved duften av røtter og løv, av den fete os av furen, som minder om lukten av marv...Jeg gikk dag etter dag i åserne...og ønsket intet heller end å få vedbli å gå der dag efter dag...'*⁷.

Naturen er en del av Glahn og Glahn er en del av naturen; han elsker alt omkring seg, alt som er natur og har ingenting å gjøre med menneskene: *'Jeg kjender de steder jeg passerer, trær og stener står der som før i ensomheten, løvet rasler under mine føtter. Det monotone sus og de kjendte trær og stener er for meget for mig, jeg blir fuld av en sælsom tanknemlighet, alt indlater sig med mig, blander sig med mig, jeg elsker alt.'*⁸

Glahn erkjenner at skogen kanskje er hans eneste venn *'min eneste venn var skogen og den store ensomhet'*⁹ fordi han liker å være alene i skogen, der hvor menneskene ikke kan se på ham eller snakke med ham. I samfunnet, blant mennesker, blir Glahn utrygg, usikker, men i skogen, i naturen, er han rolig og sterk. På samme tid er naturen hans mor som skal alltid elske ham og akseptere ham slik som han er. Naturen er da et slags tilflyktssted hvor Glahn gjemmer seg fra de kulturelle forholdene mellom mennesker. Det er bare naturen som ikke krever noe fra ham men som bare gir ham alt – hytta, skogen og friheten: *'De har ret i at jeg kan ikke videre omgås folk...Jeg bor helst i skogen, det er min*

³ Se *'Pan. Av løytnant Thomas Glahns papirer'*, Gyldendal Norsk Forlag ASA 1954, AIT Trondheim As, 1999, ss. 24

⁴ *ibidem*, kap. I, ss. 6

⁵ *idem*

⁶ *ibidem*, kap. IV, ss. 11

⁷ *ibidem*, kap. I, ss. 6

⁸ *ibidem*, kap. VI, ss. 15

⁹ *ibidem*, kap. VIII, ss. 19

glede. Her i min ensomhet skader det ikke noen at jeg er som jeg er; men når jeg kommer sammen med andre må jeg bruke al min flid for å være som jeg bør.¹⁰

Handlingene i Glahns liv er sterkt beslektet med naturens rytme, denne Naturen som våkner til liv om våren og som svulmer og blømrer gjennom de korte sommermånedene når natten ikke lenger finnes. I samband med naturen utvikles Glahns liv: det er vår da han forelsker seg i Edvarda og sommer da de er forlovede: 'Det begyndte å bli ingen nat, solen dukket såvidt skiven ned i havet og så op igjen, rød, fornyet, somom den hadde været nede og drukket'¹¹. 'Våren var vel også kommet til mig og mit blod banker'¹² sier Glahn; med våren begynner hans følelser å komme til liv slik som naturen. Om sommeren møter Glahn den unge og villige gjeterjenta Henriette og elsker med henne i skogen; når han møter henne etter at den første snøen har falt, merker han at høsten og vinteren har 'grepet henne, allerede sov hendes sanser. Allerede var solen gåt i hav.'¹³ Alt går i oppløsning med høst og med vinteren slutter alt 'alt græs og alle insekter døde'¹⁴ og Glahn bestemmer seg å forlate Sirilund og prøve å glemme sin ulykkelige kjærlighet.

I begynnelsen forsterker kjærligheten Glahns forhold til naturen. Han forteller Edvarda at han ikke kan sove om natta fordi han tenker på henne og Edvarda også sier at: 'Det er løytnant Glahn jeg vil ha. Jeg gidder ikke løpe efter nogen anden.'¹⁵ De elsker hverandre men dessverre er det kun et fantasibilde som de elsker og på grunn av det, går alt galt til slutt. Begge to ønsker å se i den andre en prins eller en naturkvinne, men denne drømmen kan aldri oppfylles. Glahn skal alltid være skogens sønn, mens Edvarda skal alltid være en del av det samfunnet som Glahn hater.

Naturen gir Glahn muligheten til å fantasere om en idealkvinne som kompenserer for den kaprisiøse kvinne som han forelsker seg i. Han dikter opp sin egen myte om den kvinnelige Eros, Iselin. Han fantaserer om henne to ganger i løpet av romanen. Første gang rett etter at kjærligheten til Edvarda har våknet: 'Jeg sov ikke i tre netter, jeg tenkte på Diderik og Iselin.'¹⁶ Den andre gang når Edvarda er i ferd med å fjerne seg definitivt fra myten om den erotiske Naturkvinnen: 'Jeg føler ophidset og endnu svak at nogen kysser mig og kysset ligger på mine læber. Jeg ser mig om, det er ingen synlig tilstede. Iselin! sier jeg.'¹⁷

Glahn er en del av altet, av naturen som han elsker, på samme måte som Hamsun selv var en del av naturen. Han hatet massesivilisasjonen og demokratiet og var i konflikt med alt som hadde å gjøre med det nye type samfunnet (etablert av industrialiseringen). I seg selv illustrerer Hamsuns liv splittelsen mellom natur og kultur; han mente at mennesket måtte vende tilbake til naturen og gi opp sivilisasjonen. Akkurat som Hamsun er også Glahn splittet mellom kropp og sjel, mellom hans enskap med naturen og dragningen til samfunnet. Glahn er et moderne menneske, et kompleks menneske med psykologisk liv og mangfold instinkter.

Fra romanens tittel fremgår at Glahn er løytnant og hører til det urbane livet, til byen. Han er en ung offiser som ble utdannet i byen. Man får ikke vite hvorfor han velger å etablere seg i naturen men, hvis vi tenker på handlingene i romanen, kunne vi kanskje

¹⁰ *ibidem*, kap. XXIV, ss. 70

¹¹ *ibidem*, kap. VII, ss. 19

¹² *ibidem*, kap. V, ss. 12

¹³ *ibidem*, kap. XXXV, ss. 92

¹⁴ *idem*

¹⁵ *ibidem*, kap. X, ss. 27

¹⁶ *ibidem*, kap. VIII, ss. 20

¹⁷ *ibidem*, kap. XX, ss. 55

foreslå at han gjør det fordi han ikke føler seg selv en del av dette samfunnet som han vokste opp i. Glahn fremstiller seg selv som ubehjelpelig og fremmed i sosiale situasjoner: han velter glass over de malte gulvene på Sirilund og aner ikke hvordan man oppfører seg overfor kvinner: *'...i båten tenkte jeg på hvor alle disse unge mennesker var kommet ifra...jeg hadde ikke sett dem før, de va fremmede for mig og allikevel så tillitsfulde som om vi hadde kjendt hverandre i lang tid. Jeg begik noen feil, jeg var blit uvant med å omgås mennesker og sa ofte du til de unge damer...Jeg sa engang: Kjære eller: min kjære;...'*¹⁸. For Edvarda prøver Glahn å bli løytnant igjen og veksler skinn draktet med uniformen en gang til; han føler at Edvarda ikke ønsker seg et dyrmenneske slik som han var mens han levde i skogen, men et samfunns menneske, noen som visste hvordan å oppføre seg i det sosiale livet; og da sender han etter sin uniform: *'Jeg skrev et brev og forlangte min uniform tilsendt.'*¹⁹

Glahn er splittet mellom natur og kultur, han er enten jeger eller løytnant, men vi kan også snakke om en kamp mellom hans kropp (som lengter etter kjærlighet og til det sosiale liv) og sjel (som føler at han aldri skal være en del av samfunnet). Glahn føler seg skogens sønn og han vet at han er fra jorden med alle sine røtter. Det er kroppen som Glahn har til felles med dyrene, kroppen og sitt blikk. Men det er også kroppen som lengter etter Edvardas kjærlighet og som drar ham ut av skogen mens sjelen føler seg bra i naturen. I sitt indre vet Glahn at han ikke skal bli akseptert slik som han er, en Tarzanfigur.²⁰

Glahn kan ikke godta samfunnsnormer og han gjør uforståelige ting (f. eks. han kaster Edvardas sko i vannet) som fjerner ham fra de andre. Han er redd for de som ikke kan forstå hans natur fordi disse mennesker har makten til å dømme ham og avsløre ham. De viktigste menneskene som representerer samfunnet i romanen og som bryter Glahns opplevelse i naturen er hr. Mack, den halte doktoren og Edvarda. Glahn kommer i konflikt med hr. Mack (Edvardas far) da han velger Eva som kompensatorisk figur for Edvardas kjærlighet, mens den halte doktoren oppstår som rival til Glahn. Disse to gjør Glahn til å hate samfunnet enda sterkere mens den tredje representant, Edvarda, klarer til å ta ham ut av naturen ved hennes kjærlighet. Hvis Edvarda betyr å gå tilbake til sivilisasjonen er Glahn villig til å glemme sin forakt og prøve igjen å integrere seg: *'Edvarda så på mig og jeg så på hende. Jeg følte i dette øieblik noget røre ved mit hjærte en liten flygtig venlighilsen.'*²¹

Ifølge Rolf Vige er forholdet mellom Glahn og Edvarda en psykologisk kamp der hver på sitt vis forsøker å vinne makten over den annens sinn.²² Både Edvarda og Glahn projiserer sine høyspente forventninger og sitt idealbilde av en kjærlighetspartner over på den annen. Disse forventninger er så store at den virkelige realiseringen av kjærligheten må alltid forbli en blek kopi. Mens Edvarda tæres av kjærlighet til sin 'Drømmeprins', har Glahn en 'Kjærlighetsdrøm' om en narcisistisk sammenheng med naturen, derfor kan ikke deres kjærlighet lykkes.

Det er den halte doktoren som forklarer til Glahn hvorfor Edvarda ikke er interessert i ham lenger: *'Hun venter på sin prins, han er ikke kommet, hun tar atter og atter feil, hun trodde også at De var prinsen især da De hadde dyreblikk, ha ha...Hvorfor skulde ikke nogen kunde vinde hende? Jeg har sett hende vride hænderne efter den som kunde komme*

¹⁸ *ibidem*, kap. X, ss. 24

¹⁹ *ibidem*, kap. XX, ss. 54

²⁰ Se Rottem, op. cit., ss. 96

²¹ Se 'Pan. Av løytnant Thomas Glahns papirer', Gyldendal Norsk Forlag ASA 1954, AIT Trondheim As, 1999, kap. V, ss. 13

²² Se Øystein Rottem, op. cit., ss. 97

*op og ta hende, føre hende bort, herkse over hendes kropp og sjæl. Men han må komme utenfra, dukke op en dag som et litt aparte væsen.*²³

Også Glahn drømmer om en kvinne som kan leve med ham i skogen, en kvinne som føler seg en del av altet og det er derfor han fantaserer om Iselin to ganger. Han ønsker for seg selv en kvinne som kan føle at hun er en del a naturen, av dens rytme, en kvinne som er like klosset i samfunnet som han er. Dessverre er Edvarda en helt annen type kvinne; for å få henne må Glahn forlate naturen og skogen, han må gi opp å være jeger for å bli løytnant igjen. Uansett er han ikke den prinsen som Edvarda drømmer om.²⁴ Tvert imot, er Glahn mer interessert i å skjule kjærlighetshistorien med Edvarda siden han er redd for å bli avslørt. Han liker ikke sosiale forpliktelser og selskapeligheten vekker hans sjalusi og skuffelse.

Glahns historie er en historie om en person som frykter kjærligheten så lenge den betyr å omgås med andre mennesker, en historie om en person som vil bygge sitt liv på en drøm og ikke på et virkelig forhold til en kvinne. Da Glahn endelig får Edvarda fastslår han at hun ikke nærmer seg til det idealbildet som han skapte i sin fantasi; på den grunnen avviser han Edvarda og prøver å glemme henne. Til tross for det, fortsetter Glahn å tenke på Edvarda og prøver å kompensere hennes mangel ved å elske seg med Eva. Men heller ikke Eva, som tilsvarende den naturkvinnen som løytnanten fantaserer om, er god nok for Glahn. Eva gir seg til Glahn uten komplikasjoner og kanskje det er akkurat dette som er problemet. Glahn kan ikke tilfredstilles når det gjelder kjærlighet; det er kun fantasien som kan hjelpe ham med å få den kvinnen som han drømmer om. Han elsker sine egne følelser høyere enn den kvinnen disse følelsene er rettet mot.

Til slutt vender Glahn seg tilbake til det primitive, til naturen. Epilogen forteller om en mann som kan ikke glemme en kjærlighet som ligger to år tilbake i tiden; det er derfor han velger å dø. Glahn dør fordi han ikke kunne realisere sin drøm i livet; han vil ikke fortsette å leve et liv hvor sine kjærlighetsdrømmer ikke kan oppfylles. For Glahn er drømmene høyere enn virkeligheten og det er kanskje også grunnen for at han ikke klarte å ha et kjærlighetsforhold til en reell kvinne. Men kanskje har Glahn rett ved å velge døden som en utløsning av problemene som han hadde i livet. Døden kan sees som en ny begynnelse hvis vi tenker på menneskenes tro i etterlivet. Skal dette livet være bedre enn livet som vi lever her på jorden? Skal det gi Glahn sjansen til å realisere sin kjærlighetsdrøm? Det spørs – hvis vi tenker på Romantismen, det var da en tradisjon for heltene å få hverandre i døden. Men så lenge ingenting tyder på at Edvarda ville følge samme vei, er det veldig usikkert om denne var tankegangen på slutten av romanen *Pan*.

Glahn ser ut til å være en veldig god representant for Hamsus splittelse mellom natur og kultur. Begge to var redde for det sosiale livet mens de også ønsket å være en del av det. Hamsun selv nølte mellom natur og kultur hele sitt liv. Akkurat som Glahn forelsket han seg i en samfunnskvinne og etter en tid forstod han at hun ikke var den kvinnen som han ønsket for seg selv. Da Hamsun giftet seg på nytt, tok han kvinnen med seg, borte fra samfunnet og inn i naturen. Desverre får Glahn ikke denne sjansen. Han pendler mellom kultur og natur, natur og kultur og velger naturen til slutt.

²³ Se 'Pan. Av løytnant Thomas Glahns papirer', Gyldendal Norsk Forlag ASA 1954, AIT Trondheim As, 1999, kap. XVIII, ss. 52

²⁴ Nettum polemiserer med Viges syn i dette tilfellet. Han mener at Edvarda er en vanlig kvinne som vil underkaste seg en mann i ydmykhet, ikke som slavinne, men som elskede.

Se Øystein Rottem, op. cit., ss.98. Hennes drøm om en prins er da en drøm som alle kvinnene har; de alle ønsker, da de er barn og leser eventyr, å være slik som prinsessen i historien, denne prinsessen som forelsker seg i en prins som egentlig kommer for å redde henne. Men problemet er at Glahn kun elsker kjærlighetsdrømmen og ikke Edvarda.

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KNUT HAMSUN OG MODERNISMEN

DIANA LĂȚUG¹

ABSTRACT. *Knut Hamsun and Modernism.* The purpose of this written paper is to present the conclusions I reached after investigating in the following topic: the Norwegian author Knut Hamsun as the first modernist novelist in Norway. It is insisted upon the new type of literature he theorised upon in his programmatic article, *The Life of the Subconscious*. The work required a practical accomplishment, meaning an analysis of some of his novels.

Hunger, his breakthrough novel, is the one that is given the most attentive analysis in this particular case. Modernist characteristics such as solitude, estrangement, revolt against the society and against the divinity are concepts that best support its positioning as the first modernist novel in Norway. The analysis on the film made after the book presents it in a different perspective.

In order to come with a contribution to an interesting investigation of Hamsun's world, I have chosen to analyse *Pan*, another captivating work. The key-conflict of the novel, the one between nature and culture has pretty attentively been described. A comparison between two distinct writings, on the one hand, and modern, on the other hand, pertaining to the same author was the most compressed part of my written paper. This refers to *Hunger* and to what *Pan* has in common with it until a certain point of the analysis.

The conclusion encompasses a reinforcement of what modernity signifies within the hamsunian universe, together with the sincere hope that an attentive reading will be useful for those interested in Knut Hamsun's misleading style. This article was presented at the *Hamsun 2009* Conference during a workshop organized for young researchers.

Key Words: *modernist, modernity, modern, loneliness, unconsciousness, enstrangement, nature, culture, industrialization.*

Dette innlegget har som mål å fremstille konklusjonene av diplomoppgaven med tittelen *Knut Hamsun, Norges første modernist*. Det er viktig å nevne at disse konklusjonene ble presentert under et verksted organisert av Det humanistiske fakultet ved Babeș-Bolyai Universitetet i Cluj-Napoca. Verkstedet som hadde deltakelse av kulturelle personligheter, mange studenter og andre med interesse for Hamsuns forfatterskap, var en del av konferansen "Hamsun 2009", som ble arrangert i Cluj-Napoca i perioden 27-28 oktober 2009.

Diplomoppgaven, avsluttet i juni 2009 hadde til hensikt å fremstille Knut Hamsun som den første modernist i Norge og som en av de viktigste representanter av strømmingen i europeisk sammenheng. Dette ved en orientering mot to av hans berømte verk fra ungdomsårene, *Sult* og *Pan*. Romanen jeg valgte å fokusere på var *Sult*, med *Pan* gav jeg bare en oversikt over et mesterverk. En kompleks beskrivelse av emnet nådde jeg ved både å bruke kritikernes synsvinkel, dvs. en kobling av flere kritiske artikler, og ved å gi min egen forklaring av problemstillingen. Altså, mitt skriftlige arbeid hadde den følgende oppbygning, som belyste hovedidéen, det at Knut Hamsun var Norges første modernist.

Først og fremst orienterte jeg oppmerksomheten mot Hamsuns forhold til sin tid, fordi han er én av de første norske forfatterne som teoretiserte modernismen i året da

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strømningen begynte. En analyse av hans kjente artikkel, *Fra det Ubevidste Sjæleliv* ble det altså ikke bare spennende, men også nødvendig. Han er ikke bare Norges første modernist, men også en betydelig representant for strømningen i europeisk sammenheng.

Når det gjelder modernitet i en generell sammenheng, skiller Peter Lutherssons (1986: s. 16-17) mellom modernisme som strømning og modernisme som periode. Sett fra et sentraleuropeisk perspektiv, kan man dermed dele modernismen inn i tre faser: perioden 1850-1910 betegnes som *ungmodernisme*, perioden 1910-1930 som *høymodernisme* og perioden etter 1930 som *senmodernisme*. I Norden står tingene litt forskjellig. Hamsuns *Sult* fra 1890 er blitt kalt Norges første modernistiske roman, derfor kan man si at modernismen som strømning begynte omkring 1890.

På dette punktet av analysen, synes jeg nødvendig å forklare forskjellen mellom begreper som *moderne*, *modernisme* og *modernitet*. For dette, skal jeg beskrive Matei Călinescus definisjon fra hans teoretiske bok om emnet, *Five Faces of Modernity*. Altså, *modern*, *modernity*, *modernism*, som han kaller dem, og andre slike begreper, er brukt for å vise historiens relativitet. De har å gjøre med en kritikk av tradisjonen i den forstand at tradisjonen mister autoriteten, i.e. kunstneren må skape en personlig fortid, fordi han ikke lenger finner noe inspirasjonskilder. Derfor oppstår begrepet *aesthetic modernity*, et krisebegrep i tredimensjonal forstand. Den står som en motsetning til tradisjonen, til borgerskapet, og til selve moderniteten. Endelig definerer han begrepet *moderne* som det å være ny, up-to-date; *moderniteten* er egenskapen av å være moderne, rettere sagt tradisjonen som vender seg mot seg selv, og *modernisme* er strømningen som har med søkningen etter moderniteten å gjøre, i.e. en rommelig bevegelse av estetisk fornyelse. *Det nye* er med andre ord både en estetisk kategori og en historisk kategori.

Nå at forskjellen mellom slike beslektete begreper har fått den nødvendige forklaring, består den mest betydelige delen i det skriftlige arbeidet mitt av en analyse av moderniteten i *Sult*. Målet var å gi en detaljert beskrivelse av romanen, for å få en beriket forståelse av dens modernitet. Altså begynte jeg med en oversikt over verkets oppfatning og handling, for å fortsette med å belyse de modernistiske trekkene det inneholder. Jeg analyserte dette aspektet fra forskjellige synsvinkler, med vekt på fremmedgjøringen, ensomheten og hva slike følelser leder til – isolasjon, motløshet, opprør mot omverden og guddommeligheten. Jeg gjorde dette ved å kommentere talende sitater fra boka, ved å koble flere kritiske og nyttige synsvinkler i dette enkelte tilfellet, og komme fram til personlige konklusjoner.

En analyse av verkets filmatisering fant jeg også nødvendig, for å vise hvilke fordeler litteraturen har, sammenliknet med filmen, men også forskjellen mellom en leser og en tilskuer. I oppsummering prøvde jeg å samle flere spennende sitater som snakket om verkets verdi, og på den måte, om Hamsuns originalitet.

Fortsettelsen kom med romanen *Pan*. Jeg valgte den som et alternativ til *Sult*, som en oversikt over et mesterverk. Med *Pan* hadde jeg til hensikt å forsterke forfatterens stilling som Norges første modernist. Dette med vekt på en sammenlikning med romanen jeg valgte som hovedemne, dvs. *Sult*. For å kunne sette en slik kobling i praksis, var det nødvendig å fokusere først og fremst på forklaringen av romanens hovedlinje i lesningen, nemlig konflikten mellom natur og kultur. Når det gjelder denne splittelse mellom livet i naturen og livet i sivilisasjonen, hadde jeg som forutsetning at den, uten tvil, fører til verkets modernitet, nemlig til begreper som likner på de fra *Sult*.

Delen som jeg synes mest krevende var en sammenlikning mellom *Sult* og *Pan*, med vekt på hva den siste roman har i slekt med eller i motsetning til den første. Altså, jeg

understrekte en del modernistiske karakteristikk som fremmedgjøringen, ensomheten eller fraværet av faste familieforhold. Fellestrekkene og forskjellene ble skjematisk hver for seg i det siste kapittelet.

Jeg brukte sitater for å støtte oppgavens struktur. Når det gjelder den berømte programmatisk artikkel ville han skrive om ”skridtløse, sporløse reiser med hjærnen og hjærtet, sælsomme nervevirksomheder, blodets hvirken, benpipernes bøn, hele det ubevidste sjæleliv.”² Programmerklæringen hamret han ned våren 1890. 49 år senere karakteriserte han i hvert fall artikkelen som tøvete³ (Kolloen, 2005: 188–189). Hamsuns *Sult* fra juni 1890 er blitt kalt Norges første modernistiske roman, derfor kan vi si at modernismen som strømning begynte omkring 1890. Ifølge Jahn Tohn er Hamsun med *Sult* helt i front når det gjelder å skildre den moderne tid ” [...] hvis moderniteten defineres som krise, oppløsning og sammenbrudd.” (forelesningen fra 03. 04. 2009, Cluj-Napoca).

Jeg fortsatte med et relativt spørsmål: hva betyr det å være ensom, og hvorfor når man en slik tilstand? Ensomhetsfølelsen og fremmedgjøringen i *Sults* urbane miljø fikk en næranalyse. Opprøret mot guddommeligheten var drøftet som et annet kjennetegn ved modernismen. Altså, fra setninger som: ”Det er Gud! det er Gud! ropte jeg til mig selv” (s. 29) som befinner seg i begynnelsen av romanen, kommer man til en overgang midt i det andre stykke, med utrop som: ”Jeg skal si dig ett, min kjære herre Gud: du er en noktsagt!” Som nevnt, den siste del av undersøkelsen i romanens modernitet bestod i belysningen av forskjellige ulemper og fordeler litteraturen og filmatiseringen av ei bok kan bestå av. „[...] mine damer og herrer, jeg er fortapt!” var setningen jeg valgte for å presentere skiftet fra ord til film. Verket kom ut i juni 1890, filmen er en norsk film fra 1966 av den danske regissør, Henning Carlsen. Endelig, er min mening at ingen anmeldelse av en film, uansett hvor strålende den er, kan være på talefot med boka filmen er basert på.

Konklusjonen etter denne analyse var at moderniteten er noe som ligger inne i seg selv, uten å ha noe med omverden å gjøre. Påstanden ledet til nøkkelkonflikten i *Pan* - skrevet i 1894 – noe som forlettet sammenlikningen mellom to såpass forskjellige verk.

Spørsmålet som oppstod på dette punktet av analysen var: hvordan blir det mulig at ei bok som har handlingen på det meste plassert i midten av naturen er likevel modernistisk? Svaret var temmelig enkelt! Det er bare denne konflikt mellom natur og kultur som er viktigst i verket og som bidrar til dens modernisme. Her finner leseren den sterke konflikt mellom natur og kultur, fordi handlingen ikke bare finner sted i naturen, men også i sivilisasjonen. Boka begynner ved den retrospektive teknikken. Etterpå, bidrar den subjektive teknikken til en nærming mellom forfatter og leser, og står som et kjennetegn for den direkte og frie formen i modernismen. Romanen er preget av naturbeskrivelser, som havet, skogen, som alltid personifiseres til en slik grad at du får inntrykket hovedpersonen er helt integrert i utsikten. Men det er helt ikke sånn. Glahn er ikke et naturmenneske.

”Glahn har ikke bondens eller den primitive jegers bruksforhold til naturen - men kulturmeneskets og hobby-jegerens nytelsesforhold.” (Knutson, 1975: 32).

For det første er det navnet som viser at han er et bymenneske - han er faktisk en løytnant som kommer til skogs for å få reddes fra sivilisasjonen. For det andre, prøver han

² Hamsun i artikkelen *Fra det Ubevidste Sjæleliv* i Samtiden juni 1890; forfatterens ord for å beskrive den nye type litteratur som skal beskjeftige seg om psykologiske undersøkelser.

³ Hamsun til Grieg 11.6.39; i brevet som han sender til Grieg i 1939, dvs. etter 49 år fra artikkelens publisering, peker han på at ideene teoretisert i ungdomsårene blir nå for ham mindre betydningsfulle.

en total identifikasjon med naturen, men han klarer ikke å sette en slik ting i praksis, bare fordi han lever ved utkanten av en skog, med utsikt til de hvite bygningene på Sirilund, på grensen til sivilisasjonen. Plasseringen er karakteristisk: Glahn lever i grenselandet mellom skog og samfunn, mellom natur og kultur, mellom jeger og løytnant. En viktig rolle i romanen spiller også vinduet fordi det står som en grense mellom Glahn og omverden.

”Når jeg da så ut av vinduet kunde jeg skimte mig handelsstedets store hvite bygninger, Sirilunds brygger, kramboden hvor jeg kjøpte mit brød, og jeg blev liggende en stund forundret over at jeg befandt mig her i en hytte i Nordland, i kanten av en skog” (P, 6).

Æsop har den samme rolle. Hunden virker som en rådgiver, dvs. at den står ved siden av Glahn når han er ensom og går på jakt.

Andre situasjoner når grensen mellom natur og kultur er fremstilt i romanen er for eksempel i kapittel XXIII, når selv om han er i skogen, røyker han. Noe annet det er å bemerke er personenes forhold til tingene de eier eller får. Edvarda får i gave to ting som er typiske for sivilisasjonen og for naturen. Fra baronen får hun ei nål, og hun vil kaste det; fra jegeren får hun to grønne fuglefjær. Hver gang han er invitert i selskap, får han en muntlig invitasjon fra Edvarda, som om han hadde en spesiell status, som om han var en utlending. Likevel, velger han å kle seg i en drakt, og han gjør dette i hytta si, som er i skogen. Man kan ikke betrakte ham som et naturmenneske – han er jo interessert i samfunnets utvikling.

En siste ting som en må klargjøre ifølge Bjørn Hemmer og som står som et kjennetegn for forfatterens misledende teknikk er at:

”Han skriver ikke for sin fornøyelses skyld, slik han påstår, heller ikke bare for å få tiden til å gå. Drivkraften er behovet for å få hendelsene på avstand, få oversikt over dem og forstå dem. Han griper til det å skrive som en strategi for å mestre sitt livs nederlag” (Hemmer, 1999: 311).

Etter å ha drøftet tingene som karakteriserer det viktigste forhold i romanen, må man ta i betraktning at den fører til hovedpersonens fremmedgjøring, ensomhet, og også til hans forpurring over de andre. Disse har fått en nærmere analysering i den neste delen av forskningsarbeidet mitt, mer presis i sammenlikningen mellom *Pan* og *Sult*.

Hvorfor er *Pan* faktisk modernist i seg selv? Takket være det tematiske grunnlaget, som kobler på en vellykket måte to såpas forskjellige verk. På den ene side står det fremmedgjøringen, ensomheten, følelsen at du er alene i verden, at du ikke lenger har noen faste familieforhold, og at du må klare deg selv. På den annen oppdager leseren at hovedpersonene er alene, at de har den hele friheten de trenger. Moderniteten er ikke noe som må være absolutt knyttet til urbaniteten, men viktigst blir det holdningen som gir deg adgang til modernitet. Først og fremst, var det sagt at begge to er moderniste, men på en forskjellig måte. Det beste argumentet for å støtte dette er at handlingen finner sted på ulike områder: i *Pan* følger man hovedpersonen i midten av naturen. Her fører Hamsun leseren for første gang inn i sin nordlandske eventyrverden, som skal bli landskapet for de fleste av hans bøker, mens i *Sult* er det et urbanisert samfunn, Kristiania, hvor så mange ubehagelige ting kan skje på så kort tid.

Ett av de viktigste fellestrekk er at i begge to finnes det subjektivitet i beskrivelser, gjennom den første person narrasjonen. For eksempel, én kan bare kaste et nærmere blikk på den første setningen fra de to verkene.

”Det var i den tid jeg gikk omkring og sultet i Kristiania, denne forunderlige by som ingen forlatter før han har fått merke av den [...]”. Slik begynner *Sult*.

”I de siste dager, har jeg tenkt og tenkt på Nordlandssommerens evige dag.” Slik begynner *Pan*.

Forholdet mellom verk og leser blir på den måten mye sterkere, altså leseren føler seg implisert i handlingen, gjennom en forskjellig holdning. Leseren føler at han\hun kan bedre forstå måten hovedpersonen oppfører seg, og man kan sympatisere med den. Når det gjelder formen, er begge to korte romaner, med et enkelt språk, og med ganske korte og komplekse setninger. Romanen *Sult* har ingen handling i tradisjonell forstand; det egentlige emnet er hovedpersonens indre liv. Den andre, *Pan*, er et mesterverk, intenst og bevegende, med flere personer som spiller en viktig rolle i handlingens forløp.

Ballsalens metafor er et annet høydepunkt som knytter romanene. Både i *Sult*: "Disse mennesker jeg møte, hvor let og lystig vugget de ikke sine lyse hoder og svinget sig gjennom livet som gjennom en ballsal! Og jeg gik der like ved siden av disse mennesker, ung og nys utsprungen, og jeg hadde allerede glemt hvordan lykken så ut!" (S, 16) og i *Pan*: "[...] midt i en ballsal kan man sitte sikker, likegyldig og upåvirket. For det er ens eget indre som er sorgens eller glædens kilde." (P, 7). Hva kunne den egentlig bestå av? Med dette skildrer Hamsun livet som en scene, slik som Schopenhauer mente. Det som forfatteren legger til er at livet går veldig fort, og de fleste menneskene lever bare for presens, for å nyte øyeblikket, uten å sympatisere eller å bekymre seg for andre medmennesker, ved siden av dem.

Kjærligheten og kvinnestillingen er også nødvendige begreper å analysere. Det viktigste fellestrekket er at begge hovedpersonene er fanget til en drøm om kjærlighet. Dessuten er kvinnene vel enigmatiske.

Hvis det er å ta i betraktning forskjellene mellom de to verkene, står tida som et viktig element. Man må ta sikte på at, selv om begge to hovedpersonene tenderer mot å gjengi presis tidsangivelser, gjør de det ut av forskjellige grunner. I *Sult* var det forklart at gjennom å vite hvor mye klokka er, beviser helten at han er i livet. I *Sult* bruker han ei klokke, den fra sentrum. I *Pan* orienterer Glahn seg etter signalene utenfra for å gi konkrete tidsangivelser. Han er fornøyd med at han kan innse tida etter sola, for eksempel. Ved å vise oppmerksomhet mot den, og ved å prøve å gjengi den, overbeviser han seg at han er et naturmenneske, at han kan leve i slekt med naturen.

Handlingen og måten den er strukturert på er en annen ting som skiller de to verkene. Romanen *Sult* har ingen handling i tradisjonell forstand; det egentlige emnet er hovedpersonens indre liv. Den andre, *Pan*, har med flere personer som spiller en viktig rolle i handlingens forløp.

Forholdet til Gud er også et viktig element, men det er litt forskjellig: i *Sult* finns det også oppstand og blasfemi i kritiske situasjoner, i *Pan* er det bare takknemlighet for Den som skapte naturen hovedpersonen trives i. "Tak min Gud, for hver lyngblomst jeg har set; de har været som små roser på min vei og jeg gråter av kjærlighet til dem." (P, 31) Spennende er det at også i *Pan* får Gud rollen av en stille iaktaker som bare ser på hovedpersonen, denne gangen ikke for å straffe ham: "Gud står et sted i nærheten og ser på mig" (P, 77).

Noe annet jeg hadde til hensikt å presentere på dette punktet av analysen var hovedpersonenes forhold til tingene. Einar Egen er egentlig den som i 1966 skrev en artikkel intitulert *Mennesket og tingene*, hvor han er opptatt av Hamsuns *Sult* og „den nye roman”. Altså, eiendommene virker i *Sult* som et våpen mot personens nedergang, og i *Pan* virker forholdet litt annerledes: "[...] gikk min hytte forbi, ned til Sirilund, med Æsop og væsken og børsen, med hele mit tilbehør med." (P, 16)

Den impulsive oppførselen er en annen forskjell som krever en riktig forståelse. Mens løyntanten kaster Edvardas sko i vannet ut av en tilsynelatende impulsiv holdning, som kunne ha vært vel overveid, griper jeget i *Sult* til masse slike ukontrollerende handlinger. Hans fantasirikdom bruker han for å holde den fryktelige virkeligheten på avstand.

DIANA LĂȚUG

Sist av alt, krever slutten en objektiv fremstilling. Både *Pan* og *Sult* avslutter med at hovedpersonene ikke lenger kan bli på samme sted, men reiser bort for å søke noe nytt, nye horisonter. Ifølge Jahn Tohn, står kunstneren, kikkeren, observatøren alene i *Sult*, mens verdenen utenfor han eksisterer nøyaktig skildret. Romanen *Pan* ender med at Glahn dør, mens kunstneren lever videre. Altså, illusjonen seirer, mens realiteten ligger nederlagt.

Jeg vil gjerne konkludere med det at Knut Hamsuns ikke bare har en stilling som Norges første modernist, men også som en av de viktigste forløperne i europeisk sammenheng. Fremstillingen av modernistiske trekk i de to romanene jeg valgte for undersøkelsen min var en klargjøring angående målet for det skriftlige arbeidet mitt.

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GRUNNER TIL Å INNFORE SKJØNNLITTERATUREN I UNDERVISNINGSPROSESSEN

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ABSTRACT. *Reasons for Introducing Literature in the Teaching Process.* This article describes some guidelines for teaching literature as a means of enhancing the students' level of acquisition in a foreign language. There are mentioned some arguments referring to the importance of integrating this subject when teaching foreign languages. By being a part of the category of authentic texts, literature works provide to a teacher a certain kind of openness that graded coursebooks do not offer. There are various teaching techniques available for this subject and in my opinion the best outcome is that the learner is encouraged to have an active role in the learning process and thus gain learner autonomy.

It is also depicted the usefulness of teaching literature but this time from the students' perspective. I have included some feedback received from students who have been studying Norwegian for six semesters. There will be placed an emphasis on the skills acquired by students as a result of integrating literature in their learning process.

The article consists of three sections: the first one enumerates some solid reasons for using literature as a means of acquiring knowledge in a foreign language, the second presents some techniques for tackling literature in the classroom and the last part contains some suggestions and activities that can be applied successfully in the teaching process. This article was presented at the *Hamsun 2009* Conference during a workshop organized for young researchers.

Key Words: *learner autonomy, cultural responsive teaching, personal development, creative skills, interpretative skills, reading skills, writing skills, listening skills, authentic texts, reader, response, reader-implication.*

Hensikten med denne studien er å nevne noen retningslinjer på litteraturundervisningens område. Følgende skal vi analysere hva betyr skjønnlitteraturen for studentene som lærer norsk som fremmed språk her i Romania. Fra en didaktisk synsvinkel representerer skjønnlitteraturen et kompleks emne og det finnes mange begrunnelser som kan bekrefte dette. Studien skal fremstille ulike metoder som kan hjelpe læreren til å innføre skjønnlitteraturen i klasserommet og jeg skal også beskrive hvilke ferdigheter danner denne undervisningen fokusert på skjønnlitteraturen. Studien inneholder tre deler: den første beskriver forskjellige grunner for å undervise skjønnlitteraturen, den andre hvilke undervisningsmetoder er brukt og den siste del skal foreslå noen aktiviteter som kan gjøre kursene livligere.

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Hvorfor litteraturundervisning?

Først og fremst skal jeg begynne med en kort innledning om hva betyr fremmedspråk tilegnelse og hvilken er den mest passende sammenhengen for å lære et fremmedspråk i. Forskeren Stephen Krashen mener at tilegnelsen av morsmålet skjer på en ubevisst måte fordi denne er en medfødt prosess, mens læringen, som er en bevisst prosess, legger vekt på hvordan å tilegne bedre uttrykksformer og grammatiske regler. Dermed forsøker studentene som lærer norsk som fremmedspråk å bruke sine morsmålskunnskaper (dvs. syntaks, bøyningsformer, grammatiske regler osv) for å gjøre tilegningen lettere. Selv om begreper som "intelligens", "personlighet", "motivasjon", "læringsform", "alder" har en stor betydning for å definere tilegnelse området, skal denne studie ikke legge vekt på å beskrive disse. Målet med studien er å foreslå noen aktiviteter som kan forbedre språktilegnelsen ved bruk av skjønnlitteratur.

Når det gjelder den mest passende sammenhengen for å lære et fremmedspråk er "de fleste mennesker enige med at å lære et fremmedspråk i en naturlig sammenheng eller i gata er mer effektiv enn å lære språket i klasserommet ". (Lightbown, Spada, 1993:69) Idéen som følger er at studentene som lærer språket i klasserommet har som mål bare å bestå en eksamen og ikke å bruke språket for å kommunisere. Undervisningen av skjønnlitteratur ønsker å vise at denne idéen med at språkkunnskaper representerer bare en karakter er ikke korrekt og at aktivitetene som foregår i klasserommet hjelper studentene til å forbedre deres kommunikative ferdigheter. Det er sant at i en naturlig sammenheng er studenten utsatt til et ekte språk, men læreren kan også innføre autentiske tekster (aviser, lytteforståelse øvinger, musikk osv.) i kurset for å skape denne virkelige sammenhengen i klasserommet.

Å tilegne seg et nytt språk innebærer også at man tilegner seg det nye samfunnets kulturelle koder. På en slik måte åpner skjønnlitteraturen, i våre tilfelle norsklitteraturen, et vindu mot Norges kultur ved å gi leseren muligheten til å oppdage nordmennes dagligtale. Når studentene lærer om litteratur de samtidig lærer om seg selv fordi "møtet med og opplevelsen av litteraturen, der leseren blir berørt både affektivt og kognitivt, gir erfaringer som kan styrke utviklingen av innlevelse i andre menneskers livsverden. Litteraturen utfordrer." (Nesse, 2007: 7) Vi kan legge til at skjønnlitteraturen åpner noen dører som har å gjøre med hvordan man forstår verden og, hvorfor ikke, seg selv.

I løpet av kurset kan læreren dra nytte av studentenes meninger og organisere en drøftelse, om emnet tillater dette. Litteraturen beriker en person i en stor grad. Først og fremst "det finnes ingen korrekt fortolkning av en tekst. (...) Ulike lesere vil bringe deres egne erfaringer i teksten; og det finnes ingen identiske lesere, så det finnes ingen identiske lesninger". (Simpson 1997: 3) Leseren er gitt muligheten til å forstå seg selv bedre og klassekameratene sine men også ta kontakt med forfatterens tanker, meninger og drømmer. «Ingen mann er en øy», skrev den britiske poeten John Donne og på samme måte søker vi alltid i bøkene vi leser nye meninger omkring oss eller i de andre.

"Litteraturen representerer en autentisk tekst. Vi mener at de fleste litterære verkene er ikke tilpasset til den spesifikke målet av å undervise et fremmedspråk."(Collie, Slater, 1991: 3) Men dette er ikke en ulempe. Læreren kan dra nytte av disse autentiske tekster fordi disse inneholder komplekse setninger som utvikler studentenes leseferdigheter men også deres grammatiske kompetanser. Noen ganger viser bøkene ikke alltid et ekte språk og måten hvordan nordmennene snakker. Til tross for dette inneholder et litterært verk "mange kulturelle informasjoner (...) som utvider studentenes innsikt i landets kultur". (Collie, Slater, 1991: 4) Om vi undersøker litt bøkene som er brukt for å lære et fremmedspråk skal vi se at disse inneholder en begrenset eller et spesifikt ordforråd, i begynnelsen, som kan brukes bare i noen sammenhenger og at øvingene tilbyr en kontrollert praksis som har som mål å gjenta kanskje nye grammatiske strukturer. Dette representerer selvfølgelig en god grunnleggende

metode for å lære noe nytt men når læreren ønsker at studentene tilegner seg et språk som brukes i virkelige situasjoner representerer skjønnlitteraturen og alle andre autentiske tekster en god start. I hva som angår de rumenske studentene som lærer seg norsk, tilbyr litteraturen en viktig mulighet for å forstå Norges kultur på en fullstendig måte.

Litteraturen også hjelper studentene til å forstå sammenhengen som det litterære verket hører til. Elaine Showalter (2003: 26) nevner forskjellige fordeler: litteraturen støtter studentene til å syntetisere idéer som tilhører en litterær periode, å bruke litterære modeller som kulturelle referanser, å kommunisere med andre eller for å klargjøre egne idéer, å tenke kreativt om problemer ved å bruke litteraturen som en utvidelse av ens egen erfaring, å forstå egenskapene som beskriver en figurativ mening og metaforiske betydninger, å kunne selv opprette litterære tekster.

Vi skal fokusere videre på tre kategorier som Joanne Collie og Stephen Slater (1997: 4, 5) har definert for å vise litteraturens betydningen i fremmedspråkundervisningen: kulturell berikelse, språklig berikelse og personlig engasjement. En kort beskrivelse av hver er fremstilt nedenfor ved å fokusere på fordelene som litteraturen tilbyr til studentene som lærer seg norsk som fremmedspråk.

Kulturell berikelse

Selv om verden avbildet av forfatteren i en bok kanskje ikke er ekte, finnes det ennå detaljer, for eksempel hvordan hovedpersonene lever, tenker, det omkringliggende miljøet, som gir leseren noen retningslinjer om landets samfunn og mennesker. Dessuten, når en leser en bok, forventer man seg å gå inn i forfatterens verden og likeledes å forstå bedre hvordan folk fra dette landet tenker og lever.

Når en person lærer språk på nytt, kan man ikke unngå kontakten med kulturen som finnes i dette landet, fordi disse to ikke kan skilles. Språket bærer med seg en kulturell arv. I tillegg til dette er fremmedspråket best assimilert i sammenheng, og litterære verk tilbyr denne sammenhengen, enten den er sosial, politisk eller kulturell. Når det gjelder studentene som lærer seg norsk som andrespråk representerer disse innsikter i Norges kultur et verdifullt trinn som kommer til å hjelpe studentene til å forstå og å tilegne seg språket på en enklere måte. William Littlewood (Brumfit, Carter, 1996: 182) hevder at det ikke er mulig å verdsette den skapte verden i ei boka hvis den daglige kulturelle bakgrunn ikke er kjent av leseren. Dette viser en gang til at å lære et fremmedspråk er påvirket av skjønnlitteraturen som finnes i dette landet og vice versa. Når man lærer et fremmedspråk "møter man både et språklig og et kulturelt brudd og noen ganger (man) kan ikke være i stand til å identifisere seg med teksten eller nyte den" (Collie, Slater 1997: 6).

Men vi må ikke glemme at skjønnlitteraturen fremstiller noen ganger rare eller fantastiske situasjoner, morsomme handlinger, interessante hovedpersoner, fengslende plott som ikke avspeiler virkeligheten. I dette tilfelle må læreren være oppmerksom på disse detaljene og virke som en ressurs. Læreren må fremstille først og fremst detaljer om hvordan fiksjonslitteraturen og autentiske tekster er skrevet og hva de inneholder. Ved å vite disse forskjellene kunne studentene dra nytte av hva de leser på ulike måter.

Guy Cook (Carter, McRae, 1996: 151) hevder at "å blande fiksjonslitteratur og autentiske tekster i et kurs har som mål å stoppe idéen at litteraturen ikke er påvirket av den store mengden av tekniske endringer som har påvirket språket". På denne måten er litteraturen fremstilt som en levende tekst, som gjennomgår endringer om situasjonen krever dette.

Språkets berikelse

Når det gjelder språkanskaffelse i løpet av en leseprosess er det ingen tvil om at lesere tilegner seg ikke bare nye ord men også de forbedrer sine leseferdigheter. Studentene som lærer seg norsk som fremmedspråk har lærebøker som er gradert i henhold til deres nivå og forståelse. Disse lærebøkene inneholder leksjoner som fokuserer på verb, adjektiv eller adverb og leksjoner som understreker måten hvordan setningene er bygd opp. Hvis lærebøker tilbyr et spor som bør følges av studentene, gir et litterært verk et bredere perspektiv hvor det bare finnes en retningslinje: å se teksten som en helhet og å forstå dens mening. Dermed utsetter et litterært verk studentene til leksikalske eller syntaktiske former som overskrider deres forståelsesnivå. Hvis elevene kanskje lærer nye ord i en bestemt sammenheng, tilbyr skjønnlitteraturen muligheten til å bli kjent med et ekte skriftspråk, i kontekst.

Mens studentene leser en tekst, vil de lære nye betydninger av et ord siden i litteraturen står figurative og ekte betydninger blandet. En ulempe for å undervise ved å bruke skjønnlitteratur er at - som Joanne Collie og Stephen Slater merker til (Collie, Slater, 1997: 4) - "noen ganger litteraturen ikke gir elevene det type vokabularet de virkelig trenger". Noen litterære verker inneholder språkstrukturer og ord som ikke er typiske for dagligtalen. Men studentene har allerede kunnskaper og de er klar over hva de blir utsatt for fordi de vet forskjellene og egenskapene som preger de litterære verkene og andre autentiske tekster.

Personlig engasjement

Skjønnlitteraturen fortryller sine lesere ved å fremstille uventede situasjoner, komplekse hovedpersoner men også fordi man finner seg knyttet til teksten. Leserene begynner å føle at de tar del i utviklingen av plottet, de begynner å like noen hovedpersoner eller handlinger og å mislike andre. Alle disse danner et sterkt personlig engasjement. Til tross at lærere alltid må tenke på studentenes nivå, ferdigheter og kursets pensum, må de aldri glemme at å velge en interessant tekst øker motivasjonen.

Leserne er ivrige etter å finne ut hvilke bøker reflekterer deres egne ideer om verden. Det er ikke bare tenåringer men også folk i allmennhet som gjenfinner seg i en stadig kamp for å finne nye meninger og nye fortolkninger til kjente situasjoner og følelser. I denne forbindelse tilbyr litteraturen en sammenheng hvor betydningene er forhandlet og hvor leseren legger til sine egne følelser og tanker skaper likeså historier som står nærmere til hjertet. Dette personlige engasjementet er også skapt fordi "litteraturen gir studentene muligheten til å skifte deres oppmerksomhet utover de mekaniske aspektene av fremmedspråkets systemet" (Collie, Slater, 1997: 5). Trinn for trinn finner studentene i lesing en ren glede og ingenting annet.

Men litteraturundervisningen skaper også ferdigheter til fortolkning, kreative ferdigheter og elevautonomi.

Utvikling av studentenes fortolkningsferdigheter

Når studentene utfører lesning aktiviteter behøver de å uttrykke sine meninger om tekstene som ble lest. Hvis studentene har kunnskap om litterære genrer og kan plassere tekster i henhold til sosiale og historiske sammenhenger, da kan de forbedre sine fortolkningsferdigheter. Studentene bør alltid bli oppmuntret til å uttrykke sine meninger og følelser om hva de har lest for å skape en personlig forbindelse med teksten. Hvis studentene uttrykker sine meninger representerer dette ikke bare en nyttig tilbakemelding for læreren men også for klassekameratene.

Disse fortolkninger tilnærmer studentene og danner en vennlig og hyggelig stemning. Motsetninger kan oppstå i løpet av drøftelsen eller diskusjonen, men disse fører til en forbedring av studentenes forståelse og fortolkende ferdigheter.

Utvikling av studentenes kreative ferdigheter

En litterær tekst kan alltid brukes som en oppfølging øvelse både i skriftlig eller muntlig form. Læreren må alltid finne andre aktiviteter for å fremstille en idé eller for å undervise noe. Kursene må ikke være kjedelige fordi studentene mister slik interessen veldig snart. For å øke motivasjonen må læreren finne øvinger og aktiviteter som oppfyller studentenes behov. Studentenes kreative ferdigheter er forbedret når de er bedt om å skrive sine egne historier, å fortsette en gitt tekst eller til å skrive kritikk for bøkene de har lest. Slik føler de at de deltar på en aktiv måte i kurset, at deres meninger er verdifulle. Litteraturkursene tilbyr studentene muligheten til å mestre språket bedre fordi en tekst kan bli utnyttet ved å bruke ulike aktiviteter. Mer varierte sammenhenger danner mer kreative løsninger.

Elevautonomi

Først og fremst når man leser noe foregår denne aktiviteten individuelt og leseren er bedt til å søke svar mellom tekstens linjer. Når man leser er hovedvekten lagt både på tekst og på den som leser. I dette tilfellet må læreren sørge for at studenten som leser oppdager seg selv som person med følelser og egne meninger. De forskjellige aktivitetene som kan brukes i løpet av et litteraturkurs kan motivere studentene for å være mer ansvarlige på hva angår tilegning av nye kunnskaper.

Jeg vil integrere her noen tilbakemeldinger fra studentene som allerede har tatt kontakt i en stor grad med norsk skjønnlitteraturen i løpet av studieårene. De måtte svare på spørsmål som: hva betyr norsk litteraturen for deg? I hvilken grad hjalp litteraturen deg til en bedre og enklere tillegging av språket? Hvilke ferdigheter ble forbedret på grunn av du har lest autentiske tekster?

Student 1:

Jeg har ikke lest så veldig mye litteratur på norsk, fordi teksten på et nytt språk er noen ganger vanskelig å følge. Til tross merkte jeg at hvis jeg oftere leste, husket jeg lettere ordene og andre grammatiske strukturer og uttrykk, og jeg begynte også å finne synonymer. Jeg synes at i tillegg til et studieopphold i Norge, er lesning av norsk skjønnlitteratur den sikreste måten å forbedre ens norskkunnskaper på. Jeg greide også å lese en bok på nynorsk på relativt kort tid. Jeg er enig at om man leser autentiske tekster, kan man bedre oppfatte stemningen og man kan ta kontakt med forfatterens stil, selv om noen ganger er det slitsomt å lese.

Student 2:

Norsk litteratur hjalp meg til å utvide vokabularet mitt fordi i løpet av seminaret måtte vi lese et utdrag og fortolke det etterpå. Jeg følte meg involvert og det var en fin mulighet for å uttrykke mine idéer. Dette har vært en velkommen innsats for min forbedring av språket.

Student 3:

Jeg har lært mange nye ord og uttrykk. På grunn av dette føler jeg at det er lettere nå for meg å snakke og uttrykke meg på norsk.

Student 4:

I begynnelsen av første året følte jeg at norsk var for vanskelig for meg for å kunne forstå noe. Jeg ønsket å få raskt et grunnlag for å kunne flytte til et annet trinn, nemlig

flytende leser. Jeg kan hevde at etter jeg har lest noen autentiske verker (bøker eller aviser fra Internettet), har jeg beriket mitt ordforråd og jeg har mer tillitt i å uttrykke meg muntlig. Norsk litteratur også hjalp meg til å forstå noen spesifikke kulturelle detaljer knyttet til det norske samfunnet og mennesker generelt.

Undervisningsmetoder

Man må også huske på at en modell eller en didaktisk retning ikke inneholder alle svarene. En undervisningsmetode er lærerens tiltak til å framstille lærestoffet for elevene og til å involvere dem i en aktiv læringsvirksomhet. Når studentene lærer seg et fremmed språk må læreren tenke på ulike metoder som kan hjelpe dem å tilegne seg nye kunnskaper på en mer effektiv måte. Et språk betyr ikke bare grammatikk selv om mange lærere legger vekt på denne type undervisning. I dag er tendensen orientert ved å involvere studentene i undervisningsprosessen gjennom å bruke en kommunikativ metode som gir elevene muligheten til å lære ved å oppdage selv de nye informasjonene. Hvis den tradisjonelle didaktikken betrakter eleven som en ren mottaker av informasjonen som læreren har sendt, tilbyr den moderne didaktikken eleven mange muligheter for å kommunisere sin synsvinkel, for å utfordre kreativiteten og for å utvikle en produktiv tenkning. Læreren må understreke den viktige rollen som de autentiske tekstene og den norske kulturen spiller i læringsprosessen. Gjennom disse tar studentene kontakt med Norges verdier og identitet og på denne måte får studentene en omfattende informasjon som letter språkets tillegging.

Læreren kan velge mellom tre ulike teknikker for å innføre en skjønnlitterær tekst: språkorientert, "tekstorientert og leserorientert" (Lazar, 2005: 23, 24).

Disse tilnæringer analyseres fra et bestemt perspektiv: hvordan undervises norsk litteratur for studenter som har rumensk som morsmål. Hensikten med denne diskusjonen er å forstå bedre fordelene og ulempene for hver undervisningsmetode og forhåpentligvis fra tilbakemeldingene innhentet skal vi få noen retningslinjer om hva et organisert, kreativ og interessant litteraturkurs betyr.

Den viktigste karakteristisk av et litteraturkurs som fokuserer på språk er at det legger vekt på ordene som finnes i den fremstilte teksten. Ved å bruke denne metoden legger læreren vekt på vokabularet som finnes i det litterære verket og lager forbindelser til tidligere leksikalske kategorier eller grammatiske strukturer for å gi studentene muligheten til å forstå betydningen av teksten. Ingen benekter at når man leser på et fremmed språk det er viktig å forstå ordene som finnes i teksten, men på annen side kan det bli stressende og vanskelig for studentene å stoppe ved hvert eneste ord, og slå det opp i ordboken. En oversettelse av de ukjente ordene er ikke alltid den beste løsningen. Morsmålet kan bli brukt noen ganger for å forklare bedre for eksempel et uttrykk, men i meningsfylt øvelser. Vi må ikke glemme at det finnes ingen perfekt oversettelse mellom språk, og derfor, snarere enn å oversette teksten kan man tilby studentene en forklaring på norsk.

Et annet alternativ til å forklare nye ord på er å venne studentene med å forstå betydningen av teksten fra konteksten som er gitt. Man kan sjekke om studentene har eller ikke har forstått sammenhengen i teksten ved å stille spørsmål knyttet til teksten. Dersom hensikten med kurset er å berike studentenes ordforråd, kan læreren gjøre dette ved å velge tekster uten et litterært grunnlag men tekster som inneholder ordene som må erverves. Et litteraturkurs med fokus på språket bruker kunnskap om ord for å lage estetiske meninger om teksten.

I løpet av et litteraturkurs har læreren kanskje ikke tid til å forklare alle ord som dukker opp fordi kurset har en annen hensikt, nemlig å forstå betydningen av en gitt kontekst. For å

bedre studentenes vokabular kan læreren gjøre en oppfølging aktivitet som representerer en videreføring av den som ble framstilt i klasserommet. På denne måten oppfordrer læreren elevene til å slå opp de ukjente ordene hjemme. Fremdeles oppfatter noen forskere denne tilnærmingen til litteraturen som "reduktiv, siden språklige aktiviteter er helt frakoblet fra de litterære aspektene fra utdraget (R. Carter og M. Long sitert i P. Sanchez 2009: 29). Dessuten er denne metoden antatt å være mer involverende for læreren enn for elevene. Studenten blir en passiv deltaker som får kunnskap om nye ord lært i sammenheng.

Et litteraturkurs fokusert på innhold innebærer en "utnyttelse av teksten fra et litterært synspunkt, med større fokus på mening" (Sanchez, 2009: 29). Denne metoden, ofte kalt den tradisjonelle, har til hensikt å gi studentene et generelt perspektiv på litterære sjangrer og bevegelser, og plassere dem i de historiske kontekster de tilhører. Studentene kan bidra til utvikling av leksjonen siden de har forkunnskaper av ulike litterære sjangrer som ble lært. Læreren kan presentere elevene en stikkprøve tekst som de kan arbeide med og oppdage de viktigste egenskapene ved den nye sjangeren. Dette er den mest utbredte metoden for undervisning av litterære sjangrer, og den kan brukes enten ved å introdusere induktivt eller deduktivt nye konsepter.

Den tredje undervisningsmetoden er leserorientert og oppfordrer studenter til å uttrykke sine meninger og personlige følelser knyttet til teksten. På denne måten blir studentene mer involverte i læringsprosessen og tar en aktiv del i den, mens de prøver å forstå både den litterære sjangrer og språket som er brukt. "Tekstene som er brukt må velges i henhold til deres relevans for studentenes interesser og bare hvis disse skaper et sterkt, personlig engasjement" (Lazar 2005: 24). Dessuten gir litteraturen til læreren muligheten til å involvere og utvikle en elev i sin helhet. Målet er ikke bare å tilegne seg nye ord, men også å forbedre studentenes yringsfrihet. Undervisningen og læringen er behageligere og mer meningsfylt hvis vi lokker fram svar som krever personlig engasjement. Forskjellige diskusjoner og uenighet kan oppstå dersom elevene uttrykker sine personlige meninger om en tekst. Siden formålet med undervisningen er å skape kritisk tenkning i klasserommet, er drøftelser velkommen. Læreren bør fremstille et annet perspektiv for studentene, nemlig at konklusjonen som man kommer fram til faktisk ikke er så viktig som selve prosessen som gjennomgås for å nå dit. Hvis undervisningen er sett fra dette perspektivet da vil studentene ikke lenger være redde for at de ikke finner den riktige løsningen men bli glad til å delta i læringsprosessen.

Undervisningsaktiviteter

For å ha et vellykket litteraturkurs må læreren integrere både produktive ferdigheter (muntlige og skriftlige) og reseptive ferdigheter (lytte, lesning) i undervisningsprosessen. Vi kan dele undervisningen av et litteraturkurs i tre deler som er forbundet og påvirker hverandre:

Før-lesning strategien

Læreren forsøker å skape i begynnelsen av kurset en hyggelig og spennende stemning for å forberede studentene for undervisningsaktivitetene som følger. En positiv stemning blandet med motivasjon og spenning ville hjelpe studentene til å "overvinne med entusiasme de språklige hindringer" (Collie, Slate, 1997: 7) som kunne oppstå. Før-lesning strategien virker som en oppvarming aktivitet som har som mål å øke studentenes motivasjon i henhold til

texten som skal bli lest. Læreren har faktisk en begrenset undervisningstid i klasserommet men hvis denne før-lesning fasen er klokkelig brukt vil denne skape en solid bro mellom studentenes interesser og det litterære verket som er analysert. Studentene kan arbeide i grupper eller i par mens de løser oppgaven siden denne metoden samler forskjellige tanker og interesser og venner studentene med å samarbeide. I denne før-lesning fasen skaper læreren stemningen i klasserommet, gir noen stikkord eller tittelen på boka og ber studentene til å forutsi hva som skal skje i dette litterære verket. For å øke interessen og studentenes nysgjerrighet kan læreren fremstille bokens innbundet for å lokke fram andre detaljer og for å starte interessante spekulasjoner om boka. Læreren må forsøke å snakke mindre og mindre og la studentene øve deres muntlige ferdigheter. I tillegg bør læreren gi i denne fasen tydelige forklaringer til sine studenter slik at alle vet hvilke er forventningene for denne aktiviteten. Hvis vi underviser mellomtrinnet eller ungdomstrinnet denne før-lesning fasen representerer den viktigste innledning studentene får for å øke deres interesse i kurset. De kanskje er ikke så vant med lesestrategier og har ingen avkodingsferdigheter men deres engasjement representerer en viktig utgangspunkt. Lærere må forstå at selv om studentene står på samme trinn er deres forståelsesnivåer forskjellige. Derfor bør klasserommet ikke betraktes som en kompakt helhet men som som et rom med enestående personer som har deres egne behov og forståelsesnivåer.

Under-lesning strategien

I løpet av denne fasen stiller læreren åpne spørsmål for å involvere studentene i undervisningsprosessen og for å være sikker på at de har forstått verket som blir diskutert. Studentene har muligheten til å uttrykke sine egne synspunkter ved å bruke norsk og de forbedrer sitt ordforråd og sine kommunikasjonsevner. Mens studentene tolker et litterært verk bruker disse sine bakgrunnskunnskaper for å finne riktige meninger. Læreren må ikke spørre generelle spørsmål som: *Har dere forstått teksten?* fordi de fleste skal svare Ja, bare for å gi en rask tilbakemelding til læreren. For å være sikker på at studentene har egentlig forstått teksten, må læreren velge mer personlige spørsmål: *Hvilken følelse gir teksten deg? Velg en setning som beskriver best din følelse eller din mening. Hvorfor liker du denne hovedpersonen? Kan du sammenlikne temaet i denne boka med andre bøker du har lest? Kan du tenke på en annen avslutning på denne boka?* Denne type aktivitet skaper samarbeid og studentene tar kontakt med andre meninger og fortolkninger.

I under-lesning strategien kan læreren bestemme noen andre mål: å fokusere på grammatikk og å studere språket, å lære å lage spørsmål om teksten eller å gå dypp i skjønnlitteratur og snakke om personkarakteristikk eller handlingen. For å sette i praksis disse mål kan læreren lage noen quiz eller tankekart for idédugnad, en tabell som inneholder personlige meninger om hva studentene har forstått, hva ønsker de å finne ut i teksten eller å lage ordlister med ukjente ord og forsøke å finne meningene sammen med klassekameratene sine. Hvis man har studenter fra mellomtrinnet da kan man hente bilder tilknyttet til teksten for å forklare ukjente ord, kan man tegne handlingen i teksten og kanskje blande lesing aktiviteten med en lytte aktivitet, hvor læreren leser høyt eller bare forteller historien. Lærere må ikke glemme at studentene bruker forskjellige intelligenser for å forstå nye informasjonen: språklig, logisk, visuell, musikalsk, kroppslig, sosial, intuitiv intelligens og at det er veldig viktig å integrere disse i undervisningsprosessen.

Etter-lesning strategien

Læreren kan spørre mer komplekse spørsmål knyttet til teksten for å sjekke studentenes forståelsnivå og meninger. Det finnes flere stimuleringstiltak til å bruke de andre produktive og reseptive ferdighetene: studentene kan skrive et sammendrag eller en kritikk av den leste bok, læreren kan planlegge en drøftelse om temaet passer for denne type diskusjonen, studentene kan skrive en annen slutt på boka eller en fortsettelse til denne, studentene kan iscenesette et utdrag/kapittel fra boka, de kan lytte til noen intervjuer som har boka som tema, de kan lage en tegneserie med utgangspunkt i boka osv.

Avsluttende betraktninger

Denne artikkelen forsøkte å vise ulike tilnærminger til litteraturundervisningen i høyere utdanning for studentene som lærer seg norsk som fremmedspråk. Detaljer om hvordan skjønnlitteraturen kan bidra til fremmedspråktilegnelsen er også gitt. Artikkelen inneholder også noen didaktiske metoder som kan brukes i klasserommet for å innføre skjønnlitteraturen i læringsprosessen.

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WAR AND LITERATURE: A GENEALOGY OF SHAME IN POSTWAR NORWAY

ADRIANA MARGARETA DANCUS¹

ABSTRACT. This paper elaborates a genealogy of shame in postwar Norway through the analysis of three literary works: Sigurd Hoel's *Møte ved milepelen* (*Meeting at the Milestone*, 1947), Knut Hamsun's *Paa gjengrodde stier* (*On Overgrown Paths*, 1949), and Per Petterson's *Ut og stjele hester* (*Out Stealing Horses*, 2003). Understanding the ways in which collective shame has shaped the Norwegian national psyche is important not only because it allows us to qualify the ethical niche currently employed by Norway in the international arena, but also because it shows how the politics and aesthetics of shame are inherently related to both the nation and social justice.

Key Words: war, literature, shame, Norway, state emotionalism

The Second World War (WWII) is a formative event in the Norwegian national psyche and a well-established theme in Norwegian film and literature since 1945. The majority of war fictions and memoirs archive the heroic acts of the Norwegian Resistance for future generations. Some, however, work towards eliciting collective shame. In this paper, I will investigate the role of three seminal works in Norwegian literature in the economy of national shame in Norway: Sigurd Hoel's *Møte ved milepelen* (*Meeting at the Milestone*, 1947), Knut Hamsun's *Paa gjengrodde stier* (*On Overgrown Paths*, 1949), and Per Petterson's *Ut og stjele hester* (*Out Stealing Horses*, 2003). *Meeting at the Milestone* and *On Overgrown Paths* came out immediately after the war at a time when Norwegians were zealously involved in rebuilding their country and punishing those who collaborated with the Gestapo. Shaming the Norwegian nation, each in its own way, these two novels are also symptomatic of the selective amnesia and emotional numbness characteristic of postwar Norway.

The international community celebrates Norway as an avid supporter of human rights and equality whose commitment to peace and democracy increased exponentially after WWII. Norway's clean reputation, however, is disturbed by a number of unsettling facts about the way in which the Norwegian authorities and public opinion dealt with those who betrayed the nation during the occupation, all from overt collaborators to children of war. Undermining Norway's ethnical niche in the international arena, these past (mis)treatments have been pushed into the dark corners of national memory from where they occasionally return to haunt and shame the nation. An example of this is the renewed controversy about Hamsun's *On Overgrown Paths* and his dubious reputation as Norway celebrated the

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Hamsun jubilee in 2009. The third book I will analyze, *Out Stealing Horses*, won Per Petterson several prestigious international awards and the *New York Times Review* included it in its top-ten best books of 2007. My analysis will demonstrate that Petterson's contemporary novel reworks Norwegian postwar shame in ways that interrupt amnesia and numbness. In order to understand how experiences of war deform and reform the Norwegian national psyche, I therefore propose conducting a genealogy of shame in Norway through the above-mentioned literary works.

In *The Cultural Politics of Emotions*, Sara Ahmed (2004) demonstrates that utterances of shame play an important role in bringing the nation together. By uttering national shame at the wrongs committed by their political ancestors against the Aborigines, the Australian public and political elites celebrate the nation in the present through invoking national ideals that their ancestors failed to live up to. This not only leads to an idealization of the nation in the present, but also to the glossing over of present injustices. In other words, in Ahmed's example, utterances of shame allow the nation to feel better, while structures of power that have allowed atrocities and discrimination in the past continue to proliferate.

Central to Ahmed's discussion of what utterances of shame do to the nation is the definition of shame itself. Drawing on critics working within psychoanalysis, ego psychology, and phenomenology, Ahmed thrusts her argument through a conceptualization of shame in relation to guilt and love. Following Donald L. Nathanson, she suggests that guilt is about sanctioning, punishment for wrongdoing, and action: one feels guilty for what one has done. Shame, on the other hand, is about a quality of the self: one feels shame for what one is (Ahmed 105). Yet, according to Ahmed, shame is never a purely negative emotion. Rather it is a confirmation of love through negation: in order to experience shame before another, one must share an interest in that other, a prior love for that other or a desire to be like the other (Ahmed 105-6). Shame, then, is a proof of one's commitment to ideals, a proof of love:

If we feel shame, *we feel shame because we have failed to approximate 'an ideal' that has been given to us through the practices of love.* What is exposed in shame is the failure of love, as a failure that in turn exposes or shows our love. (Ahmed 106)

By emphasizing the intimate relation between shame and love, Ahmed underlines the sociability of shame: through shame, we both acknowledge our failure to live up to the ideals that we share with others and uphold our desire to be one with the others, to be part of the family, the community or the nation. Ahmed is not the first one to identify the important role of shame in constructing and maintaining a collective ideal. Writing about guilt and shame in the feminist movement, Berenice Fisher (1984) recasts shame as a positive collective emotion that feminist intellectuals can and should mobilize in order to reassess their community's ability to live up to feminist ideals. By wearing shame together and reassessing their goals, feminists create a social bond that includes those other women whom their activism has traditionally failed, e.g. black women or women in the Global South. In the Australian case, however, the ambivalence of shame, simultaneously a confirmation and negation of love, implies that shame is conditional. Shame allows only white Australia to stick together by blaming their political ancestors for failing the national ideal. At the same time, it continues to exclude the other colored bodies such as Aborigines by exculpating white Australian contemporaries of individual guilt for continuing injustices and discrimination. Consequently, in Ahmed's account, shame as a shared affective state puts conditions on who can rightfully inhabit the nation and who cannot. It is this conditional dimension of collective shame that interests me in the Norwegian case. Who does shame put limits on? How does the Norwegian national body take shape through shame? Who is left out and who is left in through this shared affective state?

In postwar Norway, national shame is not healing, but debilitating, confusing, traumatic, chronic, entrapping, and intergenerational. In this way, it shares characteristics with what Kathleen Woodward (2009) has called racial shame. Discussing the racial structure of shame, Woodward demonstrates that racial shame cannot be readily transformed into knowledge like feminist or queer shame. Feminist epistemology has reclaimed shame as a self-reflexive psychological emotion that can be brought into consciousness through anger (Woodward 83-5). To feminists, the succession of shame by anger is key because anger is what allows women to recognize the oppression they have been part of. As to queer shame, Woodward, following Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, contends that it is transformed into pride through a supportive community and a politicized movement (85-7). In both of these examples, shame works as a positive force through the succeeding emotion: anger and pride respectively. In contrast, those who experience racial shame are not in the position of being able to analyze their own shame, like the feminists do; nor can they mobilize a community of their own, like in the case of queer activism. Instead, black shame in white America is traumatic and chronic, leading to lacerating violence and debilitating depression (Woodward 88).

Just like racial shame, national shame in Norway is chronic and traumatic, this time leading to emotional numbness and selective amnesia. For many Norwegians, WWII remains a taboo topic and utterances of national shame that demand authorities to issue an apology for unjust war settlements are few and far between. The heroic stories of the Norwegian Resistance are constantly pushed to the front, while the stories of the Norwegian collaborators with the Gestapo systematically silenced and forgotten.

A particularly sensitive topic is the fate of children born to a Norwegian parent, commonly a mother, and a Nazi occupier. To date, German Norwegian war children, now adults in their late sixties, continue to fight for redemption and compensation for the injustice and discrimination they have experienced since 1945. The Norwegian authorities have been responsive to the similar plea of indigenous Sami and national minorities such as the Kvens and the Romani, who have been subject to forcible assimilation and discrimination. In the case of war children, however, the Norwegian state has several times dismissed the war children's claims for compensation as outdated (Lengfelder 2010). The only official apology was issued in 2000 by Kjell Magne Bondevik, Norway's Prime Minister at the time. In his New Year's address, Bondevik briefly expressed his regrets on behalf of the Norwegian state for the unjust treatment of war children.

At the end of the war, there was an estimate of 10,000 to 12,000 German Norwegian war children whose mothers were vilified by both authorities and public opinion as "loose" women who had betrayed Norway by sleeping with the enemy (Ericsson and Simonsen 2008; Lenz 2009; Mochmann 2008). Offspring of "German tarts" and Nazis, these children were seen as hereditarily deficient and politically dangerous. Some went as far as to propose mass deportations of "Nazi brats" "back" to Germany. Although no war child act was ever passed in Norway and mass deportations of children were not conducted, the fate of these children was highly affected by the stigmatizing speech at the time. Many were put in orphanages and foster homes to get a "proper" Norwegian upbringing, while others later reported harassment, abuse, and social isolation. Their mothers were publicly ostracized by having their hair shorn and being fired, sexually abused, and socially harassed. Even worse, some of these women were interned in special camps, and those who had married a German during the war were stripped of their Norwegian citizenship and deported to Germany.

The treatment of war children illustrates the complex ways in which shame forges a national bond in postwar Norway. First, the Norwegian majority publicly shames their mothers as “loose women” and dooms them as unworthy of inhabiting the Norwegian national body. While deportation was not always a solution to rid the nation of all traitors, in the case of children of war, the Norwegian authorities employed other “corrective” measures such as forced adoption, social exclusion, and forcible assimilation. Second, shame entails not only an exposure of shameful traitors, but also a redemption of many other Norwegians who collaborated by default, such as farmers and fishermen who sold their produce to German troops. Consequently, shame involves an attempt to hide the failure of the Norwegian community to live up to its patriotic ideals. Third, fearing exposure and exclusion, the majority cannot resist the desire to hide and instead chooses to forget, deny, and ignore. The built-in critique of ideals and the potential for social transformation that Fisher ascribes to shame is not realized in the Norwegian case, for shame unifies the nation by inducing numbness and amnesia. This is particularly evident if one examines *Meeting at the Milestone* by Sigurd Hoel and Knut Hamsun’s *On Overgrown Paths*, two narratives that have played an important role in the economy of national shame.

Meeting at the Milestone was a bestseller for several years after its publication in 1947, and critics acclaimed the novel’s psychological depth and narrative style. Unlike many of his compatriots, who frantically sought to exonerate the majority of Norwegians by scapegoating the overt traitors, Hoel advocated an understanding of national betrayal and war atrocities as the result of poor child-rearing, emotional coldness, irresponsibility and provincial prejudice. In the novel, Hoel shames the Norwegian collective for having failed certain individuals and thus indirectly pushed them into the arms of the Nazi occupation. The narrator-protagonist is a hero of the Norwegian Resistance who chooses anonymity in the novel and goes by the nickname *den plettfrie* (the blameless). The blameless, however, is not without blame. After having impregnated a young woman, he abandoned her and provided neither emotional nor material support to his son. During the war, the son joined the enemy in an attempt to gain self-worth and retribution. Although the blameless admits that it was his personal failure that ultimately made his son a traitor, he feels numb and acknowledges his inability to change. He therefore remains torn between the shame of having fostered a “tool” of Nazism and his public acclaim as a hero in the Norwegian Resistance. Hoel attempts to resolve this schizophrenia at the metanarrative level by shaming the national collective for its role in the war. He also encourages each individual to reassess her personal weaknesses and betrayals of the past in order to build a better future. This process of shaming induces a sense of optimism and underlines the role of individual agency in the process of reconstruction: good Norwegians should start rebuilding Norway by working on themselves. As a result, war is no longer about circumstance and systemic power, but it is conceived as a product of a chain of individual failures that can be corrected.

If Hoel used shame to numb the nation’s wounds and provide incentives for reconstruction, Hamsun’s *On Overgrown Paths* secured Norwegians a posttraumatic shock that put them to shame and induced a complex process of selective amnesia whereby Hamsun the Nazi sympathizer was to be separated from Hamsun the literary genius, with the former to be outcast from national memory. Written during the period Hamsun was awaiting trial for treason, *On Overgrown Paths* is Hamsun’s testament of thoughts, experiences, and memories. Because he stubbornly refused to apologize for his political activities during the war, the Norwegian authorities saw fit to declare the former hero mentally impaired and ruin him economically rather than put him into jail. Annoyed by the authorities’ treatment, Hamsun writes *On Overgrown Paths* in order to prove his sanity to future generations. At the same time, he initiates his own

redemption by explaining his collaboration with Nazi Germany as an act of patriotism. Pointing out the cultural affinity Norway has always had with Germany, Hamsun explains that the reason he supported the Nazis is because he firmly believed that Norway could occupy a prominent position in the new Germanic order. He admits having been wrong for showing support to the Nazi regime. However, he insists that he has always nurtured the deepest feelings for his country. Consequently, *On Overgrown Paths* does not offer an apology. On the contrary, as Hamsun scholars have pointed out, the memoir demonstrates how shrewdly Hamsun continued to assert his political views acting as an individual who assertively decided how to act, write, and create (Sabo 1999, Zagar 2009).

Hamsun's memoir elicits a conflicted emotional response from the reader. On the one hand, the reader feels compassion for Hamsun, an old, deaf, and senile man who was disconnected from the realities of the war and fell victim to his own idealism. On the other hand, the reader cannot help being disgusted and angered by Hamsun's overt collaboration as well as his literary trick to exonerate himself for future generations. Yet, this disgust and anger cannot be upheld and they quickly fall back into compassion. The repeated feedback loops of compassion and anger result into a debilitating shame. In line with those experiencing racial shame and who cannot transform their shame into knowledge, the public opinion in Norway fails to resolve its affective dilemma and is forever caught in the Hamsun case.

Intimately related to Hamsun's problematic collaboration with the Nazis, *On Overgrown Paths* is seldom read as a novel that contributed to unifying the Norwegian nation after WWII. This is because critics focus on what the literary canon proudly includes rather than what it shamefully excludes. Benedict Anderson (1991), however, has successfully demonstrated that nations come into being not only by remembering, but also by excluding and forgetting. Haunting the Norwegian national canon, Hamsun's memoir may have been excluded, but it cannot be forgotten. It lives as embodied knowledge, shaming the nation, entrapping it, and, paradoxically, reproducing it. Shame in this case becomes a way of sticking together, not by exposing the failure of the nation to live up to its ideals, as in the Australian case, but by forever casting the nation into confusion.

The most recent dramatization of this came during the Hamsun jubilee in 2009 when the Norwegian government was criticized by the international Jewish community for financing the ceremonies marking 150 years since Hamsun's birth. International organizations such as Raoul Wallenberg Foundation, and most recently Israel's Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman, condemned the public funding of the ceremonies as a fabricated and ultimately failed attempt to separate Hamsun's literary work from his sympathies of the Nazi regime.² The Norwegian Foreign Minister Jonas Gahr Støre insisted that the jubilee was meant to contribute to a nuanced and critical debate on Hamsun, not to celebrate his Nazi sympathies.³ Meeting his Norwegian homologue in Jerusalem in order to discuss the tensed relationship between Norway and Israel following Norway's criticism of the Israeli settlements in the Gaza Strip, Lieberman used the occasion to remind Støre that Israel could not forgive Norway's celebration of Hamsun. 150 years after his birth Hamsun's problematic past interferes with political talks and once again

² "Ingen Hamsun tilgivelse," The Norwegian News Agency (NTB), 17 January 2010, <http://www.nrk.no/nyheter/distrikt/nordland/1.6950077>; Lars Erlend Øymo, "Forræderisk av Norge," The Norwegian Broadcasting Corporation (NRK), 9 July 2009, <http://www.nrk.no/nyheter/distrikt/nordland/1.6688740>.

³ "Ny jødisk kritikk av Hamsun-fest," NTB, 5 August 2009, <http://www.nrk.no/nyheter/distrikt/nordland/1.6720635>.

forces the Norwegian authorities to take a defensive stand. Internationally, Hamsun's simultaneous invisibility and hypervisibility in the Norwegian social imaginary stirs political sensibilities. At home, it continues to precipitate in debilitating shame. This proves that the national structure of shame in Norway is intergenerational, inherited as embodied knowledge from Hamsun's contemporaries, who had to deal with the political failures of their literary genius, to those who witnessed and/or celebrated the Hamsun jubilee in 2009.

Another commentary on shame as intergenerational, chronic and debilitating, this time playing out in the family setting, is Per Petterson's *Out Stealing Horses*. In the economy of shame, Petterson's novel is particularly interesting as it both draws on the national structure of shame described above and interrupts the numbness and selective amnesia symptomatic of the Norwegian context. Born in 1952, Petterson differs from other Norwegian authors in his generation such as Dag Solstad or Kjartan Fløgstad, who have their roots in the 1970s and 1980s and are explicitly political in their works. What concerns Petterson is the local, the everyday life, and the personal. Published in Norwegian in 2003, *Out Stealing Horses* was later translated into several languages and won Petterson important international prizes such as the prestigious Dublin IMPAC Award in 2007.

The novel's action is structured on two temporal levels: the summer and fall of 1948 and the late fall of 1999. There are also flashbacks to events prior to 1948, such as the marching of German troops into Oslo on April 9, 1940, a dramatic episode in the winter of 1943, and the return of the Norwegian Resistance heroes at end of the war in 1945. The narrator-protagonist, Trond Sander, is a 67-year old widower who, three years after he loses his wife and sister in a car accident, decides to move out of Oslo to live in a remote forest community in Eastern Norway. Accompanied by his dog Lyra and without notifying his two daughters, Trond plunges into the solitary, simple life in the woods where he hopes to cure his loneliness and defy the occasional aches plaguing men his age. In this self-imposed solitude, however, memories of family and several failed relationships begin to haunt him. In particular, Trond recalls his father and the unforgettable summer of 1948 when they spent the vacation together in a forest community close to the Swedish border. Through multiple flashbacks, Trond clarifies that his father had used this place as a cover for his courier activities for the Norwegian Resistance until the winter of 1943, when the Nazis discovered him. Together with another woman collaborator, Trond's father was forced to flee to Sweden to save his life. Once the war was over, he systematically returned to this isolated place, but never accompanied by his family in Oslo. During the summer of 1948, however, the father decided to take his 15-year old son with him.

Trond's admiration for his father increased considerably as father and son bonded in the proximity of nature. A city boy, Trond carefully observed his father and learned from him how to cut down grass with a scythe, log, and bale hay. In his spare time, he roamed forest paths, explored the woods, and tested his own boundaries, often together with his neighbor friend Jon, whose mother, as we later find out, was the woman who had fled with Trond's father in the winter of 1943.

One of the first learning experiences Trond distinctly recalls from the summer of 1948 is when his father asked him to cut the grass behind their cabin. While handling the scythe for the first time proved to be less challenging than expected, Trond was intimidated by this task situated in a thick, tall patch of stinging nettles. In response to the son's hesitation, the father taught his son a lesson the latter would remember for the rest of his life:

‘You decide for yourself when it will hurt,’ he said, suddenly getting serious. He walked over to the nettles and took hold of the smarting plants with his bare hands and began to pull them up with perfect calm, one after the other, throwing them into a heap, and he did not stop before he had pulled them all up. Nothing in his face indicated that it hurt, and I felt a bit ashamed as I walked along the path after Jon, and I straightened up and caught gait and walked as I normally would, and after only a few steps I could not think why I had not done so at once. (Pettersen 27)

Joining his more experienced companion Jon in a boyish prank to ride the neighbor’s horses, Trond plummets from the back of his horse and hurts himself. Momentarily overwhelmed by the pain, young Trond finds inner strength to ignore his bodily aches by recalling his father’s words and the nettles which he may have physically avoided, but whose burning needles he nevertheless felt as his father took over and performed the task himself. Trond mobilizes the same burning memory, this time to numb the pain caused by his unsuccessful attempt to “steal horses.” Pain here is pushed down into the body to a place from where it cannot reemerge, for what Trond fears is exposure of his lack of ability and knowledge as a city boy, or shame before others. The father’s words have an anesthetic effect on the son, and hereafter Trond decides to deploy the same strategy each time he faces a physical and emotional challenge. He uses it throughout adolescence to overcome difficult physical tasks and emotional turmoil caused by his father’s decision never to return home to Oslo after the summer of 1948. As an adult, Trond does the same as he struggles in several relationships. In his late sixties, his father’s words stay with him when his wife and sister perish in a car accident. Seemingly liberated from all commitments, including his two daughters whom he avoids, Trond moves into a rustic cabin in a remote forest community similar to the one in which he and his father spent the summer of 1948.

His readiness to defy death in solitude and put the past behind is however disturbed, first by the presence of his neighbor, Lars Haug, who coincidentally turns out to be Jon’s younger brother, and later on, by his daughter’s unexpected visit from Oslo. Lars’s tragic story exacerbates the recollection process and haunts Trond’s self-assumed tranquility and self-imposed estrangement from his family. A young boy of 10 in 1948, Lars accidentally shot his twin brother dead with Jon’s unsecured rifle. Afterwards, the Haug family fell apart: Jon left to sea and the father left his wife and Lars. As years passed, Lars became diligently involved in the farm until one day Jon returned from the sea and claimed the farm through the law of primogeniture. With no property and in disarray, Lars left his home never to see his mother and brother again.

Unlike Lars, whose family lost track of him, Trond walks home from one of his early morning strolls with Lyra only to see his daughter Ellen waiting for him in front of his cabin. After several weeks of detective work, Ellen finally found her father and drove from Oslo to pay him a visit. At first, Trond does not welcome her intrusion, but once Ellen overtly asks whether he would have preferred that she had not come, Trond comes to the sudden realization that she might never return. This perspective strikes him with horror and he spontaneously begs her not to leave. This is a turning point in Trond’s life: Ellen’s genuine concern for her old father creates an emotional space where Trond can reconcile with his own past and interrupt the numbness and selective amnesia inherited from his own father. Once Ellen leaves for Oslo, the cabin seems empty, the yard is different, and Trond no longer feels obliged to conceive of the past as a foreign country all together. On the contrary, as memory is healing, Trond is ready to recognize the foolishness of his father’s advice. Deployed

as a survival strategy by a man in crisis, this slogan sold Trond the illusion that he was in control of his life, that pulling nettles with bare hands does not burn, that numbing pain is the same as healing, that forgetting the past all together is possible, that the ghosts pushed into the darkest corners of memory shall never return. Secretly in love with Jon's mother and unable to confess his adulterous relationship to his wife and children, Trond's father passes on to his son a hard legacy: lacerating pain at being abandoned by a father whom he adored and burning shame that numbs that very pain into emotional sterility. For the first time, Trond is ready to face loss, betrayal, loneliness, torment, guilt, and shame not as personal failures, but as emotional consequences of the war circumstances that first pulled Trond's father and Jon's mother together, and then procured an isolation and emotional sterility in their children.

Critics have compared Petterson's novel with Knut Hamsun's *Pan*. Like the early Hamsun, Petterson is an intensely physical writer that engages his reader with all the senses. Alf Walgermo (2008) points out that *Out Stealing Horses* is a book that the reader does not simply read, but can smell and taste. At the same time, Walgermo also reveals that "... where Hamsun investigates the irrational corners of the mind, Petterson is more attuned with the rational ways of the body." While these comparisons with Hamsun's early works are undoubtedly poignant, I suggest that *Out Stealing Horses* is intimately related to both *Meeting at the Milestone* and *On Overgrown Paths*. All three works deal with events during the war and participate in the economy of national shame in Norway. Like *Meeting at the Milestone*, *Out Stealing Horses* is a reluctant memoir about the relationship between an abandoned son and a heroic father. In Hoel's novel, it is the blameless who narrates the story of how his own emotional coldness and irresponsibility made his son side with the enemy during the war. Although the blameless eventually admits his personal failures to the reader, he cannot come out and instead chooses to rest on the laurel of his participation in the Norwegian Resistance. In *Out Stealing Horses*, the story is told by the son's voice. In contrast to Hoel, who explains wrong political choices by personal psychology, Petterson implies that external circumstances such as the exigencies of war are formative for the father's psychology and which the son inherits. Now a man of age, Trond escapes in the countryside and hopes to live the rest of his life in solitude and stay true to his father's hard legacy: "You decide for yourself when it will hurt." Yet, the ghosts of the past give him no peace and return to haunt him. The chain of emotional sterility is only broken by his daughter's warmth and concern. Just as Trond's father passed on to his son a desperate survival strategy that involved numbed pain and burning shame, so did Hoel fabricate a similar slogan for Norway by implying that it was up to each Norwegian to eradicate the evil by working on themselves. This gave Norwegians the necessary optimism to get over their traumas and start reconstructing their country. Ironically, it also impeded the national community to carefully reassess their ideals and bring shame into public discourse.

More than fifty years after the war, Petterson returns to the ghosts in the system and implies it is time to wear shame differently, not in numbness and amnesia, but in pain and together with others. As Norway strives to maintain its ethical niche in the international arena, this is important both in order to address directly the Hamsun dilemma and, equally important, to recognize the failures of the nation with regard to those children of war for whom, as Bjørn Lengfelder (2010) from the Association of Children of War Lebensborn pointed out, the war is not entirely over.

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BODY AND PERCEPTIONS AS KEY ELEMENTS IN KNUT HAMSUN'S NOVEL *HUNGER*

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ABSTRACT. The purpose of the present article is to analyse and describe the way in which the hero's body acts as a representation of the void in Knut Hamsun's work *Hunger*. Modern literature uses images of the body as an embodiment of the époque's ideas and artistic ideals. The body becomes a carrier of symbols. The alienated self, the contrasts between the real world and the characters' expectations, and the paradoxes of the modern age are all thoroughly described and included in the image of the body. Being a modernist writer, one of the forefathers of modern literature in Norway, Hamsun sees the body as an artistic tool meant to approach and to show the literary tendencies at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th century.

Key Words: *alienation, body, Hamsun, hunger, modernism, psyche.*

The role of the body in modern literature will never be thoroughly described and one of the main reasons is that its symbolism is extremely rich and the implications numerous. However, the present article's purpose is to make an introduction into Knut Hamsun's work and literary views on the matter by approaching the novel *Hunger*. The novel's role in the author's literary creation cannot be denied. It is one of his first novels acknowledged by the public opinion and it bears the characteristics and the perspectives of the age, bringing fame and recognition to the author. The main reasons for this are obvious: the novel fascinates with its detailed descriptions and its analytical tendencies, being capable of making even such writers as Balzac or Zola envious of its literary mastery. It is a combination of romantic, realistic, and modern features, all interwoven in one masterpiece: "Oppdagelsen av den rolle de underbevisste fenomener spiller, fikk Hamsun til å tro at enkelte mennesker har et særlig forfinnet sjeleliv og utgjør en andel i psykologist forstand."²

I have chosen this particular novel from Hamsun's literary creation because it represents best the theme of the void seen from the perspective of the body. Thus, the body becomes a symbol of decay, alienation, and emptiness (physical hunger cannot be perceived only at the body's level, but also in the main character's mental life). Starvation empties his brain of logical thoughts to the degree that he arrives to nothingness. His hunger does not cause only a state of illness, fever, and nausea, but also mental disability, lack of artistic impulse, and incapacity to cope with and to integrate himself into the real world. In the article entitled *Religiøsitet i Knut Hamsuns Sult (Religion in Knut Hamsun's Hunger*- author's translation) R. H. Ystad states that: "*Sult*-helten er plassert i det som har blitt innbegrepet på fremmedgjøring, selve modernitetens miljø, den voksende storbyen, og heltens idéverden er

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² Beyer, Edvard, *Norges Litteraturhistorie-Fra Hamsun til Falkberget*, volume 4, Cappelen, Oslo, 1991, p.131: "The discovery of the role played by the unconscious phenomena made Hamsun believe that ordinary people have an extremely refined inner life and that they play an important role from a psychological point of view"-author's translation.

preget av en symptomatisk splittelse med rot i denne fremmedgjøringen. Dette gir seg utslag i mange fantastiske ideer, et vanskelig temperament og avvikende handlinger.”³ Due to the state of hunger, the hero’s body seems to be indestructibly connected to the environment he lives in. Perceptions become so strong that they stragulate not only the character’s artistic impulses but also his state of normality.

The main character becomes a mad man under the influence of the fast and what is natural and normal for others becomes a burden to him. Rules are no longer obeyed. He starts shouting at people with no apparent reason, lies and invents silly stories boasting rich acquaintances and famous writings. His perceptions become so strong and clear that they start to hurt him and the surroundings (the rooms, the streets, the churchyard, and even time) are perceived as a prolongation of the hero’s body. As L. B. Sønderby states: “Centralt i Knut Hamsuns forfatterskab er beskrivelserne af kroppen, der indgår i en konstellation med tiden og rummet. En situativ, fysiologisk krop, der interagerer og befinder sig i et utvidet felt, hvor blikke, perceptioner samt ikke minst tiden spiller en stor rolle. (...) det ubevidste sjæleliv beskrives via en fysiologisk topografi.”⁴ Thus, under the circumstances of the modern age, the body becomes “*the last man standing*.”⁵

Hunger is the novel of a young man, a wanderer on the streets of Christiania whose desire to write is continuously interrupted by the obsessive thought of hunger making him lose himself in the labyrinth of other thoughts and judgments. The sufferings caused by lack of money and food could be compensated for by his exaltation with literature and writing. However, the role of his intellectual preoccupations is not to save him from decay and death through starvation. He will not succeed in any of his endeavours to write something or to make use of his talent. The extraordinary psychological acuity adds to the novel’s special 20th century flavour: hunger becomes a state of mind and a peculiar *modus vivendi* making the hero indulge in a play, passing from one feeling to another, from subjective interpretations to lack of enthusiasm, and from rage and the desire to fight his condition to renouncement.

Even though the plot of the novel is a rather simple one, the reader has to pay attention to all the changes in the hero’s attitudes and reactions. The character’s psychological changes could be misleading. Thus, the plot (which exists more or less in the novel being reduced to very few dialogues and repetitive actions) becomes a literary excuse for psychological insight.

The first image the reader comes into contact with is that of the hero’s room where he lies without doing anything. The room becomes a symbolic space as it is the setting where the hero feels somewhat protected. If we continue our reading, we realize that his lying in the bed is

³ Ystad, Ragnhild Hagen, *Religiøsitet i Knut Hamsuns <<Sult>>t in Edda-Norsdisk tidsskrift for litteraturforskning*, editors: Langås, Unni, Lombnæs, Andreas G., Thon, Jahn H., no. 3/2004, Universitetsforlaget, Oslo, p. 203: ““The hero in the novel *Hunger* is a representative of what has been called as alienation, the very essence of modernism; the growing city and the hero’s ideas are influenced by a symptomatic split with roots in this feeling of alienation. This can be seen in many fantastic ideas, a difficult temperament, and different events.”-author’s translation.

⁴ Sønderby, Lone Birgitte, *Blodets hvisken og benpibernes bøn in Edda-Norsdisk tidsskrift for litteraturforskning*, editors: Mose, Gitte, Steinfeld, Torill, Universitetsforlaget, no.3/1999, Oslo, pg. 222: “In the centre of Hamsun’s literary creation is the description of the body in connection with time and space. A situational, physiological body where the inner self finds its essence, where senses, perceptions and last but not least time play an important role. (...) the unknown inner life is described by means of physiological topography.”-author’s translation.

⁵ *I dem.*, pg. 222.

a sign that the day probably is not worth living: "As soon as I was wide awake, I took to thinking, as I always did, if I had anything to be cheerful about today."⁶ According to what he says, the reader can now draw the conclusion that unfortunately, for some reason this day will not be a happy one. The explanation comes quickly: "Things had been a bit tight for me lately; one after the other of my possessions had been taken to my "uncle" at the pawnshop; I was becoming more and more nervous and irritable, and several mornings lately I had been so dizzy I had had to stay in bed all day. Occasionally when my luck was good I took in five kroner or so from one of the newspapers for an article."⁷ Little by little, symbols of decay and death appear: Miss Andersen's announcement advertising undertaking services, the ruins of a smithy burnt down, the autumn which was slowly taking over destroying the last remains of summer; the signs of decay and loss appear slowly in the book.

As the purpose of the article is to describe in what way the body acts as a symbol of emptiness and confusion, I will refer to the hero's sensations, perceptions, and thoughts. Hamsun uses the technique of the stream of consciousness. The hero's permanent wanderings on the streets of Christiania and among his illogical thoughts and inconstant feelings remind us of the modernist character's perception of life as a pathetic and useless existence carried out due to inertia. The outcome is death (mental, spiritual, and even physical in some cases). Due to these realities, the body is the only constant element in the modern hero's life and it is the only reality the character can hold on to.

Outside stimuli affect his behaviour and influence the way he relates to the outer world. He suffers from unstable changes of mood and his attitudes denote lack of well articulated actions: "The traffic noise on all sides cheered me up immediately, and I began to feel more content and at peace. I had much more to do of course than merely to take a morning stroll in the fresh air. What did my lungs care for fresh air? I was powerful as a giant and could stop a wagon with my shoulders. A rare and delicate mood, a feeling of wonderful light-heartedness had taken hold of me. I began examining the people I met or passed, I read the posters on walls, noticed a glance thrown at me from a streetcar, let every trivial occurrence influence me, every tiny detail that crossed my eyes and vanished."⁸

Time is another indefinable element in the novel. The character cannot perceive time anymore. Sometimes this causes panic or madness and illogical actions. As hunger interrupts a normal connection with the world and the realities outside, the character withdraws in his inner self and fails to establish any relationship with the surroundings and other human beings. When invited by Ylayali to leave, he has paranoid suspicions: "She came swiftly to me and reached out her hand. I looked very mistrustfully at her. Was she really doing that spontaneously? Or was she doing it just to get rid of me? She put her arms around my neck, there were tears in her eyes. I just stood looking at her. She reached up her lips to me; I couldn't believe her, this was only a sacrifice, a way to get it all over with."⁹

Hunger triggers madness. Neurasthenia and tiredness leave him devoid of any possibility to feel fulfilled and happy. Sounds, smells, hunger, cold, or feverish outbursts make his body the main actor in the play. There is a direct physical connection between the

⁶ Hamsun, Knut, *Hunger*, translated by Robert Bly, The Noonday Press Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1998, p. 11.

⁷ *Idem.*, p. 11.

⁸ *Idem.*, 12.

⁹ *Idem.*, p. 98-99.

body and the surroundings (feeling the smell of bread coming from the bakery, the coldness of the ground he has to sleep on or longing for seeing the young lady's face covered by a veil) but also an indirect one (all these senses create a network of perceptions leading to desire and inability, to excitement and depression). The "anatomy" of his feelings can be recognized in the signs of his body. As Paul Auster admits, "In the end, the art of hunger can be described as an existential art. It is a way of looking death in the face, and by death I mean death as we live it today: without God, without hope of salvation. Death as the abrupt and absurd end of life. (...) Hamsun's character systematically unburdens himself of every belief in every system, and in the end, by means of the hunger he has inflicted upon himself, he arrives at nothing. There is nothing to keep him going—and yet he keeps on going. He walks straight into the twentieth century."¹⁰

When the character, in a final state of hunger, finds some money and orders steak or manages to get some cakes from a woman on the street by being aggressive, he almost instantaneously starts throwing up. His state of hunger and decay is so deep that his body cannot accept food anymore; his mind is emptied of thoughts. His situation is without escape. In an act of despair, he embarks on a boat and sails into the unknown, seemingly to British shores. The uncertain outcome of the journey across the sea glides over the final scene, but hopes of change and a new beginning mark the end of the novel.

The town functions as a map. The labyrinth of streets and the lights left behind when the boat departs form the landscape of the novel, full of significances and symbols. It is the reader's task to decipher the numerous meanings. For example, the objects the character possesses (very few actually) are symbols of his survival: as a writer and as a human being. For him, objects are not any kind of objects: they are *The Objects* (*the Pencil, the Blanket, the Shoes*), the ones that could offer protection and that are part of his being: "(...) a strange and fantastic mood came over me which I had never felt before—a delicate and wonderful shock ran through all of my nerves as though a stream of light had flowed through them. As I stared at my shoes, I felt as if I had met an old friend, or got back some part of me that had been torn off: a feeling of recognition went through me, tears came to my eyes, and I experienced my shoes as a soft whispering sound coming up toward me. "Getting weak!" I said fiercely to myself and I closed my fists and said, "Getting weak." I was furious with myself for these ridiculous sensations, which had overpowered me even though I was fully conscious of them. I spoke harsh and sensible phrases, and I closed my eyes tightly to get rid of the tears. Then I began, as though I had never seen my shoes before, to study their expression, their mimelike movements when I moved my toes, their shape, and the worn-out leather they had; and I discovered that their wrinkles and their white seams gave them an expression, provided them with a face. Something of my own being had gone over into these shoes, they struck me as being a ghost of my "I," a breathing part of myself. . ."¹¹

He very often thinks of the way in which objects could help him if he had more than he actually does. A beautiful new suit would be a necessity especially in his work: he would like to look more elegant and fit in order to make a good impression on chief-editors. This could facilitate his success. Things are not necessary only for his survival; they are

¹⁰ Auster, Paul, *Introduction-The Art of Hunger* (1970) in Hamsun, Knut, *Hunger*, translated by Robert Bly, The Noonday Press Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1998, p. 10.

¹¹ Hamsun, Knut, *Hunger*, translated by Robert Bly, The Noonday Press Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York, 1998, p. 21.

also a symbol of social status. When sitting together with Ylayali he feels ashamed with his physical appearance and thinks that the young woman will be disgusted to see him in that condition: extremely thin, dressed up in an old suit and some old boots, without a vest or a coat on him (although the weather is already cold and winter is on its way), with a yellowish face and no hair on his head. His body is the last fortress and the loss of hair the ultimate humiliation and sign of decay. The character experiences a feeling of final despair: things (situations) have to change for him. The need is intrinsic but, however, action is delayed. Indulging in his hopelessness, he offers himself no perspectives: neither as a writer nor as a human being. Moving around Christiania his feeble body he notices the peculiarity of his perceptions and the fear of his disillusionment: "My God, what weird things you get into! I said angrily to myself—running like a madman on wet streets when it is black as pitch! The pains of hunger were unbearable and never let me alone. I swallowed spit over and over to take the edge off, and I felt it did some good. (...) My back and my shoulders bothered me most; the small ache in my chest I could stop for a moment by coughing hard or walking carefully bent over, but my back and shoulders I couldn't do anything with."¹²

He lies about a piece of cloth he has and the fact that he has to contact a tailor to make him a suit. He fantasises about how his pencil helped him write a world famous treaty making him known to the entire world. They are not mere objects which he can easily give up on. The character's connection to things is obvious. Being deprived of money and a house to live in, he starts wandering with his blanket under his arm at a certain moment in the novel. But the blanket is not really his either; it is borrowed from somebody.

Things become obsessive and threatening. The body itself acts as a thing and is subject to the same transformations and necessities as any other object. "Kroppen truer med å føre ham selv ned på tingenes plan, gjøre ham selv til en ting. Derfor bør det ikke undre oss at han ofte ser på sin egen kropp som et uavhengig vesen, at han ofte opplever den samme fremmedhet ved sin egen kropp som ved tingene omkring. Som tingene blir hans egen kropp et autonomt vesen, en ubearbeidelig ytre virkelighet som på samme tide er fjern og altfor nær, et stoff som slutter seg om ham, sperrer ham inne, truer med å kvele hans egentlige jeg. Redselen for å bli helt oppslukt av denne ytre virkelighet besetter ham stadig..."¹³ The character becomes a prisoner of his body and his mind is blocked inside it. This is one of the reasons why he cannot write or socialise with people.

Clocks and time are obsessive elements in the novel. A monologue and a confession written as a 1st person narrative, the novel guides the reader through a labyrinth of time connected only by the sensation of hunger and the character's attempts to obtain money. "Sulthelten famler seg ofte fram gjennom gatene i Kristiania-labyrinten uten å synes å bry seg om tiden. Det skyldes både sultens konsekvenser (brudd med naturlig dagsrytme, hallusinasjoner, o.l.) og hovedskikkelsens personlighet som et unntaksindivid (som får ham til å la seg styre

¹² Idem., p. 43.

¹³ Eggen, Einar, *Mennesket og tingene* in Norsk Litterær Årbok, editor: Mæhle, Leif, Det Norske Samlaget, Oslo, 1966, p. 88: "His body threatens him with reducing his self to an object. Thus, it should not surprise us that he often looks at his own body as if it were an independent creature and that he experiences the same unfamiliarity towards his body as towards other objects. As things make his own body become an independent being, an unwrought outer reality (close and remote in the same time), and a substance which comes on him and blocks him inside, threatens with destroying his own self. The fear of being totally conquered by this outer reality overwhelms him steadily..."-author's translation.

av umiddelbare innfall og handle spontant uten å ta hensyn til tiden). Imidlertid pleier han å merke seg hva klokka er, og når han senere griper til pennen for å beskrive sitt sultår, angir han ofte presise klokkeslett.¹⁴

We can notice a difference between *real time* and *personal time*. The character feels as an outcast and cannot integrate into the society due to his poverty. He continuously feels humiliated because he doesn't have money, he looks tired and shabby and his appearance and oddness cause rejection. He creates his own time, separate from real time. He lives in his own world in which he tries to save appearances. His reactions are odd and abnormal and this makes him live in a strange solitude. Hunger causes a mental split. "I sitt krav på dybdepsykologi gjør Hamsun seg til tallsman for en menneskeoppfatning som legger sterk vekt på instinktlivet. Det betyr ikke at han i første omgang sverger til sjelens mystikk. Han forlanger intelligens i all kunst. Tiden er dominert av naturvitenskapen, og Hamsun bryter ikke med den. Han utvider naturalismens virkelighetsbegrep til også å omfatte jeg-ets fantasiliv. Sjelen under lupen! (...) Å legge vekt på nytteverdien av et verk er å vende kunsten ryggen. Moralen er 'det minst menneskelige i mennesket'-mennesket da underforstått som et irrasjonelt vesen."¹⁵

Hamsun's novel contains vivid descriptions of the periods of starvation. The short periods in which he has money to survive and can eat and pay the rent are described in very few words. The reason is obvious: the focus is placed on the character's tournaments and struggles. L.B. Sønderby called Hamsun's descriptions of the body as "stream-of-bodyness:" "(...) sulten bliver fx least som udtryk for en eksistentiel mangelsituation, en metafysisk hunger eller et begær efter selvverkendelse og sandhed."¹⁶ With its experiences and sensations, the body is the one to establish a connection between the inner self and the outer world. The author creates a work which transposes dynamic interior and mental processes which cannot be explained logically. "...Hamsun i *Sult* dyrker frem en ny art poesi, en psykofysisk poesi, en kroppens, sansenes og nervernes kunst. Innenfor dette nye estetiske uttrykk er det ikke lenger

¹⁴ Humpal, Martin, *Hamsuns merkverdige klokkeslett* in Norsk Litterær Årbok, editors: Skei, Hans H., Vannebo, Einar, Det Norske Samlaget, Gjøvik, 1994, p. 125-126: "The novel's hero often wanders about the labyrinth of Christiania without caring too much about time. This includes both the consequences triggered by hunger (a loss of connection with the normal everyday rhythm, hallucinations, etc.) and the description of the main character as an exceptional individual (which makes him act under the influence of immediate whims and to react spontaneously without taking into consideration time). However, he is used to noticing what time it is and when he resorts to writing to describe his starvation, he mentions the precise time."-author's translation.

¹⁵ Beyer, Edvard, *Norges Litteraturhistorie-Fra Hamsun til Falkberget*, volume 4, Cappelen, Oslo, 1991, p.132: "In his search for deep psychological insight, Hamsun makes himself the representative of a new approach: the human being from the point of view of instincts. This does not mean that he relies on the mysticism of the human soul. He promotes intelligence in any form of art. Time is dominated by science and Hamsun does not contradict that. He enriches naturalism's notion of reality by embracing the inner self's fantasy life. The soul under the loupe! (...) To emphasise the usefulness of a work is to turn the trick back. The morale is 'the least human characteristic in a human being'-people understood as irrational beings."-author's translation.

¹⁶ Sønderby, Lone Birgitte, *Blodets hvirken og benpibernes bøn* in *Edda-Nordisk tidsskrift for litteraturforskning*, editors: Mose, Gitte, Steinfeld, Torill, Universitetsforlaget, no.3/1999, Oslo, pg. 222: "Hunger becomes an expression of existential need, a metaphysical hunger or a craving for accomplishment and truth."-author's translation.

hånden, skriften, pennen, blekket og papiret som er de primære produksjonsredskaper. Viktigere er det i denne sammenheng hva øret hører og øyet ser.”¹⁷

Hunger creates both a physical and a mental void. Moreover, the character is devoid of identity as well. There is not even one mentioning of the hero's name in the novel. The name is not important. The name is simply *Hunger*. The short periods of happiness and contentment are only meant to bring a harsher perspective on the periods of starvation. Hunger is a self-consuming state functioning on all levels; thus, it becomes a character itself.

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¹⁷ Østerud, Erik, *Modernitet og medialitet* in *Edda-Nordisk tidsskrift for litteraturforskning*, editors: Langås, Unni, Lombnæs, Andreas G. Thon, Jahn H., no. 1/2002, Universitetsforlaget, Oslo, p. 50: "...in *Hunger*, Hamsun promotes a new type of literary work, a psycho-physical creation, an art of the body, nerves, and sensations. It is not the hand, the pen, the ink, and the paper that are the main means of writing in this new aesthetic expression. Just as important are the things that our ears can hear and our eyes can see."-author's translation.

OM ORTOFONIEN OG DET ORTOFONISKE PRINSIPPET I DE SKANDINAVISKE SPRÅKENE

ATTILA KELEMEN¹

ABSTRACT. *On Orthophony and the Orthophony Principle in the Scandinavian Languages.* This paper is concerned with the orthophony in the Scandinavian languages. The theoretician of the orthophony was the Dane Rasmus Rask, but Danish is today one of the least orthophonic languages in Europe. The Norwegian Knud Knudsen succeeded to apply Rask's views on the Dano-Norwegian Bokmål, actually on the Norwegianized Danish. There will be examined how (far) the orthophony principle could assert itself in the Scandinavian languages, especially in Norwegian.

Key Words: *orthophony, orthophony principle, spelling reform, spoken and written language, pronunciation, hard consonants*

Da den danske språkforskeren Rasmus Rask la fram sine prinsipper om ortofonien i artikkelen 'Forsøg til en videnskabelig Retskrivningslære' (1826), kunne han neppe ane at et halvannet århundre senere skulle nettopp hans morsmål, dansk, regnes som et av de minst ortofone språk i Europa.

Rasks artikkel ble mye omtalt og drøftet i den tiden, ettersom dens forfatter allerede hadde tiltrukket seg lingvistenes oppmerksomhet med sine tidligere vitenskapelige verker som f.eks. 'Undersøgelse om det gamle Nordiske eller Islandske Sprogs Oprindelse' (1818) og især med sine syn om lingvistiske endringer, slektskapsforhold og vekselvirkninger i og blant germanske språk.

Rask var grammatikker og følgelig for det meste opptatt av sammenliknende morfologi og fonologi, allikevel tok han seg også av språknormering. Rask ønsket en ortofonisk tilnærming for å normere dansken som siden det 17. århundre hadde opplevd en stadig økning av avstanden mellom skriftspråk og talemål, bedre sagt mellom talemålet og dens gjengivelse i skrift. Rask gav en vitenskapelig begrunnelse for sine reformforslag, og krevde at uttalen skulle danne grunnlaget for rettskrivningen. Så skulle de stumme bokstavene fjernes, dobbeltskrevne vokaler oppgis, *j* sløyfes etter *k* og *g*. Han skilte mellom åpen *ø /ö/* og lukket *ø /ø/* også i skriften, mente videre at *c*, *q*, *x* og *z* var overflødige i dansk og krevde at fremmedordene måtte fordanskes (Han foreslo f.eks. *Sjampanje* og *Uvertyre*).

Talespråket er dynamisk og forandrer seg mye lettere og fortere enn skriftspråket som er mer statisk. Derfor kan skriftspråket ikke være en ren etterligning av talemålet, og heller ikke en tro avspeiling av talen.

Rasmus Rask utviklet sin teori om ortofonien, og det var også han som laget ordet 'ortofoni' og syntagmet 'ortofonisk princip'. Ortofonien betyr lydrett skrivemåte, med andre ord høyst mulig overenstemmelse mellom skriftspråk og talemål (faktisk uttalen av språket). Det finnes ulike grader av samsvar mellom tale og skrift i verdens språk, og graden av samsvar varierer fra språk til språk.

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Rask gikk inn altså for en uttalenær rettskrivning i dansk og dette skulle bety i hans syn at hver bokstav skulle gjengi en lyd, henholdsvis hver språklyd skulle gjengis bare med ett tegn eller én bokstav. For dansk syntes det å være en veldig vanskelig oppgave, tenker vi bare på vokalrikdommen som dansken har, på at f.eks. lyden /ø/ finnes i fire forskjellige kvaliteter, nemlig /ø/ som i *sø*, /ö/ som i *høne*, /ø̃/ som i *smør* og /ø̄/ som i *grønne* (ifølge Lund, 1982:116)

I dag kan vi se at, selv om hovedprinsippet i dansk er det ortofoniske, har gjennomførelsen av det ortofoniske prinsippet i dansk i lyktes i mindre grad, og det ble til virkelighet snarere i andre skandinaviske språk (f.eks. i nabospråket norsk, og det takket være først og fremst Knud Knudsen). Skjebnens ironi, at blant språkene i Europa, så sier mange, er dansk det minst ortofone.

Ortofone er f.eks. språk som finsk, samisk, serbo-kroatisk eller tyrkisk som fikk sitt skriftspråk relativt sent. Tyrkerne hadde brukt f.eks. opp til 1920-årene arabiske skrifttegn, og da de gikk over til bruk av det latinske alfabet, valgte de å anvende ortofoniprinsippet og en ortofonisk normering. Det motsatte av ortofonisk skrivemåte er den etymologiske skriftnormering. Den slags normering betjente seg av f.eks. V.U. Hammershaimb, da han skapte i midten av det 19. århundre det færøyske skriftspråket, idet han tok opp ordenes gamle (faktisk de norrøne) former.

Graden av samsvar mellom tale og skrift, dvs. i hvilken grad et språk er ortofont, endrer seg med tiden. Et nærliggende eksempel er rumensk, som forresten regnes for et ortofont språk, gikk et skritt tilbake på ortofoniens lei, da myndighetene bestemte at lyden /î/ skulle gjengis med to bokstaver [â] og [î] istedenfor den tidligere [î]-bokstaven. Denne endringen brakte egentlig to bokstaver for én lyd. Argumentet var ikke særlig vel begrunnet, det var etymologisk, nemlig at i ord hvor lyden /î/ stammer fra den opprinnelige latinske /a/, skulle lyden staves med [â]. Dette fordi det fantes en rekke ord hvor nåtidens lyd stammer fra en latin [a] og i tidligere rettskrivning også ble skrevet med /â/. Denne normeringen skapte egentlig forvirring, så ble det bestemt at [î] kunne skrives kun initialt og finalt, dvs. i begynnelsen og slutten av ordene. Medialt kan /î/ opptre bare hvis det gjelder en sammensatt ord.

Hvilke fordeler og ulemper har en ortofon rettskrivning, kunne vi så spørre. Først og fremst er det lettere for enhver å lære å lese og skrive det vedkommende språk. Det er uten tvil en stor fordel hvis det er en god tilsvarende mellom fonemrekke i talespråket og grafemrekke i skriftspråket. Som ulempe kan man nevne det at endringene i talemålet ikke kan håndteres skikkelig, og uunngåelig oppstår det etter hvert et behov for at skriftspråket skulle endres på grunn av manglende samsvar med talen.

Ellers blir språket mindre ortofont. Det skjedde egentlig med dansk hvor en konsekvent konservativ språkholdning hindret innføringen av rettskrivningsreformer, skjønt talemålet, uttalen av språket, fjernet seg riktig mye fra skriftspråket. Videre, hvor det finnes mange dialekter, er det også vanskelig å finne en felles ortofon skrivemåte, det er tilfelle med f.eks. arabisk, og vi kan bare tenke på hvilke vanskeligheter Aasen hadde med utforming av landsmålet som han ville bygge på flere dialekter.

Nå skal vi se nærmere på ortofonien i norsk. Norsk er et temmelig ortofont språk, mye mer ortofont enn f.eks. dansk. Men også her har man tilfeller som f.eks. gjengivelsen av /j/-lyden på mange måter, [rs], [sj], [sk(j)], så [g] i fremmede ord, til og med, skjønt i enkelte tilfeller, [ch], [sch], [sc].

Det at norsk er såpass ortofont skyldes i stor monn Knud Knudsens språkreformatoriske virksomhet. Knudsen startet i 1840-årene kampen for en ortofon rettskrivning parallelt med

sin kamp om fornorsking, noe som skulle være hele hans liv. I Norge rådde da en helt spesiell språksituasjon, siden man skrev dansk, en del av befolkningen også snakket dansk, men for det meste med norsk uttale og tonefall (overklassen, embetsmennene, de dannede), mens andre snakket sin egen norske dialekt. Før Knudsen var det Henrik Wergeland, og det var egentlig han som startet fornorskingen av det eksisterende danske skriftspråket, men han var opptatt nesten utelukkende av ordforrådet, mens av grammatikk eller rettskrivning bare i mindre grad. (forresten noe forståelig, ettersom han var dikter først og fremst, og ikke språkmann). Aasen som tilbød alternativet til fornorskingen, og bygde opp et helt norsk skriftspråk, landsmålet, på grunnlag av dialektene, betjente seg ofte av det etymologiske prinsippet i den normative fasen i sitt liv(sverk). For sin landsmålsnormal hadde Aasen en del prinsipper for sine øyne: normalen skulle være så samlendende som mulig, ingen dialekt skulle ha overvekt i den, men hvis forskjellen mellom dialektformene var for stor, da skulle gammelnorsken hjelpe.

Knud Knudsen var en elev av Rasmus Rask og var i stor monn tiltrukket av Rasks og N.M. Pedersens tanker om ortofonien. Før Knudsen var det to andre nordmenn som gikk inn for en lydrett rettskrivning, nemlig Ludvig Kristensen Daa og Mauritz Hansen, den siste prøvde til og med å skrive lærebøker i dansk og bruke en ortofon rettskrivning i 1830-årene.

Knudsen ble altså veldig tidlig ivrig tilhenger av ortofonien. Han hadde sans for det praktiske, og glemte ikke å fremlegge en pedagogisk motivering for sine ideer. Ettersom han var lærer i morsmålet, kunne han legge merke til at mange rettskrivningsfeil som elevene gjorde, skyldtes manglende samsvar mellom skrift og tale. Til det kom også erfaringene fra hans egen skoletid, så han ble tidlig klar over at rettskrivningen skulle endres og svare bedre til norsk tale.

Så skrev han artikkelen som hadde så stor innflytelse på norsk språkutvikling og som han senere i livet var så stolt av. Den het 'Om Lydene, Lydtegnene og Retskrivningen i det norske Sprog' (1845). Han krevde at språket, "det norske Bogmaal" burde "bygges på den norske Tale" liksom "norske Ord [burde] skrives som norsk Tale lyder". Han fordret "de Dannedes Tale", den dannede dagligtale, senere 'den almindeligste Udtale af Ordene i de Dannedes Mund', med andre ord han ville bygge på den norske uttalen av dansk. Denne uttalen var vanlig blant overklassen, hadde samme mønster og regler over hele landet, og den skulle også gjengis i skrift, mente Knudsen, og muligens ortofonisk. Dermed la han fram sitt språkprogram.

Senere, i 1876, skrev han 'Den landsgyldige norske uttale' for å unngå kritikk og bebreidelser av typen at uttalen var knyttet til et bestemt sosialt lag og ikke var representativ for hele landet. Kirkedepartementet bestemte elleve år senere, dvs. i 1887, at denne landsgyldige norske uttalen skulle være grunnlaget for uttalen og den skulle fungere videre som norm for skriftspråket. Det var noe som Rask bare drømte om for det danske språket, seksti år før dette vedtaket.

På samme måte regnes som hans store fortjeneste gjennomføringen av en del reformer i 1862. Knudsen formulerte jo sitt reformframlegg tidligere, men det var først i 1862, da Kirkedepartementet vedtok noen av hans forslag om endringer i skolerettskrivningen, nemlig at stumme vokaler skulle avskaffes (f.eks. *tro* for *troe*) og unødvendige bokstaver (fordobling av *e*, *i*, og *u*) som man brukte til betegnelse av stavelsens lengde, skulle fjernes (*Mil*, *Hus* for *Miil*, *Huus*), at fremmeord skulle forenkles ved at *c*, *ch* og *q* skulle avskaffes som tegn for *k*, liksom *ph* som tegn for *f* (så ble f.eks. *Philosoph* til *Filosof*).

Men som Lundeby (1995:2) sier: "Ortofoni anvendt på norsk måtte føre til et annerledes skriftspråk enn det danske fordi talen var annerledes." Men utformingen av det norske skriftspråket tok tid. Mange mener at tidspunktet man kan regne 'Bogsproget' (dvs. riksmål / bokmål) som et norsk skriftspråk, var 1866, da dansken Andreas Listov fant det nødvendig å gi ut en bok som het "Ordsamling fra den norske æsthetiske Literatur siden

Aaret 1842”, hvor han forklarte særnorske ord til danske lesere av norske bøker, mens andre oppgir som tidspunkt for total fornorsking rettskrivningsreformen i 1917.

Et viktig moment for det ortofoniske prinsippet anvendelse i de skandinaviske språkene var Stockholm-møtet i 1869. Det var ikke et offisielt møte, så det kunne bare foreslå og tilråde endringer.

Reformprogrammet om ortofonien som Rasmus Rask utarbeidet for dansk, hadde ivrige tilhengere i to nordmenn, Ludvig Kristian Daa og Knud Knudsen, som begge deltok i Stockholm-møtet.

Knudsen kom med sitt forslag om ”hårde medlyd” i *rot, kake, tape* istedenfor skrivemåten *rod, kage, tabe*, deretter *g* for *v* i *skog, mage, gagn, duge*, ordene *blåse, gråte, naken* og *sjø* (for *blæse, græde, nøgen, sø*). Blandt andre reformatoriske forslag var også erstatning av *’ld’* og *’nd’* med *’ll’* og *’nn’*, hvor det ikke var historisk riktig, og i samsvar med utbredt norsk uttale, noe som Knudsen tok opp senere i artikkelen ’Hvem skal vinne?’ (1886). Disse forslagene kunne slå igjennom først senere, faktisk ved de første rettskrivningsreformene i det 20. århundre (1907,1917).

Knudsen skrev også en artikkel ’Om tilnærmelse mellem Norsk, Svensk og Dansk’, et framlegg om en del reformer som han mente skulle gjennomføres i norsk ”om end de Danske ikke kan eller ikke vil følge med”.

Det norske vedtaket om sløyfing av vokaldobling og av ”understøttende” *e* som tegn på lang vokal førte til skilnad mellom dansk og norsk. Men dets gjennomførelse hadde som resultat en rekke homografer, og dermed oppstod et sterkere ønske og behov for å utmerke lang konsonant etter kort vokal, liksom det var vanlig i svensk og som Aasens gjorde i sitt landsmål.

Ibsen, som hadde blitt påvirket av Knudsen, men også bidrog til at Knudsens forslag etter hvert skulle aksepteres, ble etter Stockholm-møtet tilbakeholden med fornorskingen fordi han ville unngå en innskrenking av sin leserkrets bare på Norge.

Skrivemåten *g* eller *gj* henholdsvis *k* eller *kj* foran *e, æ* og *ø* skulle ta i betraktning norsk-dansk tradisjon, men *g, k* foran *i, y*, henholdsvis bruk av *gj, kj* foran *æ, e* og *ø* avspeilet bedre norsk uttale. Ibsen bestemte seg for å sløyfe *j* overalt i disse sammenhenger (liksom danskene gjorde det i 1889) med hensyn til danske lesere, men i offisiell norsk rettskrivning ble det aldri gjennomført.

Stockholm-møtet foreslo også en forsiktig nasjonalisering av skrivemåten av fremmede ord som ble allment brukt, et prinsipp som de skandinaviske språkene siden har fulgt. I dag kan vi si at hverken svensk eller dansk har gått så langt med nasjonalisering av fremmedord som norsk, som man ser i eksemplene *gaid, teip, skvåsj* og *sørvis*.

I 1892 kom det ut den første lesebok på det ”almindelige Bogmaal”, laget av Nordahl Rolfsen, som brukte norske ordformer (f.eks. *’rope’, ’blaase’* istedenfor de danske *’raabe’, ’blæse’*). Rolfsens formål var at barna skulle treffe disse talemålsnære former og ikke nødvendigvis bruke dem i skrift. Året etter ble det innført en del valgfrie former (hvor den ene var tradisjonell og den andre talemålsnær, norsk og ortofon), ”harde” eller ”bløte” konsonanter i navn på hjemlige dyr, planter og frukter, bøyningsendingene *’-ed’* eller *’-ede’* i preteritum av svake verb, kort eller lang form (*’blive’/’bli’, ’fader’/’far’*). De ortofone formene, del av Knudsens reformforslag, kunne slå igjennom, dvs. bli gyldige enefomer, først senere, nemlig ved rettskrivningsreformene i 1907 (her bare delvis) og i 1917 (denne gangen fullstendig).

Bokstaven *å* (istedenfor *aa*) ble innført ved rettskrivningsreformen i 1917, ble obligatorisk ved reformen i 1938, noe som i dansk skjedde først ti år senere, i 1948.

Ingen rettskrivningsreform i norsk har tatt så mye hensyn til nordisk språkfelleskap som den i 1959 ('læreboknormalen'), og hensikten ved den var å stoppe en videre utvikling i retning av å sløyfe stumme konsonanter.

Dansken har alltid vist en ortografisk konservatisme til tross for at "den lydige utvikling [foregår] i dag usædvanlig hurtigt set i forhold til de øvrige nordiske sprog" (Cramer,1993:24). Skjønt hovedprinsippet i dansk er det ortofoniske, er "dansk ortografi i det 19. og 20. århundre ... sterkt konservativ...ikke blot konservativ, den er også inkonsekvent." (Cramer,1993:22-23). I 1889 ble allikevel stum *e* og dobbeltskrivning av vokaler avskaffet, og *j* ble kastet bort i ord som hadde *kj*- og *gj*- i forlyd (*kær, skøn, gennem, gøre*). I 1948 kom innføringen av små forbokstaver i substantiv, å istedenfor *aa*, og dobbeltkonsonant i *kunne, skulle, ville* istedenfor *kunde, skulde, vilde*, delvis ut fra nordiske hensyn. I 1985 fulgte innføringen av dansk skrivemåte i en del fremmedord *krem, majonæse, remulade, resurse, rostbøf* ble valgfrie former ved siden av *creme, mayonnaise, remoulade, ressource* og *roastbeef*.

Svensk skriftspråk fikk en fast form i 1801 takket være Svenska Akademien, og siden har det opplevd bare noen små endringer. Den viktigste rettskrivningsreform var i 1906, en antinordisk reform, men totalt pro-ortofoni, idet man avskaffet en del stumme konsonanter (*h* ble sløyfet og det ble obligatorisk å skrive *vem, vad, vit* istedenfor *hvem, hvad, hvit*, så *t* og *tt* istedenfor *dt*, så at *blindt, godt, rödt* ble til *blint, gott, rött*) til skade for nordisk språkfelleskap. Videre ble *f* og *fv* erstattet med *v* når uttalen var /v/ (*gifva, haf* ble til *giva, hav*). Det som minsker graden av ortofoni i svensk, som forresten også regnes for et temmelig ortofont språk, er gjengivelsen av /j/ ('sj-ljudet') og /fi/-lyden ('tj-ljudet'), fastholdelsen ved stumme lyder i skrift i bokstavkombinasjonene [*dj*], [*gj*], [*hj*], [*lj*] (alle disse uttales /j/) av etymologisk grunn og stavemåten i en rekke fremmedord (*dusch, chock*).

Færøysk fikk eget skriftspråk først i 1850-årene. Da presten V.U. Hammershaimb utformet det færøyske skriftmålet, foretrakk han en etymologisk normering istedenfor en ortofon skrivemåte, hvor det gamle norrøne skriftspråket skulle spille en viktig rolle. Så kom færøysk til å likne mye på islandsk, og skilte seg fra talemålet ganske mye. Noen eksempler på kløften mellom skrift og tale: *æ* uttales /ea/, *í* /ui/ og *á* /åa/.

Islandsk er et veldig konservativt språk, hvor det etymologiske prinsippet har primat, bruker i skrift lange vokaler som *á, ó* som uttales diftongert /ao/ henholdsvis /åo/ (f.eks. *já* /jao/, *sól* /såol/), videre *é* som /je/, *æ* som /ai/. I dag er det ikke noen forskjell i uttalen av *i* og *y*, *í* og *ý*, *ei* og *ey*. Bokstaven *f* uttales som /v/ når den er mellom vokaler og i udlyd *haf, hafa* /hav/, /hava/). Det etymologiske normeringsprinsippet gjør seg gjeldende f.eks. når man skriver *hlítur* med *ý* hvis det kommer fra *hljóta* 'lyte', men med *í* hvis det kommer av *hlíta* 'lite' (ifølge Vikør,1977:94)

Norsk regnes som et temmelig ortofont språk, og selv om det finnes en del unntak hvor det ortofoniske prinsippet blir brutt (f.eks. *hv-* og *hj-*), kan vi si at blant de skandinaviske språkene er norsk det mest ortofone.

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ENTRE IMITATION, SUBSTITUTION ET DISPARITION : PORTRAITS DE LA MÈRE CHEZ J.M.G. LE CLÉZIO ET GÖRAN TUNSTRÖM

ROXANA-EMA DREVE¹

ABSTRACT. *Between Imitation, Substitution and Disappearance: Portraits of the Mother at J.M.G. Le Clezio And Göran Tunström.* This article focuses on the mother-child relationship as presented in the novels of J.M.G. Le Clézio and Göran Tunström. The absence or the death of the father transforms the inner thoughts of the characters, leading to the impossibility to connect to the parent that is alive.

It is important to analyze how the image of the mother transforms itself from a loving, caring person to a marginalized human being. This transformation can change the moral development of the children, leading to either isolation or integration in the community. Trying to fill in the gaps left by the missing father, the characters will imitate, substitute or abandon their mothers in order to find their inner self.

Key Words: *mother-child relationship, identity, fatherhood, communication, intergenerational conflict*

La relation mère-enfant, bien que moins analysée, occupe une place centrale à l'intérieur du micro-univers familial de J.M.G. Le Clézio et de Göran Tunström. Il n'existe presque aucune narration dans laquelle les deux auteurs ne fassent l'usage du rapport complexe entre les héros et leurs parents. L'obsession récurrente de la perte traumatique du père introduit au lecteur une figure maternelle puissante, qui détiendra le rôle essentiel dans la formation identitaire de l'enfant. Cette présence moins visible, parfois ignorée, se crée par rapport à la figure idéalisée du père non présent, à l'aide du dédoublement, de l'imitation ou bien de la substitution.

Portrait de la mère : entre pouvoir et culpabilité

L'entrée dans l'âge adulte, qui se veut une sorte de transition vers la vieillesse, se réalise, pour l'enfant J.M.G. Le Clézio, par la rencontre du père, jusque-là inconnu, suite à un « long voyage » vers l'Afrique. Ce chemin identitaire que la mère de l'auteur, Simone, attendait depuis des années, ne se voulait pas seulement un voyage *pour* la redécouverte de quelqu'un d'aimé, mais aussi un voyage *contre* les années passés sous silence, années de difficultés financières et de chagrins. Notons qu'en 1943 Nice est occupée par les troupes allemandes et que la mère de l'écrivain doit se réfugier dans un petit village, Roquebillière, pour protéger la vie de ses deux fils. Notons aussi qu'elle est toute seule à entreprendre ce voyage, alors que son mari, Raoul le Clézio, exerce le métier de médecin, très loin, en Afrique. Suite aux histoires racontées par la mère et les grands-parents, cachant une fascination du continent africain, le jeune J.M.G. Le Clézio a « longtemps rêvé que (s)

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mère était noire »². Difficile fut donc la découverte de la réalité qui lui montrait qu'en effet, « c'était lui l'Africain »³, le père absent, le père qu'il ne connaissait pas.

Voilà où commence, peut-être, le besoin de recréer l'image du père et de la multiplier pour être sûr qu'elle ne va pas s'effacer, qu'elle ne va pas disparaître. L'écriture se veut ainsi une catharsis, alors que l'auteur comprend que les événements mis sur le dos de ses héros représentent, en fait, « la mémoire du temps qui a précédé ma naissance, lorsque ma mère et mon père marchaient ensemble sur les routes du haut pays, dans les royaumes de l'ouest du Cameroun »⁴.

Dans une interview avec Margareta Garpe de 1983⁵, Tunström avoue que l'image de son père se trouve derrière sa création romanesque et que l'intérêt pour la lecture et pour l'écriture lui furent transmises dès l'enfance. Le métier d'écrivain qu'il embrase très tôt fut indirectement influencé par le rituel magique⁶ de feuilleter le catalogue de Björk et Börjesson et de discuter sur la valeur littéraire d'un certain livre.

Si Le Clézio ne connaît son père qu'à huit ans, suite à un voyage identitaire vers l'Afrique, Tunström perd la figure paternelle qu'il aimait tant, à l'âge de douze ans, à cause d'une grave maladie. La mort d'Hugo n'a jamais cessé de revenir obsessivement dans la création romanesque de Tunström, de marquer les représentations des personnages enfants, ancrés pour toujours dans la réalité utopique de l'enfance. « C'est alors qu'on a commencé, paradoxalement, un dialogue » n.t.⁷, déclare l'auteur suédois, un dialogue qui dépasse les frontières physiques de la mort et qui se veut un essai de recréer l'atmosphère unique des premières années de vie.

Dans ce contexte, dominé par l'absence ou la disparition du père, se crée, parfois involontairement, la relation avec la mère, encore vivante. Marqué par un sentiment de culpabilité, le rapport avec la mère ne réussit pas de remplir les trous laissés libres par la non présence du père et institue, occasionnellement, des positions concurrentielles entre la figure maternelle et ses enfants. Ainsi apparaît l'image paradoxale de la mère, amie et idéal de l'enfant ou bien personnage dominateur, suffocant et égoïste. Dans *L'Oratorio de Noël*, par exemple, la mort de Solveig apporte l'idéalisation de la figure maternelle⁸, alors que dans *Le chercheur d'or*, Mam n'arrive plus à dépasser la mort de son mari et reste ancrée dans un univers perdu, utopique:

Mam ne parle plus, ne bouge plus, ne s'alimente presque plus. [...] Je lui ai parlé de tout ce qui était autrefois, qui était plus réel, plus vrai, que cette terre ruinée. Je lui ai parlé de ce qu'elle aimait le plus, le jardin plein d'hibiscus, les poinsettias, les arums, et ses orchidées

² J.M.G. Le Clézio, *L'africain*, Mercure de France, Paris, 2004, p. 11.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ *ibid.*, p. 122-123.

⁵ Margareta Garpe, « Våra kroppar är märkliga katedraler. En intervju med Göran Tunström », in *Ord och bild*, no. 2, 1983, p. 6.

⁶ Rituel que père et fils eurent l'habitude de pratiquer.

⁷ «Då påbörjade vi paradoxalt nog en dialog». Cristen Enander, « Författaren som gick i Den stora tystnaden », in *Tidningen Boken*, nr. 5/6, årgång 10, 1996, p. 20.

⁸ Sidner, le fils de Solveig est obsédé par la famille Bach, à cause de la passion que sa mère montrait pour *L'Oratorio de Noël*. « Son langage ne se déclenchait qu'avec ça. Nulle part ailleurs il ne trouvait un point de départ à son bonheur et à son imagination. Il existait tant de mots et de récits. Solveig lui en avait tant raconté ». Göran Tunström, *Œuvres romanesques*, tome 1, Actes Sud, coll. « Thesaurus », Paris, 1999, p. 196-197.

blanches. [...] Chaque jour je lui raconte la même histoire, celle du Boucan, où tout est éternellement jeune et beau. [...]⁹

Le voleur de Bible, présente Ida qui essaye de protéger ses enfants contre la violence de Fredrik, tandis que dans *Onitsha*, Fintin part avec sa mère, Maou, pour rencontrer le parent jusque-là absent : « C'était la fin du dimanche 14 mars 1948, Fintin n'oublierait jamais cette date »¹⁰.

Nous observons, de cette manière, que la relation qui s'établit entre la mère et l'enfant est parfois associée à la responsabilité de garder ou de refaire l'univers perdu de l'enfance. Prendre en charge le rôle du parent absent s'avère être une mission difficile, parfois même impossible pour Maou, Ida, Fanny, Mam, etc. Voilà la raison pour laquelle perdre le père signifie pour Le Clézio ou pour Tunström perdre le lien avec la réalité, perdre le contact avec la mère. Il s'agit d'une « altération » des relations intergénérationnelles qui explique l'éloignement de l'enfant par rapport à ses parents, ainsi que la remémoration du père par l'intermédiaire de la multiplication et la duplication, qui trouvent leur légitimité dans l'absence.

Nous remarquons, sans doute, que le pouvoir donné à la mère après la disparition ou la mort du père est implicitement lié à l'idée de culpabilité¹¹. Aux yeux de l'adolescent, la non présence du père est d'autant plus évidente que la mère continue de vivre. Indirectement, la mère s'avère le bourreau du père, car elle occupe sans même le vouloir, la place laissée libre par le parent absent. Le désir de liberté de l'enfant est, dans ce contexte, tout à fait compréhensible. C'est pourquoi dans les récits de Göran Tunström ce n'est pas seulement le père, mais, à la fois, la mère celle qui s'absente : « L'enfant n'a pas besoin qu'elle reste avec lui tout le temps. Cela lui donne la liberté » n.t.¹². L'écrivain suédois l'explique dans une interview : « Mais si ma mère n'existe presque pas dans mes livres, c'est parce qu'elle vit encore » n.t.¹³. Il n'a pas besoin de la recréer, de la raconter aux autres. Le père, par contre, incarne tout ce qu'il y a de merveilleux dans la société, dans l'âme et dans la vie de l'enfant. Tandis que la mère est condamnée à vivre seule avec le fardeau d'avoir des enfants sans père, le fils s'éloigne d'elle pour essayer de s'approprier un père qui n'existe plus, par l'idéalisation. La brisure intérieure au cadre de la famille se fonde sur le poids inégal accordé au père par rapport à la mère qui reste fidèle à son enfant et qui est mise de côté pour le simple fait d'être toujours en vie.

Le geste de l'enfant nous fait penser à l'idée que l'homme tunströmien ou leclézien se sent « menacé par la libération de la femme » n.t.¹⁴. Car, la non présence du père suppose la destruction de la famille traditionnelle dont l'homme était le centre et se dirige vers une revalorisation des relations familiales où la mère reprend ses droits.

Il ne s'agit pas d'avoir peur de perdre le pouvoir, mais plutôt d'une crainte d'être abandonné par la mère tout comme il l'a été par son mari. L'enfant risque d'être isolé dans

⁹ J.M.G. Le Clézio, *Le chercheur d'or*, Gallimard, Paris, 1985, p. 345, 356, 358.

¹⁰ *id.*, *Onitsha*, Gallimard, Paris, 1991, p. 14.

¹¹ « All makt och därmed skuld tilldöms modern ». Stina Hammar, *Duets torg. Göran Tunström och tankekällorna*, Akademityck AB, Stockholm, 1999, p. 77.

¹² « Även i Göran Tunströms berättelse är modern frånvaro. Barnet behöver inte ha henne intill sig varje stund », *ibid.*, p. 41.

¹³ « Men når min mor næsten ikke eksisterer i mine bøger så er det naturligvis også fordi hun stadig væk lever », Doris Ottesen, *Om kærtegn. Det guddomelige i Göran Tunströms forfatterskap*, ANIS, Frederiksberg, 1989, p. 83.

¹⁴ « Manlighet hotas av kvinnans frigörelse ». Cf. Rolf Alsing, *Prästunge och maskrosboll. En bok om Göran Tunström*, Albert Bonnier, Stockholm, 2003.

un univers utopique et il préfère se soustraire à la volonté maternelle par la disparition. La crainte de perdre ses parents pour la deuxième fois le fait donc quitter le monde de l'enfance¹⁵.

La mère –source de déséquilibre

Le développement identitaire de l'enfant procède, comme nous l'avons remarqué, d'une non présence obsessive (celle du père) et d'une existence qu'il ignore souvent (la mère). Le rapport qui s'instaure entre les adolescents et la mère se concentre autour du besoin de refaire la famille initiale et de regagner l'amour du père absent. Parcimonieuse en ce qui concerne les manifestations de tendresse envers ses fils et ses filles, suite à la difficulté d'opérer auprès de l'enfant le double rôle familial (celui de mère et de père), la figure maternelle¹⁶ s'avère être parfois involontairement un agent de déséquilibre. Cette rivalité se concrétise dans l'absence d'une communication efficace entre les membres de la famille, ainsi que dans la non existence des gestes affectifs spontanés. Une fois le père décédé ou disparu, la mère n'arrive plus à maîtriser son affection et décide, finalement, de se fermer en elle et de vivre à travers les souvenirs. Ida Pripp, personnage du roman *Le voleur de Bible*, d'ailleurs intéressée au sort de ses progénitures, ne réussit plus à dissimuler le désespoir financier dans lequel se trouve la famille et envisage, pour un moment, la possibilité d'abandonner quelques uns de ses enfants pour sauver les autres. Condamnés à l'exil pour le simple motif d'être nés, les enfants d'Ida deviennent ainsi abusifs, méchants, violents (tout comme leur père):

Ils s'évaluaient et se jugeaient, distinguaient leurs propres avantages et les défauts des autres et, issus des couches les plus obscures de leurs vies, montaient des souhaits menaçants : « Si toi tu te noyais, et si toi tu étais écrasé par une voiture. Si un ou deux ou trois ». Mais même peu nombreux ils seraient encore trop nombreux. Et les plus grands se réjouissaient des cris effrénés que les petits continuaient de pousser tout ce qu'ils pouvaient faire, la moindre querelle qu'ils démarraient rendaient plus sûrs d'eux les aînés qui les considéraient déjà comme candidats à l'exil¹⁷.

L'exclusion du père de la relation mère fils est aussi un moyen d'installer un déséquilibre émotionnel à l'intérieur des relations intergénérationnelles. Obsédée par la différence d'âge qui existe entre elle et Sidner, menacée par l'apparition du parent, vrai rival à l'amour de son fils, Fanny exerce son autorité tout en niant à Sidner tout contact avec Victor jusqu'à sa mort (« L'enfant est le mien, Sidner, tant que je resterai en vie. Ensuite, il sera à toi, si tu le veux »¹⁸). Expulsé de l'univers familial par une femme dépressive et fragile de point de vue émotionnelle, abandonné par sa mère, décédée lorsqu'il n'avait que douze ans et par son père, Aron, qui se suicide quelques années plus tard, Sidner Nordensson communique avec son fils par l'intermédiaire d'un journal intitulé « Des caresses ».

La paternité refusée est, à la fois, un des traits essentiels de la relation qui existe entre Torin et Carina Zetterberg. Gary, l'enfant disputé par les deux, est, en réalité, le fils de Torsten Bodlund. Cela n'empêche pas Torin de rêver à son nouveau rôle, celui de père et de

¹⁵ «Männerna, sönerna upplever detta förhållande till kvinnorna/modern som ett hot. De lever ständigt med risken att lämnas ensamma och bli dömda till längtan efter att få del av den utvidgade verkligheten som kvinnorna genom sin unika förmåga kan skapa åt sig ». Svante Weyler, « Hur många älskande ser du? Göran Tunströms roman *Juloratoriet* », in *Ord och bild*, no. 2, 1983, p. 27.

¹⁶ Nous nous référons ici surtout à Ida, Elizabeth, Mam, Fanny, etc.

¹⁷ Göran Tunström, *op.cit.*, p.538.

¹⁸ *ibid.*, p. 369.

comprendre qu'il est « devenu quelqu'un »¹⁹ grâce à cet enfant. Le désespoir et le malheur marquent son existence, Torin étant ridiculisé par Carina, lors du procès de paternité intenté pour lui prendre l'argent. Une fois le verdict donné, Torin est « condamné à vivre » sans Gary.

Conflit intergénérationnel et voyage identitaire

La négation de la paternité, la rivalité pour l'amour du père, l'essai de refaire l'image perdue de l'enfance, ainsi que la difficulté de communiquer avec le parent survivant, introduisent une distanciation qui s'opère au cadre du micro univers familial. Une des causes de ce malentendu entre les mères et les enfants est représentée par la manière dont les femmes aperçoivent le passage vers l'âge adulte. Franchir la ligne entre l'adolescence et l'enfance est un mal nécessaire pour le héros leclézien ou tunströmien. Abandonner la famille, dans ce cas la mère, met en scène un voyage identitaire, qui permet à l'enfant de se découvrir. Les mères, cependant, de par leur structure, refusent le chemin initiatique de l'enfant qui signifierait la perte définitive du fils ou de la fille. Restée seule au monde, avec unique intérêt le parcours existentiel de son enfant, la mère ne réussit pas à comprendre que la disparition ou l'absence du père apporte la nécessité d'un voyage identitaire de la part de l'enfant. Cette inadvertance entre le temps intérieur du parent et celui du protagoniste s'explique par la nécessité de protéger la famille. Les mères de J.M.G. Le Clézio vivent, paraît-il, avec la certitude qu'elles perdront tout lien avec le mari mort ou absent dès que leur fille ou leur fils seront conscients de cet éloignement. Par la narration²⁰, les femmes peuvent intégrer les personnages dans un univers fantastique, limité, où l'imagination peut remplacer le manque. L'auteur mauricien reconnaît la même structure identitaire chez sa mère, car « le monde maternel dans mon cas, mais aussi sans doute comme chez la plupart des autres enfants, est un monde qui vous dispose à rester un enfant. Les mères ne sont jamais prêtes à voir grandir leur enfant »²¹.

La mère essaie, par conséquent, de protéger son enfant par le tenir prisonnier dans un monde imaginaire, tout comme l'enfant protège sa mère en choisissant de disparaître à son tour. Identification au père, mais à la fois besoin de donner à la mère la liberté du rêve, la volonté de vivre. Car, tout comme l'affirmait J.M.G. Le Clézio, « imaginer qu'on vivait quelque chose d'intense et de brûlant était en effet plus simple que de tenter de le vivre »²². Le rêve acquiert, dans ce cas, une connotation double, étant le seul domaine où la relation père / mère / fils / fille peut encore exister.

L'enfant part donc à la recherche de sa famille tout en s'éloignant de ses parents. La quête qu'il entreprend suppose une déconstruction du passé, tantôt désespérée, tantôt pleine de confiance, car, comme le déclare Le Clézio, « la famille génétique, biologique [...] est très différente de la famille que vous pouvez vous choisir. [...] On peut aussi aller chercher sa famille en dehors de sa famille. C'est ce que j'ai fait »²³.

Dans *L'Oratorio de Noël*, l'idée du voyage identitaire réalisé en dehors de la famille est, sans doute, essentielle pour la compréhension des gestes de Sidner. Celui-ci a « beaucoup

¹⁹ *ibid.*, p.327.

²⁰ « Dans les textes choisis, ce sont majoritairement les femmes qui racontent ». Isabelle Roussel-Gillet, « Envisager l'autre : les re-sources d'un héritier. *Le procès-verbal, Haï, Révolutions, et L'Africain* », in *J.M.G. Le Clézio. Ailleurs et origines : parcours poétique*, Actes du Colloque dirigé par Bernadette Rey Mimoso-Ruiz, coll. « études littéraires », Editions Universitaires du Sud, Institut Catholique de Toulouse, 2004, p. 24.

²¹ Gérard de Cortanze, *Le nomade immobile*, Editions du Chêne, Paris, 1999, p. 32.

²² Jean-Louis Ezine, *J.M.G. Le Clézio-Ailleurs*, Arléa, Paris, 1995, p. 28.

²³ Gérard de Cortanze, *op.cit.*, p. 98.

voyagé pour revenir chez soi »²⁴, le chemin vers un *au-delà* utopique menant à la fois vers les profondeurs d'un univers oublié, marqué par la mort de la mère. Solveig est piétinée par un troupeau de vaches, quelques mois avant la représentation de l'Oratorio de Noël, de Bach. La mort absurde de cette femme apporte progressivement la destruction des relations familiales. Seul avec deux enfants, Aron doit trouver à l'intérieur de soi-même la force de continuer la lutte existentielle pour Sidner et Eva-Liisa. Trop jeune pour garder dans la mémoire la mort de Solveig, Eva-Liisa, âgée de sept ans, « s'était endormie dans son fauteuil sous la bâche : pouvoir oublier, comme il savait qu'elle était en train de le faire ! Solveig n'allait-elle donc pas *exister* du tout en elle ? »²⁵. Il ne reste finalement que père et fils, Aron et Sidner, face au désespoir causé par la disparition de Solveig. Mais Aron décide de se suicider pour la rejoindre, alors que Sidner est jeté, par cette double mort, dans le passé où se trouve, cachée, la réalité : « Mon père, c'est ma mère » n.t.²⁶.

Dédoublément, imitation et substitution des parents

Les enfants, dans la plupart des cas, vivent isolés, captifs dans un univers où le père existe en tant que potentialité. L'utopie proposée par Göran Tunström et par J.M.G. Le Clézio c'est l'essai d'incarner cette potentialité sous la figure d'un être humain, réel.

C'est ici qu'intervient la mère en tant que lien entre le monde adulte où vit son enfant et le monde de l'enfance où se trouve son mari. La prépondérance des figures féminines dans l'œuvre littéraire de J.M.G. Le Clézio et de Göran Tunström souligne le rôle de transition joué par ces figures emblématiques. Ida, par exemple, est l'élément qui unie la famille, en dépit des problèmes créés par son mari, Fredrik. Elle est celle qui accepte la présence de Johan, alors que Fredrik et les enfants, dans leur majorité ne veulent pas établir des relations avec lui. Maou, à son tour, essaye d'introduire Fintin à son père, parti en Afrique. Elle a un rôle de transition, étant à la fois, l'amie de son fils, et l'alliée de son mari en ce qui concerne les questions administratives.

Le dédoublément du parent devient dans le contexte de l'univers matriarcal un élément d'extrême importance. Dans *L'Oratorio de Noël*, par exemple, l'éloignement de la famille devient synonyme du malheur, de la crise identitaire. Lorsque Solveig est morte, Sidner, son enfant, est condamné à la remémoration du passé et à vivre à jamais la douleur. Il sera tenté de multiplier la figure de la mère pour continuer la relation intergénérationnelle qui lui donne l'équilibre de la vie. Ainsi, nous avons la réinvention de Solveig à travers Tessa, mais aussi à travers Beryl. Tessa reprend le rôle de femme auprès d'Aron, alors que Beryl devient une seconde mère pour les enfants, et spécialement pour la jeune Eva-Liisa.

Dans *Le voleur de Bible*, par contre, Johan ne veut entretenir une relation d'amitié qu'avec sa mère de substitut, Ida, et sa sœur, Hedvig. Dans cette optique, la construction du personnage implique la destruction de la figure paternelle, exprimée ici par l'intermédiaire de Fredrik.

Le dédoublément du parent impose, parfois, l'imitation, élément qui assure l'appartenance émotionnelle d'un personnage à une famille, d'habitude, adoptive. Occupant provisoirement le rôle du père ou de la mère, le héros quitte aussitôt l'univers de l'enfance et se distingue par l'appropriation des gestes adultes. La reprise des gestes parentales

²⁴ « Han reste bort också för att komma hem ». Rolf Alsing, *op.cit.*, p. 8.

²⁵ Göran Tunström, *op.cit.*, p. 182.

²⁶ « Far är min mor ». Stina Hammar, *op.cit.*, p. 94.

permet à l'enfant de s'intégrer dans la communauté et d'avancer vers l'adolescence pour construire sa propre personnalité. Les « gouffres » qui séparent l'avant et l'après de la perte du parent ne peuvent être remplis que par la réinvention de la figure parentale disparue, ce qui insiste sur l'identification du héros à l'adulte qu'il imite. La répétition gestuelle devient essentielle pour la continuation du dialogue avec les parents absents et pour l'effacement de la distance temporelle qui s'est instaurée entre eux. L'enfant réussit de mélanger son identité aux connaissances qu'il conserve sur les personnes aimées, pour se forger une image de soi différente, mais réelle.

Le père dédoublé apparaît, ainsi, comme un élément *sine qua non* de l'identité enfantine. Oscillant entre une figure paternelle fantasmé et / ou réelle, l'enfant établit un lien inconscient avec le parent absent ou disparu, pour ressusciter, s'il était encore besoin, une image de soi oubliée. Le besoin de réinventer le parent, de le recréer à l'aide des souvenirs, des gestes imitatifs, s'exprime par des ruptures au niveau narratif. Prenons le cas de Sidner, protagoniste du roman *L'Oratorio de Noël*. Nous observons qu'ici le père apparaît dans son double rôle de parent génétique (Aron) et de parent de substitut (monsieur Werner, le professeur Stalberg).

Si la mère reste le fil rouge de l'histoire, le père accablé par la douleur devient, le long du roman sujet d'imitation, de substitution. Solveig est, donc, *remplacée* par d'autres figures féminines liées plus ou moins à l'Oratorio de Noël, alors qu'Aron disparaît, étant *substitué* par son fils. Le texte laisse voir clairement la relation d'amour entre Tessa et Sidner, alors que cette histoire devrait, normalement, être vécue entre Tessa et Aron. Leur fructueuse correspondance, à travers les années, instaure la nécessité de rencontrer la femme pour laquelle le père du héros est capable de tout sacrifier. Cependant, à la fin du voyage entrepris vers la Nouvelle-Zélande, Sidner réalise qu'il devient progressivement son propre père, que son destin est, en quelque sorte, décidé et que la liaison sentimentale qu'il ressent pour Tessa, est, au fond, un désir au-delà de sa propre volonté, car « Si nous faisons l'amour, ce serait peut-être quand même avec lui que je le ferais. Je n'ai jamais voulu d'autre homme »²⁷.

La relation avec la mère acquiert dans l'œuvre romanesque de J.M.G. Le Clézio et Göran Tunström un double rôle : celui de refaire le passé féérique de l'enfance et en même temps celui de rendre possible la dissolution de ce passé utopique, tout en favorisant la libération de l'enfant et la création de sa propre identité. L'enfant prend conscience de sa finitude et surtout de la finitude de ses parents et éprouve, par conséquent, le désir de garder l'enfance au centre de son existence, par le dédoublement, l'imitation ou la substitution des parents.

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HENRIK IBSEN AND HIS SELF-EXILE IN GERMANY

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Today Ibsen belongs to the stage, to the literature, and to the culture of Germany.

W. Henri Eller

ABSTRACT. Henrik Ibsen, the playwright who had a decisive contribution to the development of Norwegian literature, chose the exile at the time when his plays were not well received in his native country. He found his freedom, difficult to achieve in Norway, on German soil, in Dresden and Munich. There he came into contact with the authentic culture and his plays won a resounding success. This facilitated the way towards the recognition of his artistic value in Scandinavia as well. However, fame did not bring him the happiness he had hoped for, because the fjords and the sea continued to attract him, although he did not feel Norway as his homeland even after 27 years of exile.

Key Words: *Norwegian literature, German theatre, 19th century drama, exile*

Introduction

Henrik Ibsen is nowadays a symbol of Norwegian literature. However, neither Norway's social and political development nor its linguistic evolution supported his flourishing personality: «Né dans un pays qui n'accéderait à l'indépendance qu'un an avant sa mort, se servant d'une langue qui n'était pas établie, il édifia une oeuvre qui, en dépit de ces handicaps et en quelques années, devint l'une des plus retentissantes au monde.» (De Decker 9) The driving force of his writing seemed to be the exile, which Ibsen himself chose as a sine qua non condition for the fulfilment of his own destiny. The fact that his plays were received with hostility in his native country led to 27 years spent far away from Norway, in Italy (1864-1868 and 1878-1885) and Germany (roughly speaking 1868-1878 and 1885-1891), a period which brought him literary fame. Throughout this article we use the generic name of Germany, although this country was properly formed only in 1871.

The exile meant for Ibsen the great opportunity of his life, the one of reaching a climax; it meant the reception of his work to his expectations and his recognition by the Norwegian audience. *The League of Youth* (1869), *Emperor and Galilean* (1873), *Pillars of Society* (1877), *Rosmersholm* (1886), *The Lady from the Sea* (1888), *Hedda Gabler* (1890) were the plays written during his self-imposed exile in Germany. When Ibsen left Germany in 1891 the press speculated either that he was abandoning his disciples as they were claiming consideration for themselves, or that the debate on naturalism had offended him.

All Ibsen's important plays except for *Peer Gynt* had been staged in the German-speaking world by 1901 and everything he had written had already been translated. Moreover, in 1898 S. Fischer Publishing House in Berlin published *Henrik Ibsens sämtliche Werke in deutscher Sprache*, revised and introduced by Georg Brandes, Julius Elias, and Paul Schlenther.

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Premises of Ibsen's self-imposed exile

Among the premises which made Ibsen leave his native country, the Nordic spirit occupies an important place, the spirit that predisposes to go far away so as to reach one's goals. Another aspect is Ibsen's preference for loneliness, for a voluntary solitude in the Norwegian society. A third premise is represented by his character combining a meticulous, scrupulous side with a shy, common-sense one, a character typical rather of the Germans.

Although German political and cultural influences had always been more or less objected to in Norway, one of the moments of his youth which influenced him in choosing Germany as an adoptive country was his study visit of 1852 to theatres from Copenhagen, Berlin, Dresden, and Hamburg at the time when he was employed at the Norwegian Theatre in Bergen. On this occasion, Ibsen came into contact with the German literary historian and writer Hermann Hettner and *Das moderne Drama*, which would constantly influence his activity as a playwright. Hettner's idea that historical dramas had to be based on psychological conflicts perfectly fitted Ibsen's approach. Under the influence of the German theoretician Ibsen wrote *Lady Inger of Oestraat* (1854), considered the most remarkable play of his youth.

Ibsen decided to leave Norway because of the political and social humiliations and dissatisfactions. According to Jacques De Decker, the self-imposed exile was a necessary evil for him to reconsider his country critically, without any direct influence: «Manifestement, Ibsen avait eu besoin de cet éloignement de sa terre natale pour mieux la réinvestir, la saisir par la mémoire et la fantaisie et, surtout, la considérer d'un oeil critique.» (De Decker 84) He had got involved in several polemics and conflicts. One of these polemics was between Ibsen and Richard Petersen together with other Danish supporters who refused to stage the play *The Vikings at Helgeland*. This polemic strengthened his belief that he was not the right man in the right place since Norway refused the opening to the modern world. Another conflict was between Ibsen, appointed artistic director at the Møllergate Theatre in Christiania (now Oslo), and the members of its council, who accused him of lack of interest for the institution.

Ibsen did not cease to love his native land but he did not love its people. More than once did those around him notice his longing for Norway. However, Ibsen was a proud-spirited man and he refused to live by the side of those who did not appreciate him and did not want to keep up with the modern times.

Facets of Ibsen's self-exile

Taking the decision to leave Italy in 1868, Ibsen felt compelled to avoid Norway because of its leaders' lack of any patriotic enthusiasm. The Conservatives and the Liberals pettily disputed their power and thus a national culture could not take shape. It was natural that under these circumstances the writers had to seek inspiration elsewhere.

The exile meant on the one hand the possibility of living in *true freedom*, getting rid of the constraints of the society in which he was born, constraints related to traditionalism and symbols. Ibsen was not a Liberal, but sided with freedom of expression and freedom of thought above everything: "For mig er friheden den højeste og første livsbetingelse."² (Ibsen XVII: 449) or "Det heder jo at Norge er et frit og selvstændigt rige; men jeg sætter ikke stor pris på denne

² "To me freedom is the highest and first condition of life." Henrik Ibsen, letter to Georg Brandes, 3 January 1882. The translations from the Dano-Norwegian language are my own.

frihed og selvstændighed, så længe jeg ved at individerne hverken er fri eller selvstændige.”³ (Ibsen XVII: 355) The Norway that Ibsen could never cut ties with spiritually, could not serve for the moment as a home to the man in search of freedom, a fact stressed by him also in a later letter: “Norge er et frit land befolket af ufrige mennesker.”⁴ (Ibsen XVII: 454) Ibsen was a patriot, but not a nationalist. He felt that he was a world citizen, and that is why he looked for a home where he could manifest his personality. Ibsen left his native fjords, as his ancestors had done, and considered that Germany could be a place for spiritual fulfilment. Even when the war between Germany and France broke up in 1870, Ibsen could not ‘give up his freedom’ and go back to Norway. He had to fight for the freedom of his writing.

The playwright accepted the exile also for the sake of *success*. A former bohemian, in conflict with his fellow countrymen, not once refused by them with a view to the support of his work, he changed significantly. Ibsen became aware that the exile could bring him the appreciation of others, including the Scandinavians, who noticed his transformation: «On s’attendait à voir en l’auteur de *Brand* un vieil ascète austère et sérieux, et on découvrit un homme encore jeune, élégant dans sa veste de velours, distingué, aimable et plein de vie.» (Dietrichson apud De Decker 102-103)

Although not a German, Ibsen was Germanic by his structure: “German is his great and single-minded love of truth and the courage to confess to it [...] Ibsen means for Germany ‘a moment of self-reflection’: the affinity between Ibsen and the German drama is seen as their common concern with using literature as a means of social criticism.” (George 61) Moreover, also in Norway he came into contact with aspects of German culture: Bergen, the town in which Ibsen spent several years of his youth, «plus qu’aucune autre ville scandinave, conserve dans sa race des vertiges de la ligue hanséatique» (Vincent 48). The first dramatic models that he studied and staged were the works of German romantics. Although his background is Norwegian, «sa psychologie est valable pour toute la race germanique» (Vincent 49). Ibsen remained a portraitist of his native country, with mountains, fjords, and small towns, but felt attracted to the German people, to the bourgeois society of the German towns, to powerful politicians, and to genuine artistic richness. In this respect, he saw the exile as the materialization of his attraction to *authentic culture*, which allowed the individual to develop according to one’s own will. This was impossible in his native country: «la vie en Norvège, telle que je la vois en ce moment, a quelque chose d’indiciblement médiocre, elle mine l’être en assommant la volonté» (De Decker 94).

Besides its positive side, the exile also meant *deprivation* to Ibsen, especially in its first period. The first years spent among foreigners were marked by poverty, sacrifices, loneliness, even separation from his family. Ibsen often felt the lack of financial reward, but perhaps this was precisely the reason for which he kept writing and pursuing his art. In the first months spent in Dresden the Ibsens were quite poor. His family lived isolated and in simplicity. “Fra 1881 til 1890 utgav han *Gengangere*, *En folkefiende*, *Vildanden*, *Rosmersholm*, *Fruen fra Havet* og *Hedda Gabler*, men i alle disse årene tjente han bare 130 000 kr. til sammen – betydelig mindre enn hva langt ringere skuespillforfattere i de større land som

³ “They say that Norway is a free and independent realm; but I do not appreciate this freedom and independence as long as the individuals are neither free nor independent.” Henrik Ibsen, letter to Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, 12 July 1879.

⁴ “Norway is a free land inhabited by unfree people.” Henrik Ibsen, letter to Olaf Skavlan, 24 January 1882.

Scribe, W. S. Gilbert og Pinero, tjente pr. år.”⁵ (Meyer 477) Moreover, the nostalgia of the paradise lost with its fjords, sea and nature was always present. During his exile, Ibsen went back to Norway only twice: in 1874 and 1885. In his latter visit, he confessed to the workers gathered in Trondheim: “Det er efter 11 Aars Fraværelse, at jeg for en 8 Dages Tid siden kom hjem igjen til Norge./ I disse 8 Dage i Hjemmet har jeg følt mere Livsglæde end i alle de 11 Aar udenlands.”⁶ (Ibsen XV: 407) It was a reassessment of the notions of home and abroad, the relationship between the two and the joy of living. Homesickness is specific to any individual as the physical geography of one’s native place is impregnated into his/her mind.

German cities relevant to Ibsen’s exile

Ibsen’s presence in Germany included three important cities: Dresden (1868-1875), Munich (roughly speaking 1875-1878 and 1885-1891) and Berlin, with an important role in promoting his plays.

‘The Florence on the Elbe’, as Dresden is called, was well-known by the Norwegian artists. It was a place of modern life, where the railway, the bus or the steam ship were at hand and which had become one of the cheapest in the country. In spite of these advantages, he felt lonely: “Kjender De ingen Danske, som agter at opholde sig i Dresden ivinter? Jeg længes meget efter Skandinaver; muligens findes her allerede nogle [...] Dresden er et meget behageligt og et meget billigt Levested.”⁷ (Ibsen XVI: 220)

When Ibsen moved here in 1868, the plays *Brand* and *Peer Gynt* which had been written in Italy and had given their author an identity as a playwright, had already appeared in Scandinavia, but had not been translated for the German audience. The German readers became acquainted with Ibsen through his critics, represented especially by Georg Brandes and Leo Berg. Brandes, an influential critic, well-respected within German literary circles, depicted Ibsen’s personality as being “aggressive and polemical, an enemy of all groupings, be they state, family or marriage” (George 60), marked by a mixture of pessimism and optimism. In his opinion Ibsen was “*grundgermanisch*” (George 60).

The German readers first came into contact with Ibsen’s poems, some of them translated in 1868, then with *Brand* in 1869. As the German language was accessible to him, Ibsen would supervise the translations. He wrote his works in his native language, and knew that he depended on the quality of these translations for promotion and just understanding: «Il écrivait dans cette forme singulière de danois mâtiné d’expressions et d’accents typiquement norvégiens que peu de professionnels de l’art dramatique non scandinaves possèdent assez pour pouvoir le fréquenter intimement.» (De Decker 10-11) Ibsen was claiming a new *Weltanschauung*, a profound revolution regarding practical or social relationships of mankind.

⁵ “From 1881 to 1890 he published *Ghosts*, *An Enemy of the People*, *The Wild Duck*, *Rosmersholm*, *The Lady from the Sea* and *Hedda Gabler*, but in all these years he earned only a total income of 130,000 kr – considerably less than playwrights of far inferior importance in larger countries such as Scribe, W. S. Gilbert and Pinero earned per year.”

⁶ “It is after an absence of 11 years that I came back to Norway 8 days ago./ In these 8 days at home I have experienced more joy of living than in all the 11 years abroad.” Henrik Ibsen, speech delivered in Trondheim, 14 June 1885.

⁷ “Don’t you know any Danes to want to settle down in Dresden in winter? I miss Scandinavians very much; possibly there are already some here [...] Dresden is a very pleasant and a very cheap place to live.” Henrik Ibsen, letter to Frederik Hegel, 31 October 1868.

He was the author who always asked questions, allowing his readers and audience to find answers. During the Dresden exile, Ibsen became the most read Norwegian writer in Northern Europe. His dream of being known and praised, of coming back liberated to his country, began to take shape.

In 1874 the Duke of Saxe-Meiningen's prestigious theatre company started on a tour with a modern staging and modern performances of plays by Shakespeare, Schiller, Bjørnson or Ibsen. The troupe was famous for the great resources used, the mastery of realistic scenery and lights, the psychology of the embodied characters. The same year, Ibsen decided to visit Christiania, where he was warmly welcomed: "Jeg er her bleven modtagen med overordentlig velvilje af alle mennesker. Enhver tidligere misstemning er nu forbi." (Ibsen XVII: 139)⁸ *Love's Comedy* and *The League of Youth* were staged in his honour.

In 1875, Ibsen changed the town of adoption, preferring Munich to Dresden. The capital of Bavaria was characterized by a much more animated cultural environment in which the literary group *The Crocodile* occupied a privileged place. Unlike in Dresden, in Munich there were many Norwegian artists, including Eilif Petersen, Erik Werenskiold, Gerhard Munthe, Christian Skredsvig.

His stay in Munich is associated with Ibsen's revolt against the poetic style of his previous works and the courage to render real life in his creations. It is the time of *Pillars of Society*. Ibsen began to present the deficiencies of contemporary society, covering four areas of concern: the religious conflict, the conflict between generations, the social conflict and the one related to sex. By making reference to these serious problems of humanity, Ibsen challenged the public, and hoped to find solutions. Ibsen's work at this time proved German strength of character and magnitude. Unlike in the 1870s, Ibsen was now seriously taken into consideration by both the German and the Scandinavian audience. Germans were so excited about the realism pushed to its extreme that an Ibsenian school was born. The Norwegian became the mentor of many writers including Gerhart Hauptmann, Hermann Sudermann, Hermann Bahr, Wolfgang Kirchbach, Arno Holz or Johannes Schlaf.

Ibsen first received an impulse from the above mentioned Meiningen Theater, which introduced him to Berlin with *The Pretenders*. Then his first contemporary drama, *Pillars of Society* (1877) meant the starting point of his fame as a playwright. The success was reached especially through Otto Brahm, an influential critic in the late 1880s in Berlin, involved in furthering the Naturalist movement, director of Freie Bühne, and later Deutsches Theater and Lessingtheater. He became Ibsen's supporter after seeing a performance of *Pillars of Society*, a play which in 1878 had been played on 5 different stages in Berlin within 2 weeks. If this play opened his way to Germany, *A Doll's House* and *Ghosts* later consecrated him in the European vanguard. "Mit besøg i Berlin, og alt, hvad dermed står i forbindelse, betragter jeg som en sand og stor lykke for mig. Det har virket vidunderlig forfriskende og foryngende på mit sind og vil også ganske sikkert afsætte sine mærker i min fremtidige digtning."⁹ (Ibsen XVIII: 127) wrote Ibsen after a performance of *Ghosts* at Residenztheater in Berlin.

⁸ "I have been received here with extraordinary kindness by everyone. Any previous dissatisfaction is now gone." Henrik Ibsen, letter to Frederik Hegel, 16 September 1874.

⁹ "My visit to Berlin and everything connected to it I consider as a true and great fortune for me. It has had a wonderfully refreshing and rejuvenating effect on my mind, and will also quite certainly leave traces on my future writings." Henrik Ibsen, letter to Julius Hoffory, 4 February 1887.

The pessimistic idealism of the Scandinavian writer represented the right message at the right time. Idealism derives from the desire for freedom, honesty, happiness and confidence in the possibility of reaching them in a German environment. Pessimism comes from the subtle bonds of the playwright with the Norwegian space: "All his dramas bear the impress of a Norwegian *Aufklärungstendenz*. The psychological element, in which his talent is rooted, lends to his characters, - because he is far more the thinker than the poet, that characteristic which makes them so incomprehensible to the naïve observer [...] The pessimistic elements in the poet have their origin only to a small degree in the perception of universal misery; it is the misery of Norway that aggravates and pains him. The name of his illness is not Existence, but Norway." (Eller 62-63)

The exile, the distance in space and time, allowed the Norwegian playwright to become a mature personality. Ibsen remained a restless and ambivalent soul, longing for freedom but also for Norway. "I Norge vilde det være mig rent umuligt at slå mig ned for alvor. Intet steds vilde jeg føle mig mere hjemløs end deroppe. For et nogenlunde åndsudviklet menneske strækker ikke nutildags det gamle fædrelandsbegreb til."¹⁰ (Ibsen XVIII: 182) When coming back from the exile, the Norwegian society was not fully prepared to receive him. The Scandinavians opened the theatre gates for Ibsen's masterpieces as soon as they had enjoyed the European success, but the political life in Norway had not yet reached the degree of nobility Ibsen had hoped for. When coming back from the exile Ibsen still did not feel at home and continued his quest for identity through art. He remained a solitary man until the end of his life. Unable to live any longer far away from the sea, but unwilling to live with the Norwegians, Ibsen came up with a compromise solution, which he confessed to Brandes: "Kan De gætte hvad jeg går og drømmer om og planlægger og udmaler mig som så dejligt? Det er: at slå mig ned ved Øresund, mellem København og Helsingør, på et frit åbent sted, hvor jeg kan sé alle havsejlerne komme langvejs fra og gå langvejs. Det kan jeg ikke *her*. [...] Å, kære Brandes, man lever ikke virkningsløst 27 år ude i de store fri og frigørende kulturforhold. Her inde eller, rettere sagt, her oppe ved fjordene har jeg jo mit *fødeland*. Men - men - men: hvor finder jeg mit *hjemland*? Havet er *det*, som drager mig mest."¹¹ (Ibsen XVIII: 397). It seems that even in 1897 when already being in his native country, he would rather go back to Germany or Italy: "I München har jeg boet længe nok til at kunne lade mig naturalisere i Bayern, hvor jeg er sikker på at blive godt modtaget. I Italien ligeså. Og jeg må sige at Norge er et vanskeligt land at have til fædreland."¹² (Ibsen XVIII: 398)

¹⁰ "In Norway it would be simply impossible for me to settle down seriously. In no other place would I feel more homeless than up there. For a somewhat spiritually developed human being nowadays the concept of native country does not do." Henrik Ibsen, letter to Georg Brandes, 30 October 1888.

¹¹ "Can you guess what I hope and dream about and plan and picture to myself so delightfully? That is: to settle down by Øresund, between Copenhagen and Elsinore, on a free, open place, where I can see all sea racers coming from afar and going a long way. I cannot do that *here*. [...] Oh, dear Brandes, one does not live unaffectedly for 27 years in the great, free, and liberating cultural conditions. In here or better said up here, near the fjords is my *native* land. But - but - but: where do I find my *homeland*? The sea is *what* attracts me most." Henrik Ibsen, letter to Georg Brandes, 3 June 1897.

¹² "I have lived long enough in Munich to let me naturalise in Bavaria, where I am sure to be well received. Likewise in Italy. And I must say that Norway is a difficult country to have as fatherland." Henrik Ibsen, letter to Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, 15 June 1897.

Effects of Ibsen's exile

The exile that Ibsen imposed on himself, considering that it would save him and his family, worked both synchronically and diachronically. The first to mention are the changes determined by the cultural, economic and political environment on the Norwegian writer's personality. But the effects of Ibsen's presence in Germany on the German culture and audience appeared as well. His exile was also beneficial for the Norwegian culture. Diachronically speaking, the effects may be felt up to nowadays, since we are among the beneficiaries of his artistic creation.

The literary and intellectual climate of the 1870's - 1880's in Germany was under the auspices of naturalism and of individualism as a fundamental driving force. The class struggle and the feminist movement in the German social area influenced Ibsen's attitude in front of the audience. The increasing voice of the minority drew his attention because "minoriteten har altid ret. Selvfølgelig tænker jeg ikke på den minoritet af stagnationsmænd, som er agterudsejlet af det store mellemparti, der hos os kaldes de liberale; men jeg mener den minoritet, som går foran der, hvor flertallet endnu ikke er nået hen."¹³ (Ibsen XVII: 448) The individualistic Germans loved visions, they dreamed of a new *Reich*, and Ibsen managed to positively 'manipulate' them, using the trends of his time to anticipate the events that were to come. Thus, the Norwegian playwright depicted the conflict between the individual's duty to oneself and the individuals' role in society.

From an immigrant in search of freedom, Ibsen became a liberator of the Germans in a short period of time. The Germans gradually began to feel attracted to his personality as his great art represented the expression of the conscience of the age. "It was in Ibsen more than in anyone else that youthful Germany discovered the truth and the art of its time, and the method of their attainment [...] Like Brand he led the way up the mountain height, revealing new scenes, other views of life, of morals and art." (Eller 100)

When Ibsen appeared on the German artistic scene, the bourgeoisie had not become aware of the conflicts it had to cope with. It needed a researcher to discover and describe its problems, but also a visionary and a prophet capable to guide it. All these qualities were to be found in Ibsen who fully understood what Eugene Wolff stated in *Die Moderne, zur Revolution und Reform der Literatur*, namely "all creative literature ought to clarify poetically the spirit of contemporary life [...] The subject matter of our literature must be modern; it must consider the growing interest in social questions." (Eller 55-56)

Although the native language he wrote in was not widely used, the force of his genius could break the language barrier and take German literature to the level of self-realization. He saw the fellow-man as a superman and the stage as a moral institution. And fortunately for him the theatres staged his plays even simultaneously and spread his message. In this way he became "an integral and significant part of the modern German drama [...] He assisted youthful Germany, by liberating it, to express itself." (Eller 130)

¹³ "the minority is always right. Of course, I do not think of that minority of men in stagnation, who are left behind in the big center party, who among us are called liberals; but I mean that minority going ahead, where the majority has not yet reached." Henrik Ibsen, letter to Georg Brandes, 3 January 1882.

Conclusions

Henrik Ibsen, the father of modern drama, underwent a spectacular evolution, due, in part, to his courage to step into the unknown, preferring the exile abroad to feeling exiled in his own country. Germany had a beneficial role for him as it ensured his way to success. Even if it was often accompanied by nostalgia, the exile contributed to the transformation of the little known Norwegian playwright into an undeniable personality of world literature. The fact that he was the right man in the right place at the right time led to a revolution within the European theatre and a revolution of the society's way of thinking.

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REDEFINING THE CONCEPT OF DEITY IN JAPANESE MYTHOLOGY FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF NORSE GODS AND GODDESSES

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ABSTRACT. This article presents a brief description of the concept of ‘god’ – *kami* in Japanese mythology and *makter* in Norse mythology, in an attempt to understand and explain the Japanese concept from the perspective of what *makter* represent in the Old Norse context. We briefly present the concept of *kami* and the difficulties it poses to researchers using a language other than the Japanese, and briefly highlight similarities with the Norse concept of *makter*.

Key Words: *kami, god, goddess, deity*

“Translating Cultures”¹

Einer Haugen once noticed:

“For small countries, like those of Scandinavia, the importance of translation is far greater than for the larger ones. Their literary image abroad is established, if at all, by translations, since few will take the trouble to learn their language.”²

This statement could not apply any better to the Japanese language, the difficulty of which places its literature in the same position of relying heavily on translations for international recognition.

Part of this literature is of course the mythology – particularly the *Kojiki* and the *Nihonshoki* on which we mainly base our research – with its abundance of culturally-specific terms and concepts. As we started the study of Japanese mythology a few years ago, we soon discovered that one of the many difficulties such research posed was the translation and interpretation of culture-specific words and concepts, such as, to give just one example, the names of the deities. But we soon discovered that it was more difficult to understand and then to explain the concept of “deity” – “*kami*” – itself.

There is, of course, a long and complicated controversy surrounding the translation of the Japanese word “*kami*” into English and other foreign languages, and the general consensus seems to be that it is impossible, or at best difficult, to translate the word *kami* from the Japanese, and that translations such as ‘god’ or ‘deity’ are incorrect and incomplete. However, having had the chance to study Norse mythology before we started our research

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¹ We hereby allow ourselves to borrow part of the title of a book entitled *Translating Cultures. Perspectives on Translation and Anthropology* edited by Paula G. Rubel and Abraham Rosman, Oxford, 2003.

² Einer Haugen, *On Translating from the Scandinavian in Old Norse Literature and Mythology. A Symposium*, (ed. Edgar C. Polomé), p. 4

of Japanese myths, we soon noticed a series of resemblances between the concept of *kami* in Japanese context and that of *makter* in Norse context.

In this paper, we shall try to show that 2000 years ago, both the Japanese and the Scandinavians (or the Indo-Europeans in general) had similar views on natural phenomena, certain objects, plants, or animals – namely, all these were seen as “forces” and religion meant surviving in the presence of these forces on both sides of Eurasia.

‘Kami’ in Japanese Mythology

Simply put, *kami* is a concept that can include anything from rocks, plants, animals, fabulous creatures, to people. In Shinto, which is first of all a cult of the ancestors, everybody becomes *kami* after death, and initially festivals were organized by each family to welcome the *kami* – that is, their ancestors.

Explaining about the religion of the early Japanese in his preface to the translation of the *Kojiki*, **Basil Hall Chamberlain** says:

“Heaven, or rather the Sky, was an actual place, - not more ethereal than earth, not thought of as the abode of the blessed after death – but simply a “high plain” situated above Japan and communicating with Japan by a bridge or a ladder, and forming the residence of some of those powerful personages called *kami*, - a word which we must make shift to translate by “god” or “goddess”, or “deity”.”³

W. G. Aston also uses the words ‘god’ or ‘deity’ in his translation of the *Nihonshoki* and explains that the Japanese word ‘*kami*’ has a variety of meanings:

“It [*kami*] means primarily upper, and hence nobles, the sovereign, gods, and generally any wonderful or mysterious thing. The leopard and the wolf are *Kami*, the peach with which Izanagi put to flight the thunders which pursued him in the land of Yomi, etc.”⁴

W. G. Aston also explains the meaning of the auxiliary numeral used for counting gods, *hashira*, with its phonetic transformation *bashira*, which is also the way to count *pillars*. He says that this use of the word *hashira*

“...suggests a time when the gods of Japan were wooden posts carved at the top into a rude semblance of the human countenance, such as are seen at this day in many savage lands.”⁵

The Japanese word *kami* is often translated into English as ‘god’. But in fact, these two concepts are extremely different. The strongest difference comes of course from the fact that they are used in very different cultures. The Judaeo-Christian culture has a monotheistic structure, whereas Shinto has a polytheistic one. The concept of *kami* is very difficult to understand also because it underwent various transformations through time. With a very long history, this concept was gradually influenced little by little by ideas and concepts coming to Japan from China, Korea, India, and later on, even Christian concepts.⁶ However, for this paper, we shall only refer to the *kami* concept as it is present in *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki*.

When we refer to the character of the *kami*, the two mythological chronicles comprise what is known as concrete *kami* and abstract *kami*. The concrete *kami* are mainly – as their name

³ Basil Hall Chamberlain (trans.), *The Kojiki, Records of Ancient Matters*, p. lxiii.

⁴ W. G. Aston (trans.), *Nihongi. Chronicles of Japan from the Earliest Times to A. D. 697*, p. 3.

⁵ W. G. Aston (trans.), *loc. cit.*

⁶ ****Kami*, translated by Norman Havens, p. 1

suggests – concrete objects: the sun, the moon, or stones which are often endowed with *kami*-like powers. Weather phenomena are seen as the activities carried out by the *kami*, and trees, rocks, and mountains are seen as the places where they live. Some animals also become *kami*.⁷

Researchers say that the *kami* concept – as it must have been understood before *Kojiki* and *Nihonshoki* were written down – must have something to do with animistic representations of gods in South Asia. The most important researcher of this concept, **Motoori Norinaga**, is often quoted for saying “I don’t know what *kami* is”. His best explanation was that *kami* can be animals, plants, sacred objects, and people. The emperor of Japan is of course a *kami* too, as he is related to **Amaterasu – o – mikami** (The Sun Goddess) – whom the Japanese see as a historical figure. People live in the proximity of *kami* and can become *kami*. So, as **Motoori Norinaga** explains, anything that has superlative powers is *kami*. They can be both bad and good, and the general principal that applies to all *kami* is that all objects/beings which are called *kami* have some kind of power, which can influence people.

‘Makter’ in Norse Mythology

According to **E. O. G Turville-Petre**,

“... [...] the worship of inanimate objects was concurrent with the worship of personal gods. Such revered objects as trees, rocks, and rapids might come to be associated with one god or another. The god might be thought to live in them, to guard them jealously. If this is true of inanimate objects, how much more likely it is to be true of animals. Some animals might be worshiped in their own right, others because they were sacred to the gods. Many stories illustrate this.”⁸

Just like the Japanese, the Vikings saw living beings in the sun and the moon and in concepts such as night and day. They saw life behind natural phenomena such as storms, lightning, and wind. They felt themselves surrounded by *makter* – forces which they perceived as good, kind forces and bad, malicious ones. And just like the Japanese, the Vikings felt that everything in the world has some kind of power. Everything that is related to these forces was part of the Vikings’ life.⁹

By seeing things as presented above, we could say that “religion” can be defined as a way for people to live together with these forces. As we can see, these forces – be they the Vikings’ *makter* or the Japanese *kami* – were everywhere. People were in contact with them all the time, and there were many such forces that people had to relate to.

Thousands of years ago, people on both sides of the Euro-Asian continent must have lived their life always paying attention not to upset these forces. They did not see themselves in opposition with nature; they did not try to conquer and control it, but rather live in harmony with it and its forces. Both Viking paganism and Japanese Shinto can thus be classified as ethnic religions.

We therefore assume that maybe the Norse concept which best corresponds to the *kami* concept and which we can use is the *makter* concept – a force that exists in nature and in people’s lives and influences it. Also, the *makter* concept replaces very well the god concept too, because in the Old Norse world, *makt(er)* was used to refer to gods and goddesses, giants, norns, valkyries, elves, etc.

⁷ *Op. cit.*, p. 2

⁸ E. O. G. Turville-Petre, *Fertility of Beast and Soil*, in *Old Norse Literature and Mythology: A Symposium* (ed. Edgar C. Polomé), p. 262

⁹ Gro Steinsland and Preben Meulengracht Sørensen: *Menneske og makter i vikingenes verden.*, p. 46

Conclusions

To conclude, we have to say that the Japanese word *kami* does not mean 'god'. The concept of *kami* can include the concept of 'god', but *kami* is much wider in meaning than 'god'. However, we have seen that the concept of *kami* is not so different from the concept of 'god' – or rather the concept of *makter* – in the Norse context. For the people who lived in Japan and in Scandinavia 2000 – 1000 years ago, life was a mystery. They expanded the realm of the living to include not only people, animals, and plants, but also a sort of power they found to be present in lifeless objects, such as stones, trees, rivers, the sea, etc. They lived their life believing that something "lived" in these objects.¹⁰

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¹⁰ Vera Henriksen: *Verdenstreet. Mennesker og makter i Odins tid*, p. 15

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**(IM)MORALITY IN HENRIK IBSEN'S *GHOSTS* AND *CATS' BRIDGE* BY
HERMANN SUDERMANN**

CRINA LEON¹

ABSTRACT. The individuals' confrontation with conventional moral ideals, their revolt against the morality of the 19th century, the ambiguous difference between morality and immorality, the discovery and annihilation of the causes of immorality (hereditary and social flaws) are problems which drew the attention of both the Norwegian Henrik Ibsen and the German Hermann Sudermann. In this paper, a comparative analysis on Ibsen's *Ghosts* and Sudermann's *Cats' Bridge* is performed in order to show the conflict between appearance and essence.

Key Words: *Norwegian theatre, German novel, (im)morality, appearance, essence*

Introduction

Both Henrik Ibsen's *Ghosts* (1881) and Hermann Sudermann's *Cats' Bridge* (1890) focus on the burden of family inheritance, either hereditary or social. A play and a novel are in the centre of the following analysis and they may be viewed in comparison due to their authors' common interest in the individuals' relationship with the social and family environment in which they develop. Sudermann borrowed from his mentor, Ibsen, the way of approaching the relationship between good and evil, between appearance and essence, the same vision upon the changes in the system of values.

In the two literary works good, outlined in a permanent confrontation with evil, is most often the winner. The only problem is represented by the interpretable values because of constantly changing positions in the balance. Thus, the value system is ambiguous. What would apparently suggest good is essentially a carrier of negative values and vice versa, what society considers to be flawed is in fact full of spiritual purity, generosity, thus generating the confusion of moral values.

Appearance in constant tandem with essence

Ghosts and *Cats' Bridge* host a permanent confrontation between appearance and essence, shocking more than once by the truth to be discovered. Family and social environment, meant to shape one's emerging personality by the personal example, appear to be governed by an inverted system of values.

For Pastor Manders, the spokesman of Christian morality in Ibsen's case, home means a family in which a man lives together with his wife and children, even if this home hides suffering and immorality. Oswald, a representative of the new generation, considers that wild, illegitimate marriages, in which man lives together with his children and the mother

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of his children are the moral ones. So what is truly moral? A document with no interpersonal relationships (appearance) or its replacement with genuine warmth within a relationship (essence)? Apparent immorality may actually be essentially moral.

In *Cats' Bridge* Boleslav has to face the immoral and unfair community of Schranden, apparently famous for its patriotism in fighting against Napoleon. This society he had once been a member of was not able to distinguish between the son who had heroically fought to defend his homeland and the father acting only in the name of revenge.

Appearance and essence are also to be found in the manner in which some literary characters were built. Thus, women that appear weak (Mrs. Alving in *Ghosts*) or immoral (Regina in *Cats' Bridge*), despised and sometimes harassed by society, prove to be strong characters, bearing the mark of intelligence, loyalty, sensitivity, values totally lacking in the community they live in. They become thus the heroines of the works in question.

Apparently, Mrs. Alving is a sinful woman in the eyes of the society speaking through its moral representative, the pastor. In fact, throughout her entire life, Mrs. Alving has protected her family with dignity and perseverance from the same eyes of the society. She has done her best so that nobody should find out what kind of man her child's father was. When she could stand no more, the humiliated wife, making use of her intelligence and strength of character, turned suffering into a weapon, and became a successful manager of her family's affairs. This is the essence of the heroine who wants to build a monument for the one who has destroyed her life, arguing by the power of conscience, just like Boleslav in *Cats' Bridge*.

In her turn, Regina, the heroine in Sudermann's novel, a symbol of the humiliated woman transformed into a man's tool-toy, an unhappy and abused being, apparently worthy of contempt, does not lose her inner beauty, fidelity, gratitude, ability to love, characteristics related to her essence. Her words are represented by tears. When appreciated, but also when being afraid, she cries.

Another character of the novel, Helene, the pastor's daughter, is also the result of the struggle between appearance and essence. Present in Boleslav's memory as a being shining like a star, associated to the image of the icon of the Virgin in the Cathedral of Cologne, she proves insensitive, unfaithful, inclined towards depravity, immorality, and sacrifices Boleslav's love, changing it with Felix Merkel. This was the woman he had compared with Virgin Mary for years, the embodiment of kindness and purity in his eyes.

The clergy and the community's administrative leaders, apparently legitimate supporters of the morals of the epoch, render a negative impression by their lack of interest and inability to reach the soul of the simple people who appeal to them and ask for support.

Pastor Manders in *Ghosts*, apparently the person assisting in one's hardest time of life and the one who should know the people's secrets, so as to give them advice, is completely unaware of Mrs. Alving's suffering, once a good friend of his and very close to his heart. Unwittingly, he has a role in the change of attitude of Mrs. Alving, who, rejected by her best friend in one difficult moment of her life, becomes a leader from a previous victim.

The father of the Christian church in Sudermann's case, Pastor Gotz turns out to be ruthless, immoral and incorrect, refusing to bury the treacherous Baron von Schranden, otherwise his lifelong friend, drawing up a false document of burial, with the date of treason on it. The priest who should preach mercy and forgiveness behaves as if he were a God entitled to punish the sin, be it also high treason.

Marriage, traditionally one of the pillars of society, together with the Church and administration, also loses its value. In both works the idea of concubinage as an alternative to classical marriage is developed. Considered immoral by the religious and social classics, concubinage becomes an option for the younger generation: Helene-Merkel in *Cats' Bridge*, Oswald-Regine in *Ghosts*. Morality and immorality change places alternatively, what is immoral becomes moral, while what is moral gets questionable. Is the basis of marriage represented by obeying the legal order or is it represented by communication, understanding, love and respect? The answer to this question is meant to certify the moral value of marriage.

Ideals, illusions haunt the individuals just like ghosts do, one cannot avoid them, one cannot get rid of them, and that is why light, meaning truth, reality or life itself, is scary. Ghosts haunt Mrs. Alving also when reading a newspaper, ghosts haunt Boleslav in the form of memories. The place of Boleslav's childhood, a witness of his ideals, becomes threatening on his returning home. The cruel reality of Schranden, his father's treason, is opposed to the ideal he had almost reached, that of becoming a national hero. Now he is covered in shame and contempt. Illusion and reality, appearance and essence permanently struggle in the two literary works, and invite the readers, and the audience respectively to draw a conclusion, to gradually discover hypocrisy and notice the paradoxes.

Ibsen's influence in formulating the moral conflict

Morality is not immutable. "Morality is not an absolute, but a relative term. Since moral ideas shift with the age that conceived them, the individual is not immoral if his ideas are ahead of his time; and he is therefore under no obligation to remain within its restricted limits." (Coar 75) The moral conflict may arise between traditional and modern, with opening towards the future. In Ibsen's play the independent woman (Mrs. Alving), now head of the family, a less subjugated being with much personality, does not follow the old moral beliefs in which the wife is her husband's victim, always dependent on him.

The free relationship between sexes was considered immoral at the time, although nowadays it is a socially accepted option. In the case of *Cats' Bridge* the ancestors' morality or immorality is borne like a stamp by the successors. The social right to demonstrate one's good faith does not exist. Thus, Boleslav is blamed for his father's treason, being rejected by the community, although he acted as a hero in the war. Regina is accused by the society for 'prostitution' although it was her father who had sacrificed her. On the other hand, the angelic Helene, so much idolized by Boleslav, enjoys everybody's respect, despite her immorality, thanks to her father's prestige. Both Ibsen and Sudermann fight for the right of every individual to be judged for what he/she is.

Causes of decadence

Decadence and reassessment of values are a constant in the works of Ibsen and Sudermann. It is important to make a distinction between decadence as a family and social environment harmful to the individual (alcoholism, prostitution, incest, betrayal, discrimination) and a reassessment of the morals necessary as a consequence of the social development on a historical scale.

Decadence, decline, moral decay, libertinism often overlap. One of the main causes of decadence is alcoholism, present with both authors. This abuse was in fact a reality of the age, accompanying the development of the working class. A customary environment of the

two works is the tavern, the inn, where German peasants or Norwegian sailors spend their time and often get drunk. Alcohol becomes the remedy of all problems: in *Ghosts* the carpenter Engstrand is often forced to drink because of his foot, for Osvald, liquor represents a good remedy against moisture, in *Cats' Bridge* the villagers of Schranden drink at the Black Eagle from morning until midnight in the name of anything, including patriotism.

Decadence accompanies the disintegration of a society or of an individual who, in certain moments of history or of his/her own life goes from prosperity to ruin (physical, social or spiritual). On the one hand, it is the case of Prussia and its people during the Napoleonic Wars and on the other hand, it is Osvald's situation after finding out about his terrible disease inherited from his father, namely syphilis.

In the 19th century, decadence becomes a lifestyle synonymous with rudeness, immorality and laziness, paradoxically promoted even by the development of science and culture, but also by the troubled times. Decadence of Ibsen's and Prussian society also leads to a painful effect of alienation and uprooting. The historical times marked by wars and social movements that come with the desire for expansion and capitalist development accompanied by the rise of the working class, render the individual a sense of alienation.

Ghosts versus Cats' Bridge – a common message of the titles

The presence of past in the characters' lives, influencing their development, even against their will, is a reality, concentrated in its essence in the titles. The memories, places and facts, faithfully go along with the individuals throughout their lives, haunt them, put obstacles in their struggle for freedom.

Both titles, *Ghosts* and *Cats' Bridge* remind of the parents' immoral deeds (family betrayal in Mr. Alving's case and community betrayal, if we refer to the Baron von Schranden), sins which unfortunately fall on the children. Ibsen's Osvald, a victim of his father's depravity is gnawed by some 'worms' ever since birth (ghosts, remorse, confusing memories), which have destroyed his health, his life and future. Sudermann's Boleslav is a victim of the Baron von Schranden's high treason out of his love for Poland.

Memories are part of the individuals, faithful to them, in the same way in which ghosts are loyal to the haunted houses, and the cats are accompanying pets which are close connected with their owners. In the same time, both ghosts and cats embody past flaws, such as immorality, hypocrisy, prejudices, conventions that can destroy one's personality and degrade one's life.

Conclusions

"What Ibsen depicts is the struggle between the modern spirit and the past" (Schmidt 117-118), between evil and its causes, heredity or a crippling personal and social experience. This situation is assumed and the future is absent from the equation. What the German writer offers, on the other hand, "often unconsciously - is the struggle between the modern spirit and the spirit of the future" (Schmidt 118), the confrontation between a present reprehended as a possible effect of some negative experiences that are not assumed and the individual's desperate attempt to look to the future.

Sudermann trusts the power of the human nature to overcome evil, to reach freedom by one's own abilities (Boleslav's fight to get rid of the shadow of his father's mistakes). Ibsen does not protest against existing principles; his main character observes, suffers and

withdraws. Osvold mostly experiences a spiritual revolution which does not lead to a social one, preferring to withdraw to death. "I'd rather ask; it's not my job to answer" wrote Ibsen in the poem *A Verse Letter* (1875), while Sudermann is the one looking for solutions.

Ghosts and *Cats' Bridge* represent two social dramas in their essence, Sudermann's choice clearly illustrating Ibsen's influence in Germany. Sudermann, following Ibsen's model, is "concerned with a dual purpose, - rudely to shake the decaying structure of social morality now resting largely on hollow conventions and compromises, but at the same time to stay the total collapse of society and invigorate it with his own sustaining aspirations." (Heller 12) Both Henrik Ibsen's play and Hermann Sudermann's novel remind us of the Greek tragedy, marked by fate. However, in the case of modern works, fatality is not transcendental, but acts from the moral and social spheres.

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**The Image of the *Hamsun 2009* Conference in Cluj
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KNUT HAMSUN, A NORWEGIAN TREAT AT THE UNIVERSITY IN CLUJ

**2009-10-27 - 2009-10-28
Romania, Cluj - Babeş-Bolyai University**

The Royal Norwegian Embassy in Bucharest and the Babeş-Bolyai University in Cluj are organising a joint cultural event in Cluj on the 27 and the 28th October to celebrate Knut Hamsun and his works. The University, as the largest place of study in Romania where students have the possibility to study Norwegian on a bachelor's level, feels as a natural place to celebrate Hamsun here in Romania.

There will be a poster exhibition, a mini-film festival on Hamsun's novels, and interesting lectures conducted by specialists on Knut Hamsun. Among the Norwegian and Romanian lectures one will find:

* Nils Magne Knutsen, associate professor at the University in Tromsø and expert on Hamsun's authorship.

* Jan Erik Holst from the Norwegian Film Institute will approach Hamsun's writings portrayed on the movie screen.

* Sanda Tomescu Baciu, professor at the University in Cluj will speak about Hamsun in Romanian translations.

Ambassador Øystein Hovdkinn and **Rector** Andrei Marga will have the opening remarks.

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**DU PARADIS TERRESTRE A L'UTOPIE.
AVATARS MIGRANTS DU THEME DU « LIEU PARFAIT »**

CORIN BRAGA¹

ABSTRACT. *From Earthly Paradise to Utopia. Migrant Avatars of the "Perfect Place" Theme.* The cultural archetype of the "perfect place" has created a wide range of religious and literary avatars in the European tradition. The purpose of my article is to re-create the cultural "biography" of this trans-generic topic. My goal is to approach the series of *topoi* (or *loci*) which have provided a rich figurative substance for several cultures: the Golden Age, the Islands of Blissfulness, the Garden of Eden, the Promised Land, Millennium, Mag Mell, or the Celtic Avalon, the magical paradises of the Renaissance, Cocagne, Arcadia, and Utopia. This succession reveals the fact that a strong continuity can be drawn between the ancient and Christian Terrestrial Paradise and the Renaissance utopias. Although opposite, as the City of God vs. the City of Man, as God's creation vs. a human artifact, the Paradise and the Utopia are nevertheless two variants (religious vs. laic) of the quest for an ideal place.

Key Words: *Comparative Literature, Terrestrial Paradise, Utopia, the Golden Age, Avalon, the Land of Cocagne, Arcadia.*

L'Utopie² représente une mutation des variantes religieuses chrétiennes de l'archétype du lieu idéal, à savoir du jardin d'Eden, du Paradis terrestre et du Millénium. Au même titre, elle peut être rapprochée d'autres invariants thématiques comme l'Age d'Or, les Iles des bienheureux, le Mag Mell ou l'Avalon celtique, les paradis magiques, le Pays de Cocagne, l'Arcadie, etc. Une distinction générale dans ce domaine a été faite par Lyman Tower Sargent, qui, prenant le terme utopie dans un sens thématique très large, différencie les « utopies instaurées sans effort humain » (Age d'Or, Eden, société « primitive », Arcadie, Cocagne) des « utopies instaurées par l'effort humain » (la République platonicienne, communautés retirées comme les Esséniens, ordres monacaux, utopies et communautés parfaites, etc.)³. Nous allons comparer brièvement l'Utopie, en tant que *topos*, avec chacun de ces thèmes et « isotopies » du lieu parfait.

L'Utopie partage avec l'Age d'Or⁴, les Iles des Bienheureux (*Insulae Fortunatae*) et autres Champs Elysées l'élément d'harmonie et de contentement pacifique. Dans ces espaces,

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² Pour différencier entre l'utopie comme genre littéraire et l'utopie comme thème littéraire (royaume ou cité imaginaire), nous allons écrire la première avec minuscule (utopie) et la deuxième avec majuscule (Utopie).

³ Lyman Tower SARGENT, « Utopian Traditions: Themes and Variations », in Roland SCHAER, Gregory CLAEYS & Lyman Tower SARGENT (éd.), *Utopia. The Search for the Ideal Society in the Western World*, pp. 8-17.

⁴ Voir Marina SCRIBINE, « Âge d'or et création artistique », in Maurice de GANDILLAC & Catherine PIRON (éd.), *Le discours utopique*, pp. 421-437.

tout un chacun est en paix avec soi-même, avec l'autrui et avec la nature environnante⁵. Ces paradis païens sont des espaces compensatoires, qui font oublier les adversités et les malheurs de l'Age de fer présent, de même que les utopies remplissent, dans les termes de Lewis Mumford, une fonction d'évasion, de fuite de l'histoire⁶. Cependant, cette recherche d'un ailleurs libéré du mal et de l'angoisse comporte d'orientations différentes. Si l'Age d'Or suppose un retour en arrière (dans le sens jungien de « *regressus ad uterum* ») vers l'« *illud tempus* » d'une enfance utérine de l'humanité, l'Utopie est dirigée vers le futur, vers une maturité consciente et responsable, qui permet une approche rationnelle des conflits et des problèmes de la vie⁷.

On retrouve ainsi la bifurcation du vecteur temporel qui sépare l'Eden biblique et l'Utopie. Et de fait, en tant que places eschatologiques païennes, les Îles des Bienheureux, les Champs Élysées ou les Îles de Chronos partagent avec le Paradis toutes les caractéristiques religieuses qui distinguent celui-ci de l'utopie : sacré / profane ; espace surnaturel / espace naturel ; transcendance de la condition commune / persistance dans l'immanence ; intervention divine / activité humaine ; fatalité / volontarisme ; nature / culture, etc. Pierre-François Moreau résume les différences entre l'Age d'Or et l'Utopie en les décrivant comme « rêve de paysan » contre « rêve de technicien »⁸. Évidemment, « paysan » et « technicien » ne désignent pas des classes sociales (à l'Antiquité comme à la Renaissance, le mythe de l'Age d'Or ou l'Arcadie étaient plutôt des constructions de théologiens et de poètes que du grand peuple), mais des typologies individuelles, à savoir la propension « naturaliste », nostalgique et élégiaque, et la propension « civilisatrice », dynamique et enthousiaste.

Jean-Jacques Wunenburger rehausse la distinction à un plus haut degré d'abstraction, affirmant que dans les deux *topoi* sont opposés l'état de nature et l'état de culture : « Le mythe de l'Age d'Or désigne donc une époque où l'humanité était censée vivre sans artifices, sans inventions techniques, mais aussi sans institutions, sans médiation des lois, une sorte d'état de nature opposé à la culture. L'Age d'Or précède donc le moment où l'homme est devenu un être historique en accédant à un développement, celui dit de civilisation »⁹. On comprend alors pourquoi le Nouveau Monde et le « primitivisme » ont pu susciter, à côté du mythe édénique, les fantasmes ambigus d'un Age mirifique et heureux, certes, mais duquel toute une évolution historique et civilisatrice, avec l'orgueil correspondant, sépare les Européens.

Aux imaginaires classique et chrétien du lieu paradisiaque, les mythologies celtique et nordique ont apporté leurs propres contributions figuratives. Infusées dans la littérature médiévale par les moines, les érudits et les littéraires insulaires, la « matière d'Irlande » puis celle de Bretagne ont enrichi la « pensée enchantée » de l'Europe avec les images du Mag Mell, de l'Île des éternels jeunes, de l'Île des femmes, de O'Brasil, de l'Avalon, du Royaume de Féerie. Bien que christianisés (l'Île des vivants a été adaptée comme l'Île promise ou l'Île du Paradis terrestre d'Hénoch et Elie), ces *loci* n'ont pas cessé de hanter la fantaisie des explorateurs de la Renaissance¹⁰. Autant les millénarismes religieux que les utopies sociales expérimentés en Amériques se sont nourris et se sont greffés sur les fantasmes suscités par le Nouveau Monde.

⁵ Krishan KUMAR, *Utopianism*, p. 18.

⁶ Se basant sur la distinction freudienne entre le principe de plaisir et le principe de réalité, Lewis MUMFORD, *The Story of Utopias. Ideal Commonwealths and Social Myths*, p. 21, partage les utopies en « *utopias of escape* » et « *utopias of reconstruction* ».

⁷ Raymond TROUSSON, *Voyages aux Pays de nulle part*, p. 20.

⁸ Pierre-François MOREAU, *Le récit utopique. Droit naturel et roman de l'Etat*, pp. 32-33.

⁹ Jean-Jacques WUNENBURGER, *Une utopie de la raison*, p. 28.

¹⁰ Corin BRAGA, *La quête manquée de l'Avalon occidentale*, chap. 4.

A la Renaissance, les traditions païennes redécouvertes, autant gréco-latines et orientales que celtiques et germaniques, ont nourri le thème du « paradis magique ». Les romans d'aventures et les gestes fantastiques d'Ogier le Dannoys et de Huon de Bordeaux avaient réussi à amalgamer l'Avalon celtique au Paradis terrestre dans l'image du Pays de Féerie ou Pays des merveilles¹¹. Les grands textes renaissants et baroques, de l'*Orlando furieux* de l'Arioste à la *Fairie Queene* de Spenser, des *Lusiades* de Camões à la *Jérusalem libérée* de Tasso, pullulent d'îles de sorcières et d'enchanteurs. En contraste avec l'utopie, ces îles enchantées se rangent toujours dans la taxinomie des *topoi* religieux, comme le Paradis terrestre, mais ne sont pas subordonnées à une théologie stricte, comme celle chrétienne, sinon à l'imaginaire grouillant de la théorie magique des correspondances.

Cependant, à la différence du jardin d'Eden et du Millénium, dans le paradis magique, comme en Utopie, c'est l'homme qui dispose de la capacité démiurgique de modifier et de contrôler la nature selon ses propres désirs. Ce pouvoir constructif est de nature merveilleuse, surnaturelle, dans le cas du paradis magique, et rationnelle et technique, dans celui de l'Utopie. De plus, les ambitions du mage sont toujours de nature individuelle, alors que celles de l'utopiste sont collectives, impliquées dans le social¹².

Deux variantes laïques des paradis mythiques sont le Pays de Cocagne¹³ et l'Arcadie. Apparue à la fin du Moyen Age, la vision du Pays de Cocagne compensait fantasmatiquement les grandes privations d'une époque de pauvreté, de disettes et d'épidémies dévastatrices, de conditions de travail très dures, ainsi que d'une morale sexuelle exigeante¹⁴. « Pays où coulent le lait et le miel », *Schlaraffenland* ou Pays de fainéants, Cocagne a été analysé comme un rêve matérialiste, grossier, touchant aux manques du corps, en opposition avec les rêveries spiritualisées sur le bonheur, l'harmonie, l'éternelle jeunesse promises par les paradis classiques. Arthur Leslie Morton, par exemple, observe que l'Eden chrétien, situé à l'Est dans une nature plutôt arcadienne, suggère un idéal de constriction, de suppression des besoins physiques, alors que le Pays de Cocagne, situé à l'Ouest, dans une nature plutôt exubérante, implique une expansion gigantesque des désirs et leur assouvissement non moins pantagruélique¹⁵.

Une lecture psychanalytique verrait dans Cocagne une rêverie de régression au sein maternel. « En effet », commente Frédérick Tristan, « le thème du pays de Cocagne est intimement lié à celui de l'avalement. Les personnages qui ont accès à ces lieux privilégiés vont pouvoir manger et boire tout leur soûl, et cela sans exercer le moindre effort puisque la nourriture leur arrive droit dans la bouche. D'ailleurs, dès qu'ils ont fini de se repaître, ils ont tout loisir de s'endormir aussitôt. Ils sont donc revenus à l'état foetal. Le pays de cocagne est l'image du ventre maternel, c'est-à-dire le rêve que l'homme jeté dans le monde caresse de revenir à la paix profonde de sa gestation »¹⁶. Ceci dit, il serait peut-être plus approprié de voir dans Cocagne non une innocente rêverie infantile, mais le symptôme névrotique de toute une société harcelée par la famine.

¹¹ *Ibidem*, chap. 3.

¹² Raymond TROUSSON, *Voyages aux Pays de nulle part*, p. 21.

¹³ Pour un survol général du thème, voir Giovanni CASALEGNO, « Storia e geografia del Paese di Cuccagna », in G. Barberi SQUAROTTI, (éd.), *I mondi impossibili : l'utopia*, pp. 31-47.

¹⁴ Jean DELUMEAU (éd.), *La mort des Pays de Cocagne*, pp. 13-14.

¹⁵ Arthur Leslie MORTON, *The English Utopia*, p. 18.

¹⁶ Frédérick TRISTAN, *Le monde à l'envers*, p. 40.

Cependant on n'a pas assez insisté sur les éléments de continuité qui lient le Pays de Cocagne au Paradis terrestre médiéval. Un poème italien anonyme du XVI^e siècle met clairement en relief cette filiation. Appelant à l'imaginaire des explorations, le poète décrit « un nouveau monde découvert dans la Mer Océane »¹⁷. Or, cette Ile de Cocagne emprunte beaucoup aux descriptions du Paradis terrestre que les traditions irlandaises et britanniques, comme par exemple le *Panthéon* de Gottfried de Viterbe¹⁸, avaient resitué dans les brumes de l'Océan. Beau, immense, « bien égal » (c'est-à-dire équilibré en relief), parfaitement tempéré (« à nul moment il ne fait ni chaud ni froid »), avec une nature en permanente efflorescence, ne connaissant ni chagrin, ni mélancolie, ni angoisse, ni mal, ni maladie, ni mort, cette île-montagne rappelle immanquablement les Edens maritimes de la littérature celto chrétienne¹⁹. C'est ce cadre édénique que le poème commence à remplir avec les éléments d'un paradis culinaire implanté dans la géographie : une montagne de fromage râpé avec un chaudron d'un mille de diamètre au sommet, duquel se déversent des macaronis chauds, un fleuve de lait entre des berges de *ricotta*, des arbrisseaux portant perdrix et chapons cuits à point, des rameaux pour lits et feuilles pour draps, maisons en or pur, etc.

Avec l'Utopie, le Pays de Cocagne partage un anthropocentrisme antichrétien et le rejet de l'au-delà en faveur de l'immanence et de la matérialité, aussi que quelques traits secondaires comme la communauté des biens. Toutefois, les solutions imaginaires que les deux donnent aux besoins et aux désirs humains sont en général antipodiques. Le rêve de Cocagne implique un fantasme de toute-puissance magique : l'homme n'a qu'à formuler des désirs pour que ceux-ci s'accomplissent par la participation mystique d'une nature complaisante. L'homme se pose en un Dieu de la matière, qui dispose du pouvoir de concrétiser ses moindres pulsions et appétits. Il serait mieux de dire un Dieu de l'inconscient, car son logos créateur est ce que Freud appelle le « principe de plaisir ». En revanche, l'Utopie est un rêve éveillé, un projet lucide, qui se soumet au « principe de réalité » et aux restrictions contingentes. C'est pourquoi l'Utopie implique l'effort constructif et le travail collectif, qui changent la nature par l'industrie et non par la magie.

Comme l'observe Raymond Trousson, le Pays de Cocagne est matérialiste et anarchique, alors que l'Utopie est ascétique et centripète, même totalitaire²⁰. L'imagination épicurienne du premier est libre de toute contrainte et se situe dans le présent immédiat du désir ; l'effort constructif de la deuxième est obligé de se soumettre aux lois de la plausibilité, et c'est pourquoi l'Utopie est d'habitude repoussée dans un futur nécessaire à l'accomplissement des projets²¹. Cocagne est un pays de la gratuité et de l'abus, de la jouissance sans effort, tandis que l'Utopie a une sobriété monastique et un culte religieux du travail. C'est, selon Alexandre Cioranescu, l'opposition entre « l'individuel et crapuleux et le collectif et ascétique : d'un côté les abeilles qui ramassent et ne profitent pas, de l'autre les bourdons qui profitent et ne ramassent jamais »²². Ces distinctions suffisent pour distribuer le Monastère de Thélème, gouverné par la devise « Fais ce que voudras », dans la classe des Pays de Cocagne, bien que l'invocation par Rabelais de l'Utopie de More a induit en erreur maints théoriciens, les obligeant de créer pour *Gargantua et Pantagruel* une rubrique à part dans le genre utopique.

¹⁷ *Poésie en tercets décrivant un Nouveau Monde découvert dans la Mer Océane*, in Adelin Charles FIORATO (éd.), *La cité heureuse. L'utopie italienne de la Renaissance à l'Age baroque*, pp. 302-305.

¹⁸ Gottfried de VITERBE, *Pantheon*, in Joannes PISTORIUS, *Germanicorum scriptorum*.

¹⁹ Voir Corin BRAGA, *La quête manquée de l'Avalon occidentale*, Chapitre 2.

²⁰ Raymond TROUSSON, *Voyages aux Pays de nulle part*, p. 21.

²¹ Ruth LEVITAS, *The Concept of Utopia*, p. 193.

²² Alexandre CIORANESCU, *L'avenir du passé. Utopie et littérature*, pp. 58-59.

L'Arcadie représente un lieu idéal plus raffiné, plus spiritualisé que le Pays de Cocagne. Elle en est la « version aristocratique », correspondant aux besoins fantasmatiques des gens situés à l'autre extrémité de l'échelle sociale²³. Si en Cocagne la nature est une matérialisation des désirs corporels, en Arcadie elle est un milieu ambiant qui permet l'épanouissement complet de l'être humain, physique, psychique, moral et spirituel. Entre l'homme et la nature règne une harmonie calme, sans excès²⁴, même une correspondance biunivoque, chacun veillant et participant au bien-être de l'autre.

L'Arcadie est une relecture renaissante et baroque du mythe antique de l'Age d'Or, une sorte de mise à jour de ce dernier à travers le paradigme médiéval du *locus amoenus*. En même temps, elle est une alternative classicisante et européeniste aux « paradis sauvages » fraîchement découverts dans le Nouveau Monde. On pourrait voir en elle une première forme d'assimilation, dans les cadres d'une figuration traditionnelle et donc rassurante, du choc culturel provoqué par le contact avec des sociétés « primitives » et leurs pratiques sociales, sexuelles ou vestimentaires apparemment prélapsaires. Enfin, elle annonce et prépare en quelque sorte, dans une forme modérée, tempérée par une éthique chrétienne liminale, l'imaginaire des libertins des siècles suivants.

De même que les paires formées par le jardin d'Eden et le Millénium ou l'Age d'Or et l'Utopie, l'Arcadie et l'Utopie sont, elles aussi, polarisées par la flèche du temps. Si l'Utopie exprime un fantasme d'identification à l'image du père par l'auto-projection de l'utopiste dans la posture de demiurge et de patriarche de toute une communauté d'élus, donc de maturation forcée et de fuite en avant, l'Arcadie manifeste un « désir régressif de retour au sein maternel, symbolisé par les concepts féminins de terre ou de nature »²⁵. Si on reprend, avec Winfried Schleiener, les termes de la psychologie de la Renaissance, on pourrait dire qu'autant l'utopiste que l'arcadien sont des avatars du mélancolique, dans le sens de type biliaire enthousiaste, qui résout son mal de vivre par une inspiration soit réformiste soit évasive²⁶.

A cette différence d'orientation entre l'Arcadie et l'Utopie s'ajoutent autres traits divergents. Northrop Frye en signale deux. Premièrement, si l'Arcadie met l'accent sur l'intégration de l'homme et de la nature, l'Utopie exprime l'ambition de l'homme de dominer la nature. Deuxièmement, si l'Arcadie se propose de satisfaire, mais sans exagérer, les besoins pléniers de l'individu, l'Utopie impose à ses habitants une contrainte et même une ascèse volontaire, dans un sens monastique²⁷. J. C. Davis ajoute que, si les deux genres sont une critique des institutions sociales existantes, celui pastoral rejette toute forme de civilisation et d'organisation collective, alors que l'utopien propose un système global perfectionné²⁸. C'est la dimension civilisatrice et culturelle et l'activisme rationaliste et technologique qui séparent l'Utopie des paradis tout faits, préexistants, comme le Pays de Cocagne et l'Arcadie, qui ne demandent que de pourvoir aux souhaits humains. En un mot, si le Paradis, l'Age d'or, le Pays de Cocagne et l'Arcadie sont des « espaces heureux » où l'homme vit en harmonie avec la nature, « le discours utopique, en revanche, se fonde sur la dissociation de l'homme avec son espace environnant »²⁹. L'Utopie est une anti-nature.

²³ Roberto BERTINETTI, Angelo DEIDDA & Mario DOMENICHELLI, *L'infondazione di Babele : l'antiutopia*, p. 111.

²⁴ J. C. DAVIS, *Utopia and the Ideal Society*, p. 22.

²⁵ Claude-Gilbert DUBOIS, *Problèmes de l'utopie*, p. 6 *sqq.*

²⁶ Winfried SCHLEINER, *Melancholy, Genius, and Utopia in the Renaissance*, p. 204.

²⁷ Northrop FRYE, « Varieties of Literary Utopias », in Frank E. MANUEL (éd.), *Utopias and Utopian Thought*, p. 36.

²⁸ J. C. DAVIS, *Utopia and the Ideal Society*, p. 24.

²⁹ Fernando AINSA, *La reconstruction de l'utopie*, p. 47.

Enfin, on pourrait discerner dans l'archipel des *topoi* qui ceignent l'utopie un thème qui s'est gagné une incontestable autonomie avec les explorations de la Renaissance. Il s'agit de ce que les analystes traitent sous la catégorie d'« exotisme américain »³⁰ et encore de « primitivisme », plus exactement de l'image que les Européens s'étaient fait de l'organisation sociale des « bons sauvages »³¹. L'impact de la découverte du Nouveau Monde et les changements que celui-ci a provoqué dans la mentalité de l'ancien continent a modifié les projets utopiques aussi³². La figure du bon sauvage, avec ses péripéties historiques (première période de gloire à la Renaissance de Colomb à Montaigne, éclipse à l'Age baroque et classique, deuxième période de gloire aux Lumières, etc.), a proposé un mode de vie différent de celui européen, naturaliste, sain, sage, adamique³³.

Le dispositif spéculaire mis en place par le discours « primitiviste » est similaire à celui utopique : une société meilleure située dans un au-delà géographique, offerte comme un modèle contrastant pour la société européenne contemporaine. *Les Dialogues avec un sauvage* (1703) du Baron de La Hontan ou le *Supplément au Voyage de Bougainville* (1772) de Diderot mettent en scène des confrontations dialoguées (des faux dialogues cependant, comme le montre Jean-Michel Racault³⁴) entre le « sauvage » et le « civilisé » qui servent de miroir pour renvoyer une série de critiques à la civilisation européenne et pour proposer une manière différente de vivre.

Les différences entre la « société primitive » et l'Utopie concernent évidemment le type de civilisation préconisé par le « bon sauvage » et l'utopiste. Rejetant les complications sociales et psychologiques de l'urbanisme, de l'économie technologique et de la science, des institutions politiques et administratives, des hiérarchies compliquées et de la morale sophistiquée de l'europpéen, la « société primitive » est plus proche de l'Age d'Or et de l'Arcadie. Elle trouvera, certes, un écho dans les utopies physiocrates des siècles suivants. Mais les dissemblances restent tout aussi évidentes, à commencer par les orientations temporelles divergentes : régressive et passiste pour le « primitif », progressiste et évolutionniste pour l'utopien³⁵. Dans son livre sur *Utopie et primitivisme*, Christian Marouby a pu même voir dans l'utopie une réaction à la découverte du Nouveau Monde et à la menace impliquée par la confrontation avec les cultures autochtones. Le projet de l'utopie serait un symptôme paranoïaque de protection, par inflation rationnelle, face à la peur de l'autre, du primitif, de la personnalité d'ombre que le « civilisé » maintient refoulée en lui-même³⁶.

Peut-on pousser plus loin encore les distinctions entre utopie et genres apparentés ? A la Renaissance et à l'Age classique, par exemple, différents théoriciens ont pu isoler l'*Utopie* de More des « cités heureuses » de la tradition italienne ou des « *ideal commonwealths* » anglaises. Les premières prennent souvent l'exemple de républiques et d'états existants, comme Venise, Genève, Hollande ou San Marino, dont ils déduisent des modèles idéaux.

³⁰ Voir les livres, assez vétéustes idéologiquement, de Gilbert CHINARD, *L'exotisme américain dans la littérature française au XVI^e siècle d'après Rabelais, Ronsard, Montaigne, etc.* et *L'Amérique et le rêve exotique dans la littérature française au XVII^e et au XVIII^e siècle*.

³¹ Voir Geoffroy ATKINSON, *Les Relations de voyages du XVII^e siècle et l'évolution des idées*, Chap. IV « Le bon sauvage ».

³² Voir William BRANDON, *New Worlds for Old*, pp. IX sqq.

³³ Voir Henri BAUDET, *Paradise on Earth*.

³⁴ Jean-Michel RACAULT, *Nulle part et ses environs*, pp. 243-257.

³⁵ Henri BAUDET, *Paradise on Earth*, p. 35.

³⁶ Christian MAROUBY, *Utopie et primitivisme*, pp. 41-55.

Autant dans ces cas que dans ceux des « *perfect moral commonwealths* », la différence face aux « pays de nulle part » est donnée par la dimension de véridicité et d'applicabilité. Si l'utopie suppose un rejet et une reconstruction de la société européenne, les deux autres typologies acceptent l'ordre social et politique existant et proposent seulement des réformes morales et des améliorations institutionnelles³⁷.

A partir du XVII^e siècle, des nouvelles espèces et variétés utopiques ont fait leur apparition. Les plus célèbres sont les « pansophies », utopies du savoir universel où l'éducation joue le rôle essentiel pour une réforme morale préalable à celle sociale, inspirées autant de la *Nouvelle Atlantide* de Bacon que de la société secrète des Rosicruciens. Les utopistes de la Révolution anglaise proposent des « *commonwealths* », qui sont très proches des programmes législatifs et sociaux des sectes protestantes et millénaristes. Avec la création de la Société Royale commencent à pulluler les projets des « *projecteurs* », que Swift prendra un peu plus tard en dérision³⁸. Les Lumières imposent des utopies réformistes et révolutionnaires et, avec l'idée de progrès, apparaissent les *uchronies*. Situées dans le futur ou dans des histoires alternatives, sous la terre, sous la mer ou dans les planètes, les utopies ne cessent de proliférer.

Néanmoins de telles catégories semblent plutôt être des subdivisions et des tropismes de l'utopie, et non des genres autonomes. La réduction eidétique de l'utopie comme genre littéraire peut donc s'arrêter ici. Les cités heureuses de la Renaissance, les « *commonwealths* » et les pansophies anglaises, les propositions réformistes anticipant la Révolution française, les utopies souterraines ou astrales, les *uchronies*, etc. ne sont que des variétés du genre utopique.

Sur la base d'une telle déduction descendante, par exclusion et délimitation des genres connexes, plusieurs théoriciens ont proposé des définitions restrictives pour l'utopie en tant que genre littéraire. Pour Glenn Negley, l'utopie est « une œuvre de fiction (distincte donc des traités et des dissertations politiques) ; elle décrit en détail une communauté ou un état, indifféremment si celui-ci se limite à un petit groupe ou s'amplifie au monde et à l'univers entier (ce qui fait qu'une déclaration de principes ou une proposition de réformes procédurales n'est pas une utopie) ; son thème est la structure politique de cet état ou communauté fictive (ce qui fait que la simple robinsonnade, le récit d'aventures ou la fantaisie scientifique ne peuvent être qualifiés d'utopies) »³⁹.

Jean-Michel Racault avance une définition plus analytique. Dans sa formulation, « l'utopie narrative implique le recours au récit (ce qui exclut les exposés purement didactiques des utopies-programmes). Représentation d'un monde fictif, l'utopie cherche à susciter par l'écriture le tableau détaillé et concret (ce qui implique le recours à la description) d'un monde imaginaire complet (ce qui exclut les descriptions portant seulement sur des points particuliers), plausible (ce qui implique la recherche d'un *effet de réel*), autonome (cette autonomie étant manifestée par la clôture spatiale et l'autarcie d'un univers autosuffisant), cohérent (ce qui exclut la fantaisie pure) et soumis aux lois physiques du réel (ce qui exclut la féerie et le merveilleux). Le monde utopique est habité par une collectivité (ce qui exclut la robinsonnade purement individuelle) nettement individualisée et particularisée (ce qui exclut les tableaux d'une humanité abstraite et générale), formée d'êtres raisonnables. Cette collectivité est régie par une organisation explicite détaillée (ce qui exclut la pastorale), saisie dans son fonctionnement concret (ce qui exclut les codes législatifs et les projets politiques, dont l'organisation est seulement programmatique) et rationnellement justifiée par le bonheur

³⁷ J. C. DAVIS, *Utopia and the Ideal Society*, pp. 27-31.

³⁸ Keith THOMAS, « The Utopian Impulse in Seventeenth-Century England », in Dominic BAKER-SMITH & C. C. BARFOOT (éd.), *Between Dream and Nature : Essays on Utopia and Dystopia*.

³⁹ Glenn NEGLEY, *Utopian Literature*, p. XII.

qu'elle apporte aux citoyens, la puissance qu'elle assure à l'Etat, ou encore par sa conformité à quelques grandes valeurs fondatrices : Nature, Raison, Justice. La justification rationnelle de l'organisation permet de différencier l'utopie du mythe, dans lequel la justification est de nature transcendante »⁴⁰.

Enfin, Raymond Trousson entreprend une démarche similaire, au terme de laquelle il conclut qu'on peut parler d'utopie lorsque, « dans le cadre d'un récit (ce qui exclut les traités politiques), se trouve décrite une communauté (ce qui exclut la robinsonnade), organisée selon certains principes politiques, économiques, éthiques, restituant la complexité de l'existence sociale (ce qui exclut le monde à l'envers, l'Age d'Or, Cocagne ou l'Arcadie), qu'elle soit présentée comme idéal à réaliser (utopie positive) ou comme la prévision d'un enfer (l'antiutopie), qu'elle soit située dans un espace réel, imaginaire ou encore dans le temps, qu'elle soit enfin décrite au terme d'un voyage imaginaire vraisemblable ou non »⁴¹.

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⁴⁰ Jean-Michel RACAULT, *L'utopie narrative en France et en Angleterre*, pp. 20-21.

⁴¹ Raymond TROUSSON, *Voyages aux Pays de nulle part*, p. 24.

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**LE FRANÇAIS ET L'ITALIEN : DEUX DESTINS LINGUISTIQUES ET
DEUX REALITES CULTURELLES DIFFERENTES. ELEMENTS POUR
UNE APPROCHE COMPARATIVE.**

LOUIS BEGIONI¹

ABSTRACT. *French and Italian: Two Linguistic Destinies and Two Different Cultural Realities. Elements for a Comparative Approach.* The objective of my article is to reflect upon the linguistic situation of French and Italian. The research would like to establish some elements of comparison starting from the most important sectors of linguistics : synchrony, diachrony, and sociolinguistics. The article compares these two situations not only by considering the history of the two languages and the two countries but also by insisting on the differences of structuring on diatopic and diastratic levels. The main differences that result are the following : due to political, cultural, linguistic and administrative centralism French has created a standard French based on the linguistic model provided by Paris while Italian, which is at its origins the Toscan language, forms itself with an uncommon vivacity from different regional variants. The present development of Italy reveals no signs of standardisation, on the contrary...

Key Words: *diachrony, synchrony, Romance dialectology, sociolinguistics, language politics, geolinguistics, comparative linguistics of Romance languages*

Introduction

Lorsque l'on observe aujourd'hui la situation linguistique de la France et de l'Italie, on est frappé par la différence des références. En France, le français parisien constitue un modèle linguistique incontesté qui a acquis, au cours de l'histoire un statut de langue standard, même si de très nombreuses variations diatopiques et diastratiques existent, il n'en va pas de même en Italie où le toscan littéraire choisi comme langue nationale à l'Unité du pays n'a jamais pu être considéré comme un modèle de référence. Seule des variantes régionales d'italien ont une existence attestée face aux très nombreux dialectes (plus de 2500 d'après la dernière enquête de l'Istat coordonnée par Tullio De Mauro). Cette situation est très originale en Europe et les locuteurs italiens sont au moins bilingues (sauf les toscans). Dans notre présentation, nous précisons quelques caractéristiques de la situation linguistique de la France d'aujourd'hui et nous analyserons avec plus de précision la situation italienne qui nous semble bien plus complexe et présente des éléments extralinguistiques (entre autres, culturels et politiques qui peuvent nous donner de précieuses indications sur l'avenir linguistique de ce pays.

Les principales caractéristiques de la situation linguistique de la France

Un modèle linguistique pour la France : le français parisien, langue standard ?

On peut affirmer aujourd'hui que le français parisien « moyen » - sur le plan sociolinguistique – peut être considéré comme le français standard. Ce sont des critères d'ordre

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historique, sociologique et culturel. Paris, capitale de la France, a toujours représenté le centre d'une nation qui s'est construite à travers les siècles. Avant d'être la capitale, Paris a d'abord été la capitale de l'Ile-de-France et sa langue (variété régionale de langue écrite) a acquis un grand prestige avec l'extension du pouvoir politique des rois de France. Le français devient langue nationale sous François 1^{er} avec le décret de Villers-Cotterets (1539). Toutefois, l'hégémonie du français de Paris date surtout de l'époque de Louis XIV au cours de laquelle la centralisation administrative commence à se mettre en place. A la Révolution de 1789, ce processus s'accélère. Le français devient en quelque sorte la langue du peuple. Au XIX^{ème} siècle, Paris croit rapidement. Toutes les voies de communication, routières et ferroviaires, vont y converger. La capitale devient le siège des grandes administrations, le centre de toute vie politique, culturelle et artistique. Sa suprématie culturelle et linguistique va s'affirmer jusqu'à nos jours.

Le français et les langues régionales.

Cette situation de centralisme culturel et linguistique ne signifie pas que les langues régionales, dialectes et patois aient disparu brutalement. Bien au contraire, le bilinguisme généralisé va caractériser la France jusqu'au début du XX^{ème} siècle. A partir de la Première Guerre Mondiale², l'usage des patois commence à diminuer. « Le mouvement s'est ensuite accéléré par l'effet de la multiplication des moyens de communication de masse, instruments puissants de diffusion du français »³. Malgré ce déclin, les patois n'ont pas disparus et depuis 1996, la délégation générale à la langue française et aux langues de France a été chargée, entre autres, de valoriser le patrimoine culturel que constituent les langues régionales et minoritaires en France (<http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/dglf/>).

Peut-on parler de français régional ?

Le fait que, dans de nombreuses régions de France, on parle la langue française avec une prononciation particulière, un lexique emprunté aux patois et parfois des structures morphosyntaxiques propres, nous conduit à accepter la réalité du *français régional*. Toutefois, il ne constitue pas une langue différente du français appris à l'école mais une variante qui possède donc des caractéristiques linguistiques propres à une région donnée. Plus on s'éloigne de la région parisienne, plus ses variations s'accroissent. C'est surtout le cas dans le domaine d'oc, dans le sud de la France.

La variation diastratique.

La standardisation du français peut être également contestée lorsque l'on examine la stratification sociolinguistique, en particulier dans les zones très urbanisées. Les phénomènes linguistiques liés à la « ghettisation » des banlieues sont de plus en plus importants. Le français standard tend à concerner le code écrit alors que les échanges oraux subissent de plein fouet les différences sociales de la société française. Pour ce type d'analyse, nous renvoyons aux travaux de Claire Blanche-Benveniste et de Françoise Gadet (voir en bibliographie).

² Walter, Henriette (1997): *Le français dans tous les sens*. Paris: Robert Laffont: 114 - 119.

³ Walter, Henriette (1997): *Le français d'ici, de là, de là-bas*. Paris: JC Lattès: 107.

La situation linguistique de l'Italie.

Lorsque que l'on compare la situation linguistique de l'Italie à celle des autres langues européennes, on peut constater que le contexte linguistique italien présente une complexité due en grande partie à l'histoire de la construction de l'Etat italien. Les changements de la société italienne au cours des 150 dernières années ont eu d'importantes conséquences sur le plan des pratiques langagières.

Notamment depuis 50 ans, le développement économique et l'extension de la radio et de la télévision ont contribué à une plus grande diffusion de la langue italienne dans la plupart des situations communicatives. Pourtant, les dialectes n'ont pas disparu et de nouveaux équilibres se sont constitués entre les dialectes locaux, les dialectes régionaux et ce que nous appellerons l'italien parlé dans les régions, c'est-à-dire l'italien régional. Il faut souligner le fait que les locuteurs italiens sont encore largement bilingues voire trilingues – lorsqu'ils parlent plusieurs dialectes ou des langues étrangères ou minoritaires présentes sur le territoire italien – et la dernière enquête de l'Istat dont nous avons parlé dans l'introduction a montré qu'il existait encore plus de 2500 dialectes en Italie et que les locuteurs italiens, certes, parlent de plus en plus italien, mais avec un usage alterné italien/dialecte.

Face à la complexité de cette situation, nous essaierons de définir la structure linguistique du territoire en examinant les niveaux les plus importants de son articulation linguistique :

- l'italien national (standard ou néo-standard),
- l'italien régional,
- le dialecte régional,
- le dialecte local.

Pour ce faire, nous prendrons en considération les nombreuses interactions qui existent entre ces différents niveaux, ainsi que les composantes extralinguistiques pouvant aider à comprendre le fonctionnement du système linguistique italien dans un équilibre, par définition, instable.

Comment pourrait-on définir l'italien standard ou néo-standard?

Se confond-il avec ce qu'on appelle l'italien commun et l'italien national? En règle générale, dans un pays donné, la langue standard est une forme linguistique normalisée qui ne prend pas en considération les variations locales ou sociales et qui est employée couramment par les gens de ce pays. Puisqu'elle est répandue par les médias, l'école, les institutions officielles, cette langue tend à réduire les différences linguistiques régionales et locales. La langue écrite aussi peut certainement entrer dans cette définition. C'est le cas de la situation linguistique de la France, où, comme nous l'avons précisé plus haut, le français standard existe aussi bien à l'oral qu'à l'écrit. Après la construction d'un Etat national centralisé et, surtout, après l'institution de l'école obligatoire en 1880-1882, on a interdit l'utilisation des dialectes, des langues régionales ou étrangères parlées sur le territoire national. Le français standard est identifiable avec la langue qui est parlée à Paris, c'est-à-dire au centre du pouvoir politique, économique et culturel. En Grande-Bretagne, même si, au niveau régional, les variations linguistiques restent importantes, l'existence de l'anglais standard est indéniable. Le cas de l'Allemagne aussi est particulier puisque la langue standard y a été définie grâce à la diffusion de la Bible de Martin Luther, notamment dans le système éducatif. Si, par contre, nous prenons la définition de F. de Saussure de la *langue* comme un système de relations ou, plus précisément, comme un système

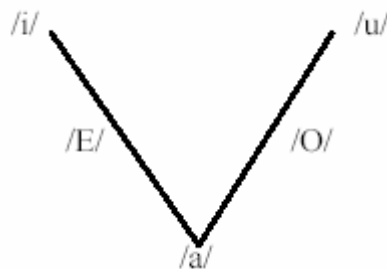
de systèmes reliés les uns aux autres et communs à l'ensemble des locuteurs d'une langue donnée, nous sommes sans doute plus proches de la situation linguistique de l'Italie d'aujourd'hui. La langue serait une sorte de superstructure commune à tous alors que les réalisations régionales, locales ou personnelles devraient être associées à la notion de *parole*. En effet, à partir de l'unification politique de l'Italie en 1860, l'italien littéraire qui a été proposé comme modèle pour la langue nationale s'est largement répandu aussi bien à l'écrit qu'à l'oral, et ses réalisations régionales possèdent des liens structuraux communs, parfois même forts, alors que nombre de leurs caractéristiques restent liées à des structures linguistiques qui sont influencées par les dialectes régionaux et locaux.

Un peu d'histoire linguistique de l'Italie

L'histoire linguistique de l'Italie depuis son unification politique présente beaucoup d'analogies avec celle du monde romain. Le latin parlé se répand dans les provinces conquises par Rome et, au contact de réalités linguistiques locales, ce latin donne vie aux variétés régionales et locales, qui, au fil du temps, sont devenues ces langues régionales, appelées, dans l'Italie unifiée, dialectes. Avec la réalisation de l'unité politique du pays, la langue littéraire modelée sur le toscan archaïque et imposée sur le plan national entre en contact avec les réalités linguistiques régionales. Après 150 années d'interactions, il en résulte des *italiens régionaux* ou *variétés régionales d'italien* aux caractéristiques qui changent d'une aire linguistique à l'autre. La diffusion de la langue de l'école et le développement massif des *mass media* a répandu l'utilisation de l'italien également dans des situations de communication très courantes.

Dans ce contexte, les locuteurs qui avaient une langue régionale très proche de la langue littéraire – pour des raisons historiques et linguistiques évidentes, c'est surtout le cas de l'Italie du centre – ont fait moins d'efforts pour apprendre *l'italien* en gardant ainsi des caractéristiques phonologiques, mais aussi morphologiques et lexicales, qui sont parfois plus marquées que celles des autres variétés régionales. Le phénomène dit de la *gorgia* du toscan actuel constitue l'un des exemples les plus marquants (prononciation du son [k] en [h] ; ainsi *casa* 'maison' se prononcera ['hasa]), mais le toscan possède aussi d'autres caractéristiques phonologiques qui le distinguent des autres italiens régionaux. La variété d'italien parlée à Rome et dans une grande partie du Latium constitue également un cas intéressant puisqu'il s'agit d'une sorte de calque des variétés des dialectes de cette région, qui a été transféré en italien. Il s'agit là d'un paradoxe tout à fait italien. Apparemment, plus une langue régionale est proche du toscan littéraire, moins ses locuteurs s'efforcent d'apprendre *l'italien*, et ses caractéristiques linguistiques, surtout phonologiques, restent plus marquées. Au contraire, mais toujours à un niveau superficiel, plus une langue régionale est linguistiquement éloignée du toscan, plus important est l'effort que doivent faire ses locuteurs pour apprendre l'italien; parfois, certaines variétés parmi les plus éloignées du toscan pourraient être considérées comme linguistiquement *meilleures*. Par exemple, c'est ce que l'on pense habituellement de l'italien régional sarde. Pourtant, il faut être très prudent puisque c'est justement dans cette variété d'italien, notamment dans l'aire linguistique campidanaïenne (région de Cagliari, au sud de la Sardaigne), que nous trouvons des constructions morphosyntaxiques, qui, comme nous le verrons plus tard avec le cas du gérondif, ont un sens si différent de celui des formes toscanes qu'elles peuvent engendrer des situations d'incompréhension sur le plan communicatif. Le toscan actuel ne constitue donc plus le modèle de l'italien standard qui serait en train de se standardiser. Il occupe une position linguistique et géographique centrale, entre le nord et le sud, que nous retrouvons

surtout dans la représentation mentale des locuteurs italiens pour ce qui est de la notion de langue italienne nationale ou standard, mais qui ne correspond plus à la réalité linguistique italienne d'aujourd'hui. Pendant des siècles, le toscan a joué le rôle de langue supranationale pour l'intercompréhension entre les classes dirigeantes et les intellectuels; aujourd'hui il a perdu ce statut et, à cause de ses importantes variations phonologiques, il est relégué au niveau d'un italien régional, certes culturellement prestigieux et avec une connotation puriste, mais ancré dans une région qui n'est assurément pas le moteur du pouvoir. Nous sommes d'accord avec Nora Galli (1985) lorsqu'elle déclare que «come si è detto l'italiano è di origine toscana e deriva dal fiorentino, ma non è il fiorentino di oggi, né ha mai coinciso pienamente col fiorentino neppure nel passato»⁴. C'était surtout une langue écrite, appartenant à un registre littéraire, caractéristique de la haute société, présente dans les centres urbains, qui employait de nombreux latinismes et qui subissait également l'influence des autres villes toscanes ainsi que d'autres régions de la péninsule. L'italien standard ou néo-standard (éventuellement en voie de standardisation) pourrait être défini comme l'extension aux autres régions de la variété écrite du toscan littéraire, avec une adaptation régionale qui dépend du contact avec les structures linguistiques des dialectes régionaux. Ainsi que nous venons de le dire, il est très difficile de décrire de manière exhaustive cette langue *pseudo-standard*. On peut pourtant en identifier, sans trop de difficultés, les structures syntaxiques et morphologiques même si les variations régionales ne manquent pas. Au niveau phonologique, une description rigoureuse reste très complexe notamment en ce qui concerne le système vocalique. Il est possible de trouver une solution capable de rendre compte de ce système en adoptant la notion d'archiphonème pour les voyelles d'ouverture moyenne, ce qui permettrait de mettre en évidence un système vocalique tonique simplifié:



Une autre idée reçue trop généralement répandue: l'italien standard correspondrait au soi-disant italien du nord, c'est-à-dire à celui de Milan. Il n'y a aucun doute que, pour des raisons extralinguistiques liées à l'histoire et à des formes de concentration du pouvoir, l'italien parlé à Milan a acquis un prestige évident. Milan en tant que capitale économique et capitale culturelle de la modernité constitue certainement sur le plan linguistique un modèle de référence et exerce une importante force centripète sur toute l'Italie. Aujourd'hui, le pouvoir économique représente un pôle d'attraction extraordinaire dans le monde entier et nous pouvons le comparer au pouvoir politique et administratif d'autrefois. Pourtant, la notion d'italien du nord ne résiste pas à l'analyse linguistique. Les variétés d'italien que l'on parle à

⁴ Galli de' Paratesi, Nora (1985): *Lingua toscana in bocca ambrosiana*. Bologna: Il Mulino.

Notre traduction : Comme nous l'avons dit, l'italien vient du toscan et dérive du florentin, mais ce n'est pas le florentin d'aujourd'hui, d'ailleurs, il n'a jamais totalement confondu avec le toscan, même par le passé.

Venise, à Bologne, à Gênes ou à Turin sont très différentes entre elles et les formes linguistiques qui les caractérisent sont liées au substrat dialectal et régional. Il est donc difficile d'accepter l'existence d'un italien du nord homogène à l'analyse linguistique même si de nombreuses formes linguistiques présentent des similitudes entre elles puisqu'elles appartiennent à des aires géographiques proches.

L'italien parlé à Milan a acquis un prestige suffisant pour qu'on puisse le confondre avec un italien standard potentiel, mais cela est sans aucun doute dû à une italianisation précoce du nord industriel, qui a donné lieu à une standardisation également précoce de l'italien régional de la région milanaise. De plus, ce phénomène s'est accompagné d'une volonté et d'une conscience linguistique fortes. En d'autres termes, son aire linguistique est la plus italianisée car c'est là où la nouvelle langue nationale s'est affirmée le plus rapidement. Cette italianisation des régions industrielles du nord est assurément due à des paramètres socioéconomiques et extralinguistiques. Ce phénomène est également à mettre en relation avec le désir de la petite et moyenne bourgeoisie du nord industrialisé de s'italianiser notamment par idéal d'identification linguistique. L'émigration des populations du sud vers le nord de l'Italie dans les années 1950 et 1960 constitue une autre composante favorable à un développement de l'italien en tant que *lingua franca* de communication dans les régions industrialisées. Même si les médias, notamment la RAI, ont contribué à la diffusion de cette variété d'italien régional, on ne peut pas affirmer qu'il corresponde à l'italien standard ou à ce que l'on pourrait appeler l'italien du nord. La situation de cette région reste, d'un point de vue linguistique, très diversifiée. Ainsi, d'ouest en est, les variétés régionales du Piémont et de la Vénétie gardent des caractéristiques linguistiques très différentes. Nombreux ont été ceux qui ont pensé que cette affirmation de l'italianisation pouvait avoir pour conséquence une régression des dialectes – ce sur quoi il faut être très prudent. Il est vrai que les dialectes sont moins employés surtout dans les situations de communication officielles, administratives ou professionnelles; toutefois, ce phénomène ne peut être interprété comme une régression de fond, mais plutôt comme une redistribution des situations de communication. Bien au contraire, la prise de conscience culturelle, politique et aussi linguistique des populations de l'Italie du nord est le signe de la vitalité des dialectes régionaux et locaux, aujourd'hui perçus comme l'affirmation d'une identité culturelle forte.

En revanche, comme nous l'avons déjà dit, l'italien de Milan n'est qu'une des variétés régionales qui s'est standardisée de manière précoce en particulier sur le plan phonologique. Il est indéniable que les systèmes linguistiques du nord ont eu une influence considérable dans le domaine de la terminologie spécialisée (industrie, économie, technologie, etc.); mais, comme nous le savons, les influences lexicales ne sont pas les plus significatives dans le domaine de la langue. Cela n'enlève rien au fait que la standardisation précoce de la variété milanaise lui a conféré un grand prestige, notamment dans la diffusion d'un modèle pour l'enseignement de l'italien à l'étranger. Même si beaucoup d'enseignants étrangers croient encore à la *supériorité* et à la *pureté* linguistique du toscan, le modèle de référence est la variété de type milanaise aussi bien sur le plan phonologique que morphosyntaxique. Il n'est plus imaginable d'insérer dans les méthodologies d'enseignement de l'italien langue étrangère des prononciations de type toscan, romain ou napolitain. Cela non pas pour des raisons discriminatoires d'un point de vue culturel, mais, plutôt, pour des raisons de cohésion linguistique qui tiennent au niveau de standardisation de l'italien de Milan, à son image et à des variables extralinguistiques liées au pouvoir économique et au rayonnement de cette ville en Italie et dans le monde entier. Une solution linguistiquement et méthodologiquement plus acceptable serait de proposer aux élèves d'italien langue étrangère un modèle de référence de type milanaise pour l'apprentissage phonologique et morphosyntaxique, mais aussi de leur procurer du matériel

écrit et audiovisuel, de leur donner accès aux variétés régionales, par exemple à celles de Toscane, de Rome, de Naples, etc. Ils pourraient ainsi prendre conscience du fait que chaque locuteur italien parle un italien différent, c'est-à-dire la variété linguistique de sa région.

Une autre remarque sur les idées reçues concerne les influences de l'italien du nord sur les autres variétés du centre et du sud. Nous prendrons deux exemples bien connus, l'un morphologique, l'autre phonologique.

Le premier exemple est celui de la diffusion du passé composé à la place du passé simple pour exprimer un temps du passé avec la valeur aspectuelle d'accompli. Dans ce cas, l'opposition entre le nord et le centre ou le sud est évidente. Dans le nord, on emploie presque exclusivement le passé composé, alors que, dans le centre et le sud, le passé simple tend à être conservé avec une valeur aspectuelle très marquée d'accompli (avec en toscan la règle bien connue des 24 heures qui distingue plus nettement les deux emplois). C'est un fait, dans les variétés méridionales aussi, on emploie de plus en plus le passé composé.

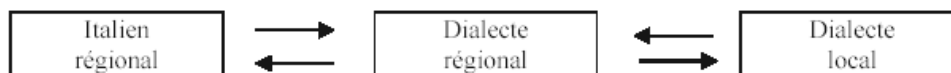
S'agit-il d'une influence septentrionale? La possibilité de conclure à une telle influence doit être traitée avec beaucoup de prudence. Il est bien plus probable qu'il s'agit d'un phénomène de restructuration du système verbal présent dans l'évolution du latin vulgaire aux langues et aux dialectes romans: l'opposition aspectuelle accompli/inaccompli exprimée par des formes verbales synthétiques est remplacée par l'opposition formes simples/formes composées où l'aspect passe au second plan. Dans cette nouvelle structure, le passé simple devient une forme verbale à valeur d'accompli qui est ressentie comme inutile puisqu'elle est synthétique. D'où la tendance à sa marginalisation.

Le second exemple est celui du passage du /s/ intervocalique sourd, typique du toscan et des variétés du centre et du sud, au /z/ sonore. Ainsi, on opposera [kasa] à [kaza]. Ce changement aussi correspond moins à une influence des parlers du nord qu'à la tendance naturelle de cette consonne à se sonoriser dans un contexte intervocalique, qui était déjà présente en latin.

Cela dit, nous pouvons nous poser la question: l'italien standard existe-t-il vraiment? Puisque, dans chaque région, le seul italien que l'on parle est une variété régionale, personne ne parle l'italien standard.

Ainsi que nous l'avons envisagé plus haut, l'italien national ou standard n'est qu'un modèle de référence s'appuyant sur la diffusion du toscan littéraire qui, au contact de différentes réalités linguistiques, a donné naissance aux variétés régionales d'italien. Pour sa part, l'italien régional de Milan est celui qui, pour des raisons extralinguistiques, s'est standardisé le premier, bien que d'autres aires industrielles du nord-ouest aient également connu ce phénomène. Parmi les causes que l'on peut souligner, nous soulignerons: le développement économique, une vie culturelle importante et, surtout à partir des années 1950, une immigration à partir d'autres régions qui a contribué à la diffusion d'un italien partagé par tout le monde. Les variétés de Florence et de Rome sont moins standardisées pour au moins deux raisons. La première, que nous venons de rappeler, est la proximité linguistique au modèle national de référence – le toscan – raison pour laquelle les locuteurs de ces deux régions font peu d'efforts linguistiques. La deuxième concerne le prestige que ces deux variétés ont eu dans le passé.

La situation italienne, très particulière et originale dans l'espace linguistique européen, implique que la plupart des Italiens sont bilingues, voire trilingues, puisqu'ils parlent l'italien régional, le dialecte régional et, dans de nombreux cas, également un dialecte local. Les interactions linguistiques entre ces trois niveaux sont nombreuses et expliquent la variabilité même du phénomène. Ces influences ne sont pas unidirectionnelles: l'italien régional agit sur les dialectes autant que ceux-ci influencent l'italien régional.



La situation linguistique italienne au niveau régional

L'italien régional

Ainsi que nous l'avons déjà expliqué, les locuteurs, lorsqu'ils choisissent de s'exprimer en italien, utilisent leur variété régionale. Cet italien prend les caractéristiques linguistiques du substrat linguistique de la région.

Les variations phonologiques sont les plus faciles à observer lorsqu'on étudie l'une de ces variétés. Comme nous l'avons déjà remarqué, les systèmes vocaliques comportent les plus fortes fluctuations en particulier pour les voyelles ouvertes et fermées, pouvant être transcrites avec les archiphonèmes /E/ et /O/; celles-ci se réalisent ouvertes ou fermées selon les régions et selon les influences dialectales. Pour ce qui est des consonnes, les variations sont également importantes. Parmi les plus évidentes, nous citerons une fois encore les variétés toscanes: le phénomène de la *gorgia*, la prononciation de *zio* (oncle) en ['tsijo] au lieu de ['dzijo], cette dernière étant la caractéristique des variétés septentrionales, et de nombreux phénomènes de sonorisation intervocalique dans certaines localités méridionales, par exemple, on peut avoir [ammad'dzare] au lieu de [ammat'tsare] (tuer).

Sur le plan morphosyntaxique, ces variations sont moins nombreuses, mais elles peuvent parfois déterminer des situations de communication équivoques.

Voici quelques exemples:

– La généralisation du passé composé à la place du passé simple, que nous avons déjà évoquée.

– L'utilisation de deux verbes *avoir* l'un fonctionnant comme un auxiliaire *avere*, l'autre, *averci*, prenant le sens plein du verbe *posséder* comme c'est le cas dans la plupart des dialectes septentrionaux ainsi qu'en espagnol avec les deux verbes *haber* et *tener*.

– Dans la variété régionale de l'italien sarde campidanien, la périphrase aspectuelle utilisant le gérondif prend une signification différente de celle des autres variétés régionales; ainsi *sto venendo* (je suis en train d'arriver), *venendo* ou *venendo venendo* expriment une action dans un futur proche ou différé et l'action d'arriver peut se produire après plusieurs heures, ce qui peut engendrer de grandes difficultés dans l'interprétation du message linguistique avec des locuteurs d'autres régions.

– Un autre exemple observé au cours de nos recherches sur la variété de l'italien de la région de Parme: il s'agit des formes verbales composées d'un verbe de mouvement suivi d'une particule post verbale – adverbe de lieu. Dans la plupart des variétés régionales nous avons des structures telles que *andar via* (s'en aller), *buttar giù* (démolir, jeter vers le bas), *metter su* (mettre en place) : par exemple *metter su un negozio* (ouvrir un magasin), etc.

Dans l'italien régional d'Émilie et en particulier de Parme, nous avons des structures analogues qui proviennent du substrat dialectal: *buttar giù* pour *buttar giù la pasta* (mettre les pâtes à cuire dans l'eau), *lavar giù* pour *lavar giù i piatti* (faire la vaisselle), *cavarsi giù* (se déshabiller), *star dietro a* (être en train de faire quelque chose), etc. Ces structures très nombreuses dans les dialectes émiliens et plus largement dans le nord de l'Italie influencent largement l'italien régional, qui, à son tour, pourra avoir des incidences sur les autres variétés régionales; c'est par exemple le cas de *buttar giù* qui est également employé en Toscane et dans le Latium avec la même signification.

Dans un sens opposé, nous pouvons observer des influences de l'italien régional sur les dialectes, en particulier dans le domaine lexical. Tout le lexique lié au progrès socioéconomique, technologique et scientifique est massivement entré dans les dialectes à travers l'italien régional: *computer* (ordinateur), *television* (télévision), etc.

Existe-t-il plusieurs variétés d'italien dans une même région?

Au cours de nos recherches en Émilie, nous avons pu observer d'importantes variations linguistiques entre les différents départements (*Province* de Parme, de Reggio Emilia, de Modène, de Bologne). En effet, les interactions entre les dialectes de chaque département et l'italien toscan peuvent donner lieu à des variantes départementales. Dans l'aire émilienne, les différences linguistiques observées concernent surtout le niveau phonologique, le lexique et, beaucoup plus rarement, le niveau morphosyntaxique.

Le dialecte régional et ou départemental La situation des dialectes dans les différentes régions italiennes est complexe et très diversifiée: l'Italie des dialectes est certainement un domaine d'études infini puisqu'on assiste à des fluctuations, des influences et des changements continus liés à des paramètres extralinguistiques instables. L'affirmation de l'italien régional et départemental face à la grande variété des dialectes locaux constitue la nouveauté majeure de l'Italie linguistique de l'après-guerre. Les interactions entre les dialectes régionaux / départementaux et les dialectes locaux mettent en évidence des forces centripètes vers les chefs-lieux régionaux et départementaux, qui influencent en profondeur les structures linguistiques des dialectes locaux. Ces phénomènes, provoqués par des changements sociologiques, culturels, administratifs, sont renforcés par la mobilité des populations autrefois plus ancrées dans la réalité locale. Le dialecte régional/départemental devient le point de repère.

Les dialectes sont-ils en train de disparaître? Qui parle encore dialecte?

On parle souvent dans la presse italienne de la disparition des dialectes. Même dans ce cas, il faut pourtant être prudent et examiner de manière attentive la situation linguistique de chaque région. S'il est vrai que l'utilisation de l'italien régional se répand de plus en plus, il est également vrai qu'il existe une revalorisation culturelle et linguistique des dialectes. A ce sujet, la situation de la *province* de Parme est très éclairante. L'intérêt pour la culture locale sous tous ses aspects (théâtre dialectal, musées ethnographiques, fêtes, etc.) a redonné une nouvelle vigueur aux dialectes, sans doute plus aux dialectes régionaux/départementaux qu'aux dialectes locaux. Dans l'une de ses enquêtes sur les dialectes, l'ISTAT (Institut national italien de statistique) fait cette triple observation: *Si consolida l'italiano, diminuisce l'uso esclusivo del dialetto, aumenta l'uso alternato* (Istat 2002). Cette tendance indique pourtant que la diffusion de l'italien marque le pas, elle régresse même entre 1988 et 1995 alors que la population italienne devient bi- et/ou trilingue. En effet, ce phénomène peut s'expliquer par le fait que les enfants sont exposés dès leurs plus jeune âge à:

- l'italien des médias télévisuels,
- l'italien régional et/ou départemental,
- le dialecte régional,
- et, parfois, le dialecte local.

L'enquête de l'Istat ainsi que nos recherches sur l'aire émilienne confirment cette tendance, et cette situation linguistique et culturelle apparemment complexe s'affermie et met en évidence la grande flexibilité linguistique des Italiens et l'attitude non normative, plurilingue et multiculturelle qui a toujours caractérisé les populations italiennes. D'après l'Istat, 44,1% de la population âgée de plus de six ans parle en famille principalement l'italien contre 19,1% le dialecte. L'utilisation alternée de l'italien et du dialecte en famille, avec les amis et avec d'autres interlocuteurs atteint 92,3%. Ces données officielles montrent bien la restructuration en cours des rapports existant entre l'italien et le dialecte, et non la mort des dialectes.

La situation sociolinguistique de l'Italie

Les modèles proposés dans ce domaine doivent être précisés en fonction des rapports existant entre l'italien national, l'italien régional, le dialecte régional et le dialecte local. Si nous admettons qu'il n'existe pas d'italien national standardisé, nous nous apercevons que l'application à l'Italie des modèles sociolinguistiques habituels pose de nombreux problèmes. Dans la langue écrite (ainsi que dans certaines situations de communication orales telles, par exemple, les situations officielles et universitaires), il est possible de repérer des registres linguistiques de type soutenu ou littéraire. Le niveau standard ou moyen se réalise dans l'italien régional. De leur côté, les registres linguistiques du type parlé, familier et, surtout, populaire se réalisent bien souvent dans l'italien régional en incluant de nombreux dialectalismes, ou directement dans le dialecte régional ou local. Il est donc absurde de parler d'*italien populaire*, de langue des jeunes, comme certains linguistes l'affirment. Dans ce dernier cas, les caractéristiques lexicales communes à cette classe d'âge ne sont pas suffisantes pour que l'on puisse parler d'une langue des jeunes.

Ceux-ci continuent d'utiliser, et ce, de manière alternée, l'italien de leur région ou leur dialecte.

Cette situation, encore une fois complexe et non homogène, peut entraîner des difficultés, par exemple, dans le domaine de la traduction. Comment traduire une insulte de jeunes français d'une banlieue citadine qui disent *espèce de salaud* ? Que proposer ? *Vigliacco* ? ou *li mortacci tua* ainsi qu'on le dirait à Rome ? Si Paris et Rome ont le même statut politique et administratif de capitale, elles n'ont pas le même statut socioculturel, et faire un choix devient alors très difficile.

Cet exemple montre encore une fois que la situation linguistique de l'Italie est le résultat d'un équilibre linguistique *instable* qui reflète la grande variété socioculturelle d'un pays qui, heureusement, n'a pas connu et ne connaîtra sans doute jamais l'uniformisation linguistique qui a été réalisée en France. Nous avons affaire à une variété dans l'équilibre, dans le respect et dans la tolérance qui fait aujourd'hui la force et l'originalité de la situation italienne.

Nous nous proposons de définir un nouveau concept sociolinguistique qui nous semble parfaitement adapté à la réalité italienne, celui de *tolérance linguistique*. En effet, depuis l'antiquité, les locuteurs de la péninsule italique ont eu l'habitude de côtoyer différents codes linguistiques: sous l'empire romain, les langues italiennes régionales et les variétés régionales du latin, aujourd'hui, le dialecte local, le dialecte régional/départemental (plutôt citadin), l'italien régional et l'italien *national néostandard* (existant surtout à l'écrit et dans les médias). Dans une telle situation, le locuteur italien est naturellement bilingue voire trilingue. Il est habitué à la variation linguistique et n'est nullement choqué lorsqu'un locuteur d'une autre région utilise une variété d'italien avec des différences phonologiques, morphologiques, syntaxiques ou lexicales – d'où une grande tolérance au niveau de la communication. Cette tolérance n'est pas simplement un phénomène linguistique, mais un phénomène plus vaste qui rend compte des différences culturelles, sociales et donc aussi linguistiques de l'ensemble des régions italiennes. Cette tolérance signifie également respect sans renoncer à ses propres particularismes: *jamais un Romain ou un Napolitain ne se mettra à parler l'italien avec l'accent de Milan ou de Turin.*

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TRADUIRE LES CULTURES A TRAVERS LES TEXTES LITTERAIRES

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ABSTRACT. *Translating Cultures through Literary Texts.* In this article, we seek to underline the importance of cultural characteristics of a community, and to identify and explore the multitude of cases in which the translator uses literal translation, thus showing double loyalty to the original text. Even though in principle, the literal translation is considered “shameful”, there are cases in which the translator conditioned by author’s insistence to emphasize the cultural characteristics, decides to use literal translation in order to minimize the loss of cultural nuances. The cases under investigation in the present article are “Broken April”, “The Successor”, and “Chronicle in stone” by Ismail Kadare.

Key Words: translation, cultural characteristics, literal translation

La communication étant une réalité quotidienne, présuppose une connaissance profonde et sincère de la culture que nous allons croiser. Elle passe, avant tout, à travers l’exercice de la traduction et de la diffusion des œuvres d’une certaine culture dans une autre. La traduction constitue ainsi, l’un des moyens pour transmettre les discours culturels, en permettant la rencontre des réalités culturelles différentes, tout en soulignant le rôle considérable du traducteur dans la culture d’arrivée.

Dans cet article nous avons l’intention de souligner l’importance des traits culturels d’une communauté et de montrer la multitude des cas où le traducteur en restant doublement fidèle à l’auteur, a recours à maintes fois à une traduction littérale. Même si en principe la traduction littérale est considérée comme « la honte » du traducteur, il y a des cas où le traducteur conditionné par l’insistance de l’auteur sur les traits culturels, garde la traduction littérale avec le minimum de pertes de nuances culturelles.

Si nous nous référons à des considérations générales sur les problèmes de la traduction, nous pouvons citer Mounin, auteur qui met en évidence le fait que la traduction ne peut pas être réduite à des problèmes de conversions algébriques, qui d’ailleurs deviennent utilisables seulement dans un monde de significations. « En effet la linguistique descriptive moderne obtient des formules vides, morphologiques et syntaxiques de ce même type, mais elles ne deviennent signifiantes que lorsqu’on leur adjoint des valeurs concrètes qui les rattachent au monde de l’expérience non-linguistiques ».²

Au cas où l’on conçoit que traduire, c’est l’activité d’introduire un texte dans un autre contexte linguistique, idéologique et culturel, on doit entre autres admettre que le texte-source, malgré la volonté du traducteur de l’incorporer dans la production de la langue-cible, tient à présenter quelques marques d’étrangeté. En effet, le traducteur s’affronte à

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² Voir, Mounin G., Les problèmes théoriques de la traduction, Tel Gallimard, Paris, 1963, p. 227-230

deux problèmes : celui de la fidélité envers le texte et la liberté d'adaptation et de changement, ce qui fait que le texte traduit, ne peut en aucun cas être ni le même au texte-source ni tout à fait différent, en devenant ainsi une sorte d'intertexte. La traduction peut être conçue comme l'expression d'une différence entre deux cultures, comme une deuxième lecture du texte-source qui peut orienter le lecteur vers des sens nouveaux, vers de nouveaux éléments culturels, sur la mentalité et le monde de l'Autre et sur sa propre culture aussi.

L'importance des phénomènes ou des éléments culturels accentue la présence interdisciplinaire de la traduction et de l'ethnologie ou bien de l'ethnographie, qui nous amène à supposer que, si l'ethnographie constitue la description complète de la culture totale d'une communauté donnée, et si les cultures se voient comme l'ensemble des activités et des institutions par où cette communauté se manifeste, on peut s'arrêter à cette définition que Trager a donné de sa « métalinguistique » : « Les relations entre le langage et chacun des autres systèmes culturels contiendront toutes les significations des formes linguistiques et constitueront la métalinguistique de cette culture »³.

L'idée de la linguistique américaine que le contenu de la sémantique d'une langue, c'est l'ethnographie de la communauté qui parle cette langue, s'affirme parfaitement par la conception d'Edmond Cary sur la traduction qui n'est pas une opération seulement linguistique, mais qu'elle est une opération sur des faits à la fois liés à tout un contexte culturel. Le traducteur se sert sans cesse de la ressource ethnographique : lectures géographiques, économiques, sociologiques, historiques, les récits de voyage, des mémoires, des romans exotiques etc., ce qui explique que pour traduire une langue étrangère il faut remplir deux conditions, indispensables pour l'une l'autre : étudier la langue étrangère et étudier l'ethnographie de la communauté dont cette langue est l'expression. Nulle traduction n'est totalement adéquate si cette double condition n'est pas satisfaite⁴. Nier le fait que grâce à l'ethnographie on peut accéder aux significations, c'est nier qu'aucune langue n'a jamais été apprise, ni comprise, ce qui nous amène à affirmer que l'ethnographie se révèle comme un instrument de pénétrer les « mentalités » ou les éléments culturels des communautés différentes de la nôtre.

Les phénomènes ou les notions culturelles appartenant à une culture donnée sont très difficiles d'être transmis par les correspondances lexicales dans le monde culturel d'accueil. Si le traducteur croit avoir réussi sa traduction, il appartient au lecteur de la traduction de connaître avec précision la nature des objets appartenant à une culture donnée. Il s'agit de voir comment faire transmettre le côté implicite que cache le langage de l'autre culture. Concernant les textes littéraires étrangers, tout lecteur doit être capable et apte de les comprendre. Mais s'agissant des mœurs, des traditions traitées dans ces textes littéraires, le lecteur étranger n'en possède que rarement une connaissance suffisante pour accéder à l'intégralité des faits culturels étrangers à travers une traduction littérale. Et, il est au traducteur de donner au lecteur étranger des connaissances supplémentaires pour entre-ouvrir la porte qui mène à la connaissance de l'autre⁵.

Travailler sur la traduction des cultures, c'est aussi s'interroger sur l'intraduisible, le phénomène de non-dits, de silences, d'absence de mots, le phénomène de l'incompatible de la traduction, de la trahison, ou d'une double fidélité envers la langue de départ en transmettant le mieux possible à l'aide des emprunts et d'autres instruments, les traits culturels.

³ Voir, Trager, *The field of linguistics*, S.I. L., Occasional papers, nr 1, 1949

⁴ Voir, Mounin G., *Les problèmes théoriques de la traduction*, Tel Gallimard, Paris, 1963, p. 236

⁵ Voir, Lederer M., *La traduction aujourd'hui*, Hachette, 1994, p. 123

Tout d'abord, partant de la fameuse formule « Traduttore, traditore », on peut affirmer que rien ne peut être fidèle si on le traduit d'une langue à une autre, parce que le texte traduit est porteur d'éléments étrangers. Cette intraduisibilité attire notre attention dans ce cas, étant donné qu'il y a plusieurs mots étrangers qui ne trouvent pas leurs équivalents dans la langue du départ, ce qui nous rappelle que du point de vue de la langue source, la traduction peut être lue comme perte, mais au point de vue de la langue cible, la traduction peut être présentée comme une autre lecture qui apporte au texte original de nouvelles dimensions. Selon Paul Ricœur, « le traducteur trouve sa récompense dans la reconnaissance du statut indépassable de dialogicité de l'acte de traduire comme l'horizon raisonnable du désir de traduire », -ce qui fait penser à la formule « *Pas de gain sans perte* ».⁶

Dans une vraie traduction de texte littéraire qui nous concerne, le traducteur ne s'inquiète pas de la fidélité envers le texte d'origine, mais de sa capacité à réinterpréter et à reformuler dans la langue d'arrivée. Ça veut dire, introduire le texte littéraire dans un autre contexte linguistique, historique et culturel ou plutôt réaliser sa réinterprétation à un autre système linguistique qui ne répond pas à sa syntaxe, à ses sonorités, à son sens non plus. Étant donné que la traduction est un excellent exemple où le transfert des valeurs interculturelles se réalise de la façon la plus tangible et qu'elle constitue le terrain où les Mondes se croisent parfaitement, il peut être suggéré au traducteur de déguster le texte pour reconnaître sa spécificité littéraire, une certaine sensibilité à la littérarité du texte (où toute une compétence linguistique se met en jeu) que de traduire le sens littéral de celui-ci. Nous sommes persuadés que le traducteur procède par la déconstruction du langage pour accéder à une langue étrangère, au monde culturel de l'Autre, et au-delà des langues, à l'intérieur des contextes, la vraie traduction exige un travail persistant dans l'histoire, dans le subconscient et l'imaginaire collectif et individuel de la communauté en question.

Notre article consistera dans des traductions d'éléments et de phénomènes culturels dans les textes littéraires plus précisément des romans qui sont déjà des artefacts culturels, dont les traductions transmettent une vision du monde propre d'une culture, d'une civilisation, un assemblage du bagage cognitif de l'auteur et de la culture traditionnelle de la société où il vit.

La difficulté de l'activité du traducteur éprouve lors de son travail de traduction, une résistance à plusieurs stades : premièrement avant de commencer, sous la forme de la présomption de non-traduisibilité, qui l'engloutit avant même d'initier le texte littéraire, mais une fois que le travail de traduction commence, la résistance et la peur du début commencent à s'oublier. « Des plages d'intraduisibilité sont parsemées dans le texte, qui font de la traduction un drame, et du souhait de bonne traduction un pari »⁷. De l'expérience des traducteurs, il existe bien des textes qui révèlent des caprices et qui essaient de se montrer lointains et difficiles à gérer par les traducteurs, comme par exemple traduire des poésies où le traducteur découvre la difficulté de mettre ensemble le sens et la sonorité, le signifiant et le signifié ou des œuvres philosophiques qui révèlent des difficultés en un sens aussi intraitables dans la mesure où elle surgit au plan même du découpage des champs sémantiques qui s'avèrent non exactement superposables d'une langue à l'autre.⁸

Se référant à cette difficulté lors du processus de la traduction, Franz Rosenzweig s'exprime : « Traduire, c'est servir deux maîtres : l'étranger dans son œuvre, le lecteur dans

⁶ Ricœur Paul, Sur la traduction, Bayard, Paris, 2004, p. 19

⁷ Idem, p.11

⁸ Voir, Idem, p. 12

son désir d'appropriation⁹». Auteur étranger, lecteur habitant la même langue que le traducteur, nous rappelle la problématique des vœux de fidélité et du soupçon de la trahison, tout en ne cessant pas d'être dans le texte et hors du texte, de languir, de souffrir, de se donner, afin d'accorder sa voix à celle de l'Autre.

Pour De Launay, « l'intraduisible n'est qu'une impossibilité momentanée de la réécriture, ou structurelle de telle langue, mais pas de la traduction; il est toujours possible, en effet, de donner une sorte d'équivalent, étayé par des explications. L'intraduisible véritable est simplement ce qu'on ne peut véritablement pas réécrire, ce qui ne signifie pas non plus qu'il interdit toute forme de traduction, mais cette dernière se réduirait par une gigantesque note explicative qui finalement se substituerait à la traduction, elle-même désormais inutile »¹⁰. Même assurés d'avoir cerné la singularité du texte à traduire jusque dans ses détails, les traducteurs n'en disposent pas pour autant d'instruments linguistiques qui permettraient une réécriture identiquement « équivalente » ; ils sont donc voués aux « comparables », aux béquilles inévitables de la note explicative¹¹, de cette *construction des comparables* que souligne P. Ricœur en définissant la traduction comme une trahison créatrice de l'original, appropriation également créatrice par la langue d'accueil¹². Ainsi, avec le sens, le traducteur veut refléter avec une grande précision, l'image profonde, le reflet des mœurs, le subconscient, l'imaginaire et les visions du monde culturel qui font du pays traité dans le roman une culture particulière parmi les autres. Le secret consiste dans la présentation des mots représentant des traits typiques culturels d'une région ou pays donné, dont le traducteur qui a étudié bel et bien l'intention et l'attention de l'auteur sur les phénomènes en question, décide de procéder par l'emprunt des mots typiques de la culture qui va être traduite dans le roman et de les vêtir des règles d'orthographe de la langue vers laquelle il traduit en utilisant ou non, selon les besoins l'explication en bas de page. Et, c'est sur ces types de « trucs » de traducteurs, que portera notre analyse des traductions de la littérature albanaise. Cette dernière, est déjà partie prenante du marché international, en marquant ainsi son existence dans l'univers culturel mondial. Le traducteur littéraire joue le même rôle « d'orfèvre » que l'auteur dans la transmission du sens, le choix des mots, les tournures stylistiques des phrases, le rythme et la musicalité des fragments, afin de provoquer les effets voulus chez le public.

Pour bien illustrer ce panorama théorique, il est nécessaire de mentionner les marques d'authenticité dans les traductions de la littérature albanaise, bien évidemment les œuvres qui portent la signature d'Ismail Kadaré traduits en français et anglais. On verra comment le traducteur choisit de rester fidèle à l'auteur du texte, vu que ce dernier (Ismail Kadaré) avec le souci d'observateur scientifique et d'un ethnographe, revisite sur le plan littéraire les grandes étapes historiques, le folklore et les mythes de son pays natal dans une prose dramatique-bouffonne, d'une ironie mordante, tout en veillant sur le déploiement des traits culturels albanais.

Le roman « Avril Brisé »¹³ de Kadaré traduit en anglais et français, est porteur de ce phénomène d'emprunts de mots albanais dans la traduction pour montrer à travers l'intraduisible le caractère original des coutumes dans la région du Nord de l'Albanie.

⁹ Idem, p. 9

¹⁰ De Launay M., *Qu'est-ce que traduire?* Vrin, Paris, 2006, p. 46

¹¹ Idem, p.51

¹² Voir, Ricœur P., *Sur la traduction*, Bayard, Paris, 2004, p.66

¹³ *Deux intrigues s'y croisent : L'écrivain Bessian Vorpsi emmène sa jeune épouse Diane en voyage de noces sur le Plateau du Nord, le Rrafsh, afin de lui faire découvrir la rude montagne encore soumise à la loi de Kanun, qu'il décrit dans son œuvre ; Gjorg, un montagnard qui vient de tuer le meurtrier de son frère, ce qui constitue le quarante-quatrième meurtre d'une vendetta qui dure depuis soixante-dix ans.*

Le traducteur Jusuf Vrioni a voulu garder le mot « *Kanun* », tel quel pour montrer la force puissante, ainsi que la spécificité et la particularité de ce droit coutumier qui existe seulement dans le nord de l'Albanie. On verra que pendant la traduction, l'auteur essaye de substituer ce mot avec le mot latin « Code » ou le « Coutumier », pour ne pas créer de confusion ou de malentendu pendant la lecture.

- « *Te souviens-tu de la définition de la maison telle quelle figure dans le « Kanun »*¹⁴
 -(.....) « *On ne plaisante pas avec le Coutumier »*¹⁵

Le traducteur préfère utiliser le mot albanais « Krouchks » qui signifient les proches de la jeune mariée ou du mari, qui sont invités pendant le mariage ou qui accompagnent la mariée dans la maison de son mari, pour montrer l'importance de ces personnes et le respect qui accorde le Kanun à eux. :

- « *Diane, le visage collé à la vitre, émerveillée, ne pouvait détacher son regard des costumes féminins. Comme ils sont beaux. Mon Dieu comme ils sont beaux –se répétait –elle sans cesse, cependant appuyé contre elle, il lui citait d'une voix caressante les paragraphes du Code consacrés aux Krouchks : Le jour du mariage ne peut jamais être renvoyé »*¹⁶.

Un autre mot que le traducteur désire mettre en évidence en ne la traduisant pas, est « Besa », un mot qui évoque ou sous-entend la parole donnée pour quelque chose de très important, voire sacrée dans le « Kanun », une promesse faite volontairement et sûre d'être réalisée, parole d'honneur sur l'accomplissement d'un devoir entrepris avant : par exemple « Besa » albanaise.

-« *As-tu jamais pensé, quand nous étudions cette balade à l'école, que la Besa qui y était évoquée est une des premières pierres des fondements de cette édifice aussi majestueux qu'effrayant ».*¹⁷

Toujours dans le contexte du Kanun, ce droit coutumier au nom duquel, par honneur, les gens du Nord étaient obligés de pratiquer le phénomène de vendetta, le traducteur croise un autre élément présent dans le vocabulaire albanais « mourana » qui évoque un amas de pierres sur le lieu où a été tué ou enterré quelqu'un (conséquence de la vendetta). Le mot « Kulla » est aussi gardé dans la traduction en français, non seulement pour montrer l'architecture particulière en pierre au Nord de l'Albanie, mais aussi la fonction -refuge de ces « châteaux » particuliers sans fenêtres et ouvertures pour la protection des personnes qui attendent la vengeance. Pour le traducteur, il est clair que la présence du mot « mourana » et du mot « kulla » en français transmettent le sens tragique que contenaient ces phénomènes culturels au Nord de l'Albanie.

-« *Les « mouranes » comme on les appelle, sont tristes-dit-il (.....) C'est vrai dit-elle, ils en émanent quelque chose du tragique et le nom aussi, sous lequel on les désigne, mourane, est bien tel, dépouillé, cruel, n'évoquant que la douleur, sans que rien ne vienne l'adoucir »*¹⁸.

Ou

-« *Tiens voilà les « Kullas » des montagnes ».*¹⁹

¹⁴ Kadare I., Avril Brisé, Livre de Poche, Fayard, Paris, 2003, p. 77

¹⁵ Idem, p. 77

¹⁶ Kadare I., Avril Brisé, Livre de Poche, Fayard, Paris, 2003, 76

¹⁷ Idem, p. 74

¹⁸ Kadare I., Avril Brisé, Livre de Poche, Fayard, Paris, 2003, p. 72

¹⁹ Idem, p. 76

Dans le roman d'Ismail Kadaré « The successor » traduit en anglais, on essaye de répondre à la question : que s'est-il passé au cours de la nuit du 13 décembre, dans la chambre à coucher du " successeur désigné", dont le cadavre a été découvert au petit jour avec une balle en plein cœur ? Le roman est inspiré de la plus ténébreuse énigme de l'histoire de l'Albanie contemporaine : la mort mystérieuse du dauphin du dictateur communiste albanais Enver Hoxha. Encore aujourd'hui, le secret reste entier.

Même dans la traduction en anglais, on arrivera à trouver des traces de la langue et bien évidemment de la « vision du monde albanais», mais cette fois politique. Le traducteur choisit de garder le mot « Bllok » en albanais, qui nous révèle déjà beaucoup de son étymologie « être bloqué » ou « isolé » des autres pour montrer la force et la puissance résidentielle de la dictature d'Enver Hoxha. La force de cette dictature puissante, partie prenante dans l'œuvre conditionne le traducteur de la langue anglaise dans l'utilisation du terme « Albanian Sigurimi qui se voit être traduit en anglais quelquefois par « *Albanian Security* ».

Exemple 1:

"And that was pretty much all the information that emanated, or seemed to emanate, from the house of the deceased. But other stories seeped out from the gated compound -the Bllok-where state officials lived"²⁰.

Exemple 2:

" A transatlantic intelligence agency was the first to realize not only that its espionage operation in Albania was completely Outdated, but that a significant number of its agents, most of whom were getting on in years, had gone over the Albanian Sigurimi. That was presumably Why the news from the country following the death of the Successor was so disconcerting"²¹ "

Un autre exemple qui vient à l'appui du phénomène de l'intraduisible est le fragment qui contient les termes « prijs » et « pasardhës » où le premier ayant comme correspondant en anglais le terme « *the guide* » contient une valeur ajoutée, celle d'un guide ou leader spirituel dans un sens plus littéraire, mais aussi évocateur d'un passé glorifiant, tandis que le deuxième souligne l'importance cruciale, parce qu'il ne s'agissait pas tout simplement d'assurer la continuité du pouvoir, mais d'un anneau incontournable de la chaîne de la dictature.

Exemple 1 :

"And by so doing he had shown the obedience to the Party and to the Prijs-the Guide-ruled his heart. That showed you what sort of fellow he was! You don't get to be Successor for nothing, now do you?"²²

Exemple 2:

"I was the Pasardhës. He who comes next. But the nextness was not a question of distance, such as the two paces I had to leave between us when standing behind the Guide as we paraded onto the platform or stood on the rostrum. Nor was it a chronological nextness, referring to the years I could reign after him. No, it was a much more complicated business"²³.

²⁰ Kadare I., The Successor, Canongate, Edinburgh-New York-Melbourne, 2006, p. 4

²¹ Idem, p.9

²² Idem, p. 16

²³ Idem, p. 196

Dans l'œuvre « *Chronique de la ville en pierre* », une vraie chronique épique et fantasmagorique d'une ville albanaise (Gjirokastra) au milieu du vingtième siècle, Kadaré nous présente une ville bizarre, terriblement penchée. Si l'on glisse sur le côté d'une rue, on risque de se retrouver sur un toit. Sous sa dure carapace de pierre se cache pourtant la chair tendre de la vie du sud de l'Albanie avec ses propres traits culturels.

L'auteur nous propose, derrière les murs de sa ville de pierres, un panel de personnages hauts en couleurs et caractéristiques de la culture albanaise. La plongée dans la vie quotidienne de ces personnages nous révèle une culture méditerranéenne, où les femmes vivent entre elles par communauté d'âge ou d'origine (les « grandes vieilles » et les « vieilles *katendjikas* ») pendant que les hommes travaillent. Notre traducteur bilingue est aussi un traducteur bi- culturel, capable de voir le monde désigné par des textes écrits en deux langues différentes, grâce à ses connaissances linguistiques, mais aussi grâce à ses connaissances de ce « monde »²⁴. Donc capable de voir le monde étranger, capable de l'exprimer, le traducteur sait le transmettre à ceux qui l'ignorent à travers l'emprunt, en restant strictement fidèle à l'auteur, lequel a eu l'intention d'insister sur ces personnages particuliers dans cette zone du sud de l'Albanie, mis déjà en italique dans le texte original.

*« A cette époque, les visites des vieilles *katendjikas* devinrent plus fréquentes, ce qui était prévisible. A la différence des grandes vieilles, les *katendjikas* sortaient souvent de chez elles, surtout dans les périodes de troubles. Elles différaient sur bien des points des grandes vieilles. Les *katenxhikas* continuaient de se plaindre de leurs brus, en un temps où celles des grandes vieilles avaient depuis longtemps quitté ce monde. Elles se plaignaient aussi des rhumatismes, de la goutte et d'autres maladies qui les tourmentaient, alors que les grandes vieilles ne connaissaient que le noble mal de la cécité, dont elles ne se lamentaient jamais. Les *katendjikas* ne pouvaient être comparées en rien avec les grandes vieilles »²⁵*

Vu le caractère authentique que l'auteur porte ou consacre aux situations, phénomènes et traits typiques de la culture du sud de l'Albanie, le traducteur décide volontairement de prêter la plume à l'auteur, pour mieux faire immerger et impliquer le lecteur dans la vision du monde et la civilisation culturelle du pays en question. Il se fait complice avec l'auteur dans la traduction des expressions figées qui sont connues comme porteuses de situations propres au pays concerné. Les solutions comme on l'a dit plus haut vont de l'emprunt à l'explication au cours du texte en passant par la note du traducteur en bas de page. Dans notre cas ci-dessous, le traducteur transmet le sens de ces expressions typiques du sud de l'Albanie par une traduction « *littérale* » de la situation de la langue source, pour mettre en évidence les formules fréquentes (dans la bouche des habitants du sud) de souhait ou de malédiction tourmentant l'esprit d'un enfant curieux de déchiffrer le sens comme le lecteur de la traduction. En effet, l'auteur a amené le traducteur vers ce choix, parce que comme on voit plus en bas, l'auteur explique les situations concrètes culturelles en utilisant les mots présents dans les expressions figées comme par exemple : « *më zien koka* » se traduit littéralement par « *j'ai la tête qui bout* » pour dire je ne peux plus ou « *j'ai la tête comme une citrouille* » ou « *hëngërsh kokën* » par « *Puisses-tu te manger la tête* » pour maudire quelqu'un « *que tu crèves ou que tu meurs* »

²⁴ Lederer M., La traduction aujourd'hui, Hachette, 1994, p. 123

²⁵ Kadare I., Chronique de la ville en pierre, Hachette, Paris, 1973, p. 98

“Fjalët filluan të çliroheshin nga kuptimi i tyre i përditshëm. Shprehjet e krijuara nga dy-tri fjalë filluan të zbërtheshin në një mënyrë torturose. Në qoftë se do të dëgjoja që dikush thoshte “më zien koka”, mendja ime, kundër vullnetit tim aty për aty përfytyronte një kokë që ziente si vorbë me fasule”²⁶.

“ Les paroles se défaisaient brusquement du sens qu’on leur accordait d’habitude. Les expressions de deux ou trois se fragmentaient douloureusement. Si j’entendais quelqu’un dire « j’ai la tête qui bout », mon esprit, malgré moi, imaginait une tête qui bouillait comme une marmite de haricots »²⁷.

Ou

*(.....)Në kokën time po krijohet një kaos i vërtetë, ku fjalët hidhnin një valle të frikshme, jashtë cdo arsyeje. Vecanërisht më mundonin shprehje të tilla si « hëngërsh kokën »²⁸
(.....)*

« Dans ma tête se créait un véritable chaos, où les mots se livraient à une danse macabre, hors des confins de la logique et de la réalité. En particulier des expressions comme « Puisses tu te manger la tête » que l’on employait chez nous comme une malédiction, me tourmentaient. A l’horreur que suscitait en moi la vision d’un homme tenant sa tête entre ses mains et la dévorant, s’ajoutait le mal que j’avais à comprendre comment un homme peut manger sa propre tête, quand on sait bien que tout se mange à l’aide des dents et que celles-ci se trouvaient dans la tête, même maudite »²⁹.

En guise de conclusion nous tenons à mettre en exergue que l’abondance des modèles de traduction où l’on a recours à l’intraduisible, ne gêne rien à la qualité du texte littéraire. Même si on sait d’après Umberto Eco (« *Dire quasi la stessa cosa* »), que la fidélité dans la traduction n’est pas la reprise du mot à mot, mais du monde à monde et que le traducteur doit ouvrir le même monde que celui que l’auteur a ouvert, mais avec des mots différents qui touche à la culture aussi, il existe bien des cas dans le travail difficile du traducteur où il expérimente dans la recherche d’une vraie traduction. En effet, il est clair, comme Nida le souligne que : « Les mots ne peuvent pas être compris correctement, séparés des phénomènes culturels localisés, dont ils sont les symboles »³⁰.

Mais, dans notre étude sur l’intraduisible, la complicité de l’auteur avec le traducteur crée un climat de curiosité et d’intérêt pour le lecteur qui s’immerge avec plaisir dans un autre monde culturel à travers les emprunts. Ainsi, les éléments qui ne sont pas traduits colorent d’avantage le contexte culturel d’une communauté, ce qui la rend d’ailleurs différente des autres. Donc, l’intraduisible malgré les pertes de nuances culturelles, donne une nouvelle dimension à la traduction du texte littéraire.

²⁶ Kadare I., *Kronike ne gur*, Onufri, Tirane, 2000, p. 96

²⁷ Kadare I., *Chronique de la ville en pierre*, Hachette, Paris, 1973, p. 98

²⁸ Kadare I., *Kronike ne gur*, Onufri, Tirane, 2000, p. 96

²⁹ Kadare I., *Chronique de la ville en pierre*, Hachette, Paris, 1973, p. 99

³⁰ Nida, E. A., *Linguistics and ethnology*, Word, 1945, nr 2 p. 207

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SOCIAL REPRESENTATIONS AND DISTANCES FROM THE SELF

MIHAI ZDRENGHEA*, MARIA-IONELA NEAGU**

ABSTRACT. In presidential debates, the individual floor getting is conditioned by what the participants assume about each other's cognitive experience, emotional involvement. During the public political confrontation, the participants use repeated attempts to destabilize the opponent's position, on the one hand, and restore one's own political power, on the other. In what follows we will try to show that the effectiveness of Obama's speech lies in the coherence of his representations and the preservation of arguments in supporting his standpoints. Obama establishes his authority by categorizing his target audience, i.e. the middle class, placing them first in the order of priorities and on the other hand, by resorting to modal verbs with their deontic value for the audience to take his statements as right and reliable pointing, at the same time, to his realistic views.

Key Words: *critical discourse analysis, confrontation, functionalisation, backgrounding*

1. Analytical Framework

The force of argumentation lies on the one hand in the speaker's ability to structure his discourse so that he should convince a reasonable critic of the acceptability of his claims and standpoints (van Eemeren, 2004) and on the other hand, in the linguistic choices the speaker makes in order to represent the participants in an event and to express their motivations, intentions, social distance and their identities while interacting.

The general framework of the present study is circumscribed to Critical Discourse Analysis as both theory and method of textual analysis. Following Fairclough (2000) our approach will involve the study of 'discourse' as a way of representing the world, focusing on the presidential debate, namely the 2008 American Presidential debates, as the most representative genre of the social practice of elections.

We further on add to this framework a number of cognitivist and functionalist categories: argument structures, thematic roles, sociosemantic representations of actors, deictic centre and periphery. In particular, drawing upon Fillmore's (1968) theoretical approach to thematic roles (detailed introduction in Neagu, 2009: 60-62), van Leeuwen's (1996) network of linguistic means available for representing social actors (as presented in Neagu, 2008: 172-173) and Chilton's (2004) centre-periphery three dimensional axis of deixis, the paper attempts to identify the real Agent, Patients, Goals and Sources and the way they conceal the relations of power lying behind the speakers' words.

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2. Social Actors in 2008 American Presidential Debates

The analysis is based on excerpts from the three American Presidential Debates organized in 2008, as they were transcribed on the site of the Commission on Presidential Debates.

The purpose of the research is to identify the linguistic means and strategies by which the two candidates, John McCain and Barack Obama, represent their nation, their allies and enemies, and even themselves. The recurrent topics under scrutiny throughout the three debates were related to domestic and foreign policy and their impact upon America's national security. The global financial crisis was one of the core issues, along with the USA's involvement in military conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan.

In Obama's view, the Americans are 'we', the Wall Street and 'those of you on Main Street', taxpayers, homeowners, 'folks', 'ordinary Americans', 'the nurse, the teacher, the police officer', '95 percent of working families', 'your employer', 'everybody', 'our children', 'every young person', etc. Obama's target audience is clearly determined. He makes specific reference to certain categories of people, depicted mainly as Beneficiaries of his recovery plan, the Goal of his economic policies. Table 2.1 below illustrates a sample analysis of the linguistic construction of reality in Obama's speech characterized by constant configurations of participants and events.

Table 2.1.

Propositional structure in a portion of Obama's speech

<i>Argument 1</i>	<i>Predicate</i>	<i>Argument 2</i>	<i>Other arguments</i>	<i>Adjunct/conjunct</i>
we SOURCE	invest	in a serious energy policy GOAL		
that INSTR.	will save	the amount of money BENEFACTIVE		
we GOAL	are borrowing	[the money] THEME		from China SOURCE
[we] SOURCE	to send	[the money] THEME		to Saudi Arabia GOAL
we SOURCE	invest		in our young people GOAL in their ability	
[they] AGENT	to go			to college GOAL
that AGENT	will allow	them BENEFACTIVE		
[they] AGENT	to drive	this economy THEME	into the 21 st century GOAL	

Linguistically speaking, contrary to what Bas Aarts (2008: 94) states, one can notice that adjuncts acquire meaning and are assigned a theta-role in spite of the fact that they are not arguments and do not refer to a participant.

Whereas Obama's speech evinces instances of functionalisation as he refers to social actors in terms of their occupation or role, McCain's target audience is generically outlined by means of noun phrases such as 'a lot of Americans', 'the American worker', 'people', 'a business person', 'every family', 'every agency of government' and they are seen just as Patients or Experiencers of the crisis, rather than Beneficiaries of his future policies.

Table 2.2.

Propositional structure in a portion of McCain's speech

<i>Argument 1</i>	<i>Predicate</i>	<i>Argument 2</i>	<i>Other arguments</i>	<i>Adjunct/conjunct</i>
It	is	a terribly painful situation STIMULUS	for Americans EXPERIENCER	
They EXPER.	Are seeing	their premiums their co-pays PERCEPT		
[their premiums their co-pays] THEME	go			up
Forty-seven million Americans EXPER.	are	without health insurance		in America today
The escalating costs of health care AGENT	are inflicting	such pain STIMULUS	on working families and people PATIENT	
[working families and people] THEME				across the country LOCATION

On the other hand, he would rather nominate and quote certain authorities in the field than express his own opinion. Thus, whenever discussion focuses on military conflicts, one of his favourite, trustworthy Agents is General Petraeus, whose strategies and initiatives are praised as being the right things to do. He also mentions Sarah Palin, identifying her as an Agent (*'She cut the size of government'*), a Stimulus (*'She has ignited our party and people all over America'*) and a Cogniser (*'She understands that autism is on the rise'*). These are legitimising strategies (Chilton, 2004: 46) that help McCain appear as truthful and morally right. At the same time, he presents 'the other' negatively, blaming and accusing Obama all the time, delegitimising all his claimed authorities (*'Joe Biden has been wrong on many foreign policy and national security issues, which is supposed to be his strength'*).

The personal pronoun ('they') designates several categories of actors: enemies, allies, the American army. When talking about conflicts with other countries (the external policy) the main social actors are, on the one hand, WE (a spirit of solidarity among all Americans) and on the other hand, THEY (the opponents, the enemies): *'they quadrupled their nuclear capacity'*, *'they are operating themselves'*, *'they've reconstituted themselves'*, *'their illegal behaviour'*.

The enemy countries are represented as groups or as nations. They usually appear together, a sense of association and cooperation being highly suggested: *'We cannot separate Afghanistan from Iraq'* / *'They've (the Pakistanis) intermarried with Al Qaida and the Taliban'*. When politicians refer to these countries, they do not mean the entire nation, only rebel organizations such as Al Qaida, Hezbollah, or Hamas. These are all examples of nominations, i.e. individualization by proper names. A distinction is sometimes made between the terrorist organization from a certain country and the government of that country. So, the speaker is not overgeneralising.

On the other hand, ‘we’ is synonymous with America, also mentioned as ‘home’ as in the following example: “*Americans here at home.*” The plural form denotes the idea of collectivization. It is a sense of belongingness to a certain culture – in this case to the American one. Thus, we assist to a permanent oscillation between ‘here’ and ‘there’, between ‘we’ and ‘they’ and to a change of perspectives from ‘home’ to ‘abroad’.

“we are still spending \$10 billion a month, when they have a \$79 billion surplus.”

“our efforts of isolation have actually accelerated their efforts to get nuclear weapons”

SOURCE

The third person plural personal pronoun also refers to the American troops. The following examples allow the reader to recreate the image of the army.

688 brave young Americans (collectivization; categorization by identification and appraisal)

I was honoured to speak to those troops.

They said, let us win.

AGENT

(...) more U.S. troops should be sent to Afghanistan.

THEME [PASS] GOAL

(...) allow our troops to (...)

Our troops have performed brilliantly.

AGENT

Transposing the image of the troops into thematic roles we identify a switch from the subject position – AGENT – to the Patient position and also Theme if we consider the troops as the entity which moves from Iraq to Afghanistan.

‘They’ also refers to the allied countries, to that “league of democracies” that the speakers mention several times. An important role regarding this issue is played by NATO, an organization whose aim is “respecting international boundaries and the norms of internal behavior” (identification with other countries, likeness – the same form of government, sharing the same values). The nations which belong to this organization must protect each other:

“be supportive and in solidarity with them in their efforts. They are members of NATO”

“they are free to join NATO (...) start bringing them in.”

“we, the U.S., will support the inclusion of Georgia and Ukraine in the natural process, inclusion into NATO.”

In the last two examples we can notice that NATO is viewed as a container, an enclosed area. The allies are mainly represented as Patients or Instruments as in the following example: “We have to work more closely with our allies.”

Last but not least, social actors can also be impersonalized, that is represented by expressions which do not denote human participants, for instance by replacing them metonymically with names of parts of the body (instances of somatisation), or by means of abstract nouns, leading to conceptual metaphors, such as ENEMIES ARE LIVING BODIES:

“the hands of Al Qaida”

“some of that money ends up in the hands of terrorist organizations”

“stinking corpse” – referring to Israel

“But we have to have a president who is clear that you don’t deal with Russia based on staring into his eyes and seeing his soul (Putin’s).”

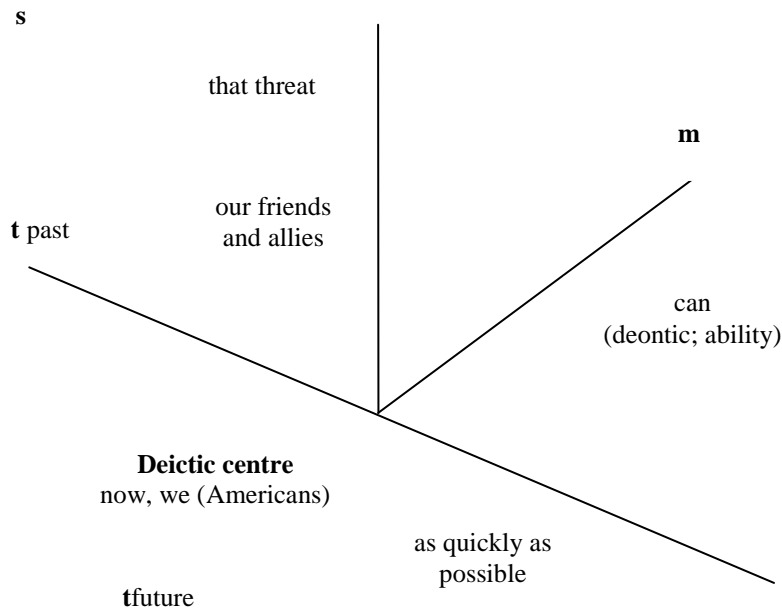
“The fledging democracies’ include countries as: Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, the Czech Republic, Georgia. They are treated as entities that need protection, linguistically

represented as Patients. Instances of impersonalisation, if any, mainly result either into backgrounding the identity of the actors that may be held responsible for an activity, or into complete denial of responsibility.

3. The Deictic Centre and Periphery.

Following Chilton's approach to representation (2004: 56-59) as a three-dimensional axis of deixis – time, space, modality - we attempt to graphically project various statements made by Senator McCain or by Senator Obama with a view to account for the linguistic choices the speakers make in representing 'the self' as the right authority and 'the other' as departing from the norms of morality and truthfulness. The examples are taken from the transcript of the first American presidential debate (2008).

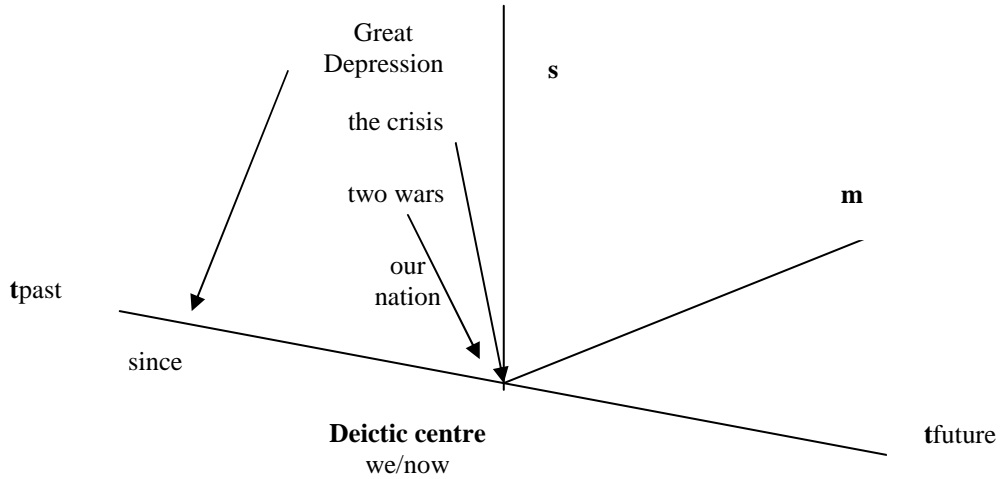
(1) *we can act with our friends and allies and reduce that threat as quickly as possible (...)*



If we are to provide an interpretation of this schema, we can say that on the space axis *s* we encounter the entities indexed by the noun phrases: *our friends and allies*, *that threat*. The deictic centre is marked by the use of inclusive 'we' that denotes generic reference to the speaker and all the other Americans. As space builders the possessive pronoun 'our' and the anaphoric demonstrative 'that' depict the proximate forces that join the speaker against distant entities.

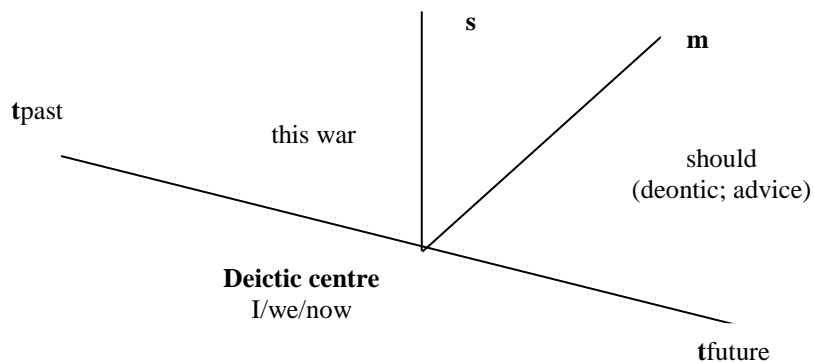
On the time axis *t* the origin is the time of speaking. There is no reference to the past moment, all the activities denoted by the verbs are asserted as taking place at the present moment – 'now' – or in the near future - *as quickly as possible* – suggesting the necessity of taking action. Finally, on the modality axis *m* we may say that the speaker is not only *here* and *now*, but it also represents the origin of the deontic *right* in our case. The modal *can* is used with its deontic value, expressing ability of doing something (in this situation of reducing the threat).

(2) *Our nation is involved in two wars, and we are going through the worst financial crisis since the Great Depression.*



Translating this schema into words, we would say that on the space axis we have represented four distinct entities according to their proximity from the centre. The main ‘actor’ here is *our nation* which is contained by all the other entities: *two wars*, *the crisis*, *the Great Depression*. As regards the time axis, we observe the past reference (*since the Great Depression*) and the relation with the present moment (now America being involved in two wars and also dealing with a financial crisis). In terms of modality, there is no explicit reference, but the statement is assumed to be true and right, if the hearers have contextual knowledge.

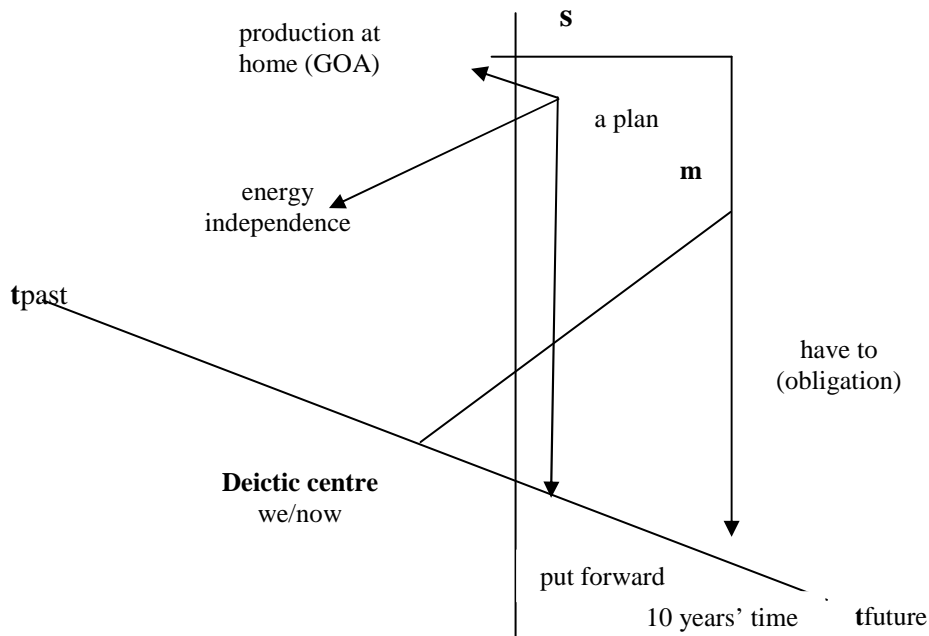
(3) *Now, what I’ve said is we should end this war responsibly.*



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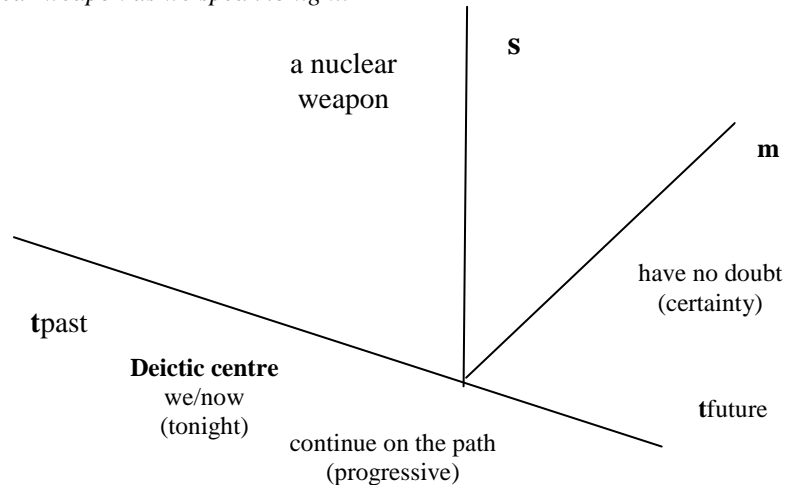
This representation shows a single spatial deictic expression – ‘*this war*’ – which is located very closed to the *self* (the speaker) due to the use of the demonstrative ‘*this*’. There is no past or future reference, the only aspect that matters being the present moment – *now*. On the modality axis we deal with the deontic *truth* expressed by means of the modal *should* denoting advice.

(4) *We have to have energy independence so I've put forward a plan to make sure that, in 10 years' time, we have freed ourselves from dependence on Middle Eastern Oil by increasing production at home, but most importantly by starting to invest in alternative energy, solar, wind, biodiesel, making sure that we're developing the fuel-efficient cars of the future right here in the United States, in Ohio and Michigan, instead of Japan and South Korea.*



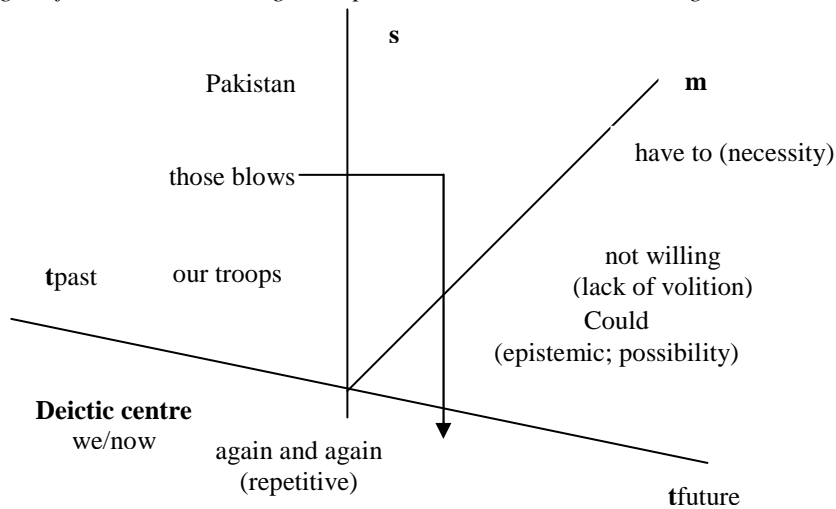
Analyzing the representation from above, we see that on the space axis the closest entities to the speaker are *energy independence* and *the production at home* (which represents the goal to be achieved in 10 years' time), while countries like Japan and South Korea are remote from the speaker. Referring to the axis of time, we observe the projection in the future of all the actions. A plan concerning with the energy independence is adopted *now*, so that *in 10 years' time* the production at home will increase. It is a long term plan. At the level of modality, we encounter the modal ‘*have to*’ showing obligation, responsibility and necessity at the same time. It stands for the deontic *right*.

(5) *But we have no doubt that the Iranians continue on the path to the acquisition of a nuclear weapon as we speak tonight.*



In this example we face two opposite entities: on the one side, the speaker ('we') and on the other side, at the remote end of the space axis, the Iranians with their nuclear weapon. On the time axis, there is this specific reference to the present moment – 'tonight' – and the idea of continuity in future related to the Iranians and their actions. Thus, the value of the speaker's actions is anchored in the present, whereas the others are connected to the future. Last but not least, even though there is no modal used, we may infer the rightness of the utterance from the speaker's explicit certainty.

(6) *We could allow our troops to just be on the defensive and absorb those blows again and again if Pakistan is unwilling to cooperate, or we have to start making some decisions.*



The last schema reveals three entities situated on the space axis: *our troops* (closer to the speaker), *those blows* and *Pakistan* (situated farther from the deictic centre). The time reference is present with a slight projection in the future realized by means of adverb repetition 'again and again'. Modal verbs evince different values. Those related to *self*, i.e. *could* and *have to*, sustain the rightness of the actions, while the modal *not willing* pointing to the Pakistan denotes the wrongness of the action.

4. Conclusions

In presidential debates, the individual floor getting is conditioned by what the participants assume about each other's cognitive experience, emotional involvement. During the public political confrontation, the participants use repeated attempts to destabilize the opponent's position, on the one hand, and restore one's own political power, on the other.

The effectiveness of Obama's speech lies in the coherence of his representations and the preservation of arguments in supporting his standpoints. Obama establishes his authority by categorizing his target audience, i.e. the middle class, placing them first in the order of priorities and on the other hand, by resorting to modal verbs with their deontic value for the audience to take his statements as right and reliable pointing, at the same time, to his realistic views.

The war is seen from two different points of view: as a benefic mechanism (the heroic view) or having a negative connotation perceived as the Source of many crimes and loss of innocent lives. Irrespective of the two views, the war is understood as a consumer, as a direction in which one needs to invest money and human resources. In spite of the fact that Obama did not have McCain's experience in foreign policy, he managed to resolve most of their differences of opinion providing the right arguments that forced McCain to retract his standpoints.

McCain is especially prone to making evaluative statements that are not grounded in rational arguments, but subjective and relative. In particular, he tries to prove the legitimacy of Iraq war no matter the price paid by the American people. His statements are relative to individual life-styles. He mainly addresses the soldiers and the veterans whom he places on a pedestal in his attempt to represent the war as a right strategy in leading a country.

Further analysis of conceptual metaphors created by the linguistic choices of the two candidates, along with their argumentative conduct will eventually emphasise the role played by different entities in building, supporting, reshaping or de-mythologising American identity.

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**LIFE (AND DEATH) NARRATIVES IN JOAN DIDION'S
*THE YEAR OF MAGICAL THINKING***

MARIA ȘTEFĂNESCU¹

ABSTRACT. Joan Didion's 2005 book, *The Year of Magical Thinking*, recounts the author's experience of grief subsequent to her husband's unexpected death, as well as being an illness narrative. Based on recent work done in autobiographical studies and narratology, I shall attempt to analyse *The Year of Magical Thinking* in terms of the identity narratives it deploys in an effort to reestablish life coherence and continuity. I shall also focus on the book's formal construction and the various reader responses it may trigger.

Key Words: *illness narrative, autobiography, mourning literature, reader response.*

Joan Didion's autobiographical book, *The Year of Magical Thinking* (2005), would hardly fit in the tradition of memoir writing which proposes a balanced account of, and reflection on, the whole span of one's lifetime from the perspective of mature age. However, as scholars working within the field of autobiographical studies have amply demonstrated, "autobiography is not a single genre but an "umbrella" term for widely diverse kinds of life narrative [...] that engage historically situated practices of self-representation" (Smith & Watson, 2005/2008: 357). As such, I believe that an exploration of *The Year of Magical Thinking* in the light of recent work done on identity narrative and illness narrative would help illuminate the various aspects in which Didion's book relates to both, as well as problematizing readerly expectations regarding mourning literature.

Although not unchallenged (see Strawson, 2004), the currently mainstream conception of how people understand and represent their lives relies on the "narrative identity" thesis, whose core argument – expressed by philosophers (Ricoeur, 1990[1992]), psychologists (Bruner, 1997) and narratologists (Rimmon-Kenan, 2002) alike – is that the sense we have of our own identity is substantially shaped by the stories we tell about ourselves which, in turn, may be influenced and mediated by the "cultural genres" (Bruner, 1997: 147) prevalent in our community (e.g. the rebel, the dreamer, the self-made person, the victim of society etc.). Rather than coming 'ready-made', the facts and circumstances of our lives are "fashioned to fit our growing conceptions of our Selves, even filtered at the entry point by our perception of the world" (Bruner, 1997: 147). In the influential narrative model of self-construction that he has defended, J. Bruner argues that the impetus for extending/reconsidering one's conception of the self, as well as the mechanism that triggers (life) narratives, is the experience of trouble. "When Self is no longer able to function in a fashion that relates us to others and, indeed, to our prior conceptions of ourselves [...] we turn to renewed self-construction" (Bruner, 1997: 158) in the hope of achieving a new coherence, often subsequent to a traumatic event that has brought major disruption to our previously stable lives.

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While the experience of personal or collective disaster is certainly not the sole impulse for autobiographical writing, a considerable number of life narratives do originate in an encounter with misfortune, and they have recently been given extensive scholarly attention in the form of studies on illness narratives, accounts of loss and survival, trauma and witness narratives. Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan's current work, for example, has resulted in insightful analyses of how illness narratives can illuminate and/or call into question some tenets of contemporary narratology. In her 2002 study on illness and narrative identity, Rimmon-Kenan examines "the interplay in illness narratives between continuity, its disruption, and the various ways of coping with the latter" (Rimmon-Kenan, 2002: 10) and concludes that, more often than not, such coping involves an effort to restructure past memories and future expectations in order to reconcile them with the present and establish a new sense of coherence and continuity. In this article I shall propose an analysis of Joan Didion's autobiographical book, *The Year of Magical Thinking*, as a life narrative which, while thematizing both illness and the response to the loss of a spouse, invites but also resists description in terms of the types and categories put forth by Rimmon-Kenan. Narrative continuity in *The Year of Magical Thinking* is achieved mostly through the process of discursively "realigning present and past" (Rimmon-Kenan, 2002: 15), often by narrating the latter in the light of the former. However, Rimmon-Kenan's contention (based on the corpus of illness narratives she has analysed) that "these narrators tend to emphasize elements of their past history that they did not stress before [...], to create new connections between the events, to change the balance between foreground and background" (Rimmon-Kenan, 2002: 156) appears to have only limited validity for the case of Joan Didion's autobiographical account. *The Year of Magical Thinking* does not result in any radical reinterpretation of the past. Instead, of the two overarching narratives the protagonist regards as having always been central to her understanding of life one is given higher prominence and further emphasized as capable of rendering some meaning to the experience of loss and death.

The appointment in Samarra

Married for almost forty years to John Gregory Dunne, Joan Didion writes *The Year of Magical Thinking* one year after a massive heart attack causes her husband's sudden death. A parallel account follows Quintana Roo Dunne, the couple's only child, through a series of illnesses whose major complications result in long-term hospitalisation and, after what appears to be a positive outcome in the book, eventually lead to her death (Quintana Roo Dunne dies in August 2005, prior to the publication of *The Year of Magical Thinking*, but Joan Didion decides not to alter the ending). A professional writer, having published both fiction and journalistic prose, Joan Didion turns to autobiography in an effort to comprehend and come to terms with her deeply traumatic experience: "[t]his is my attempt to make sense of the period that followed, weeks and then months that cut loose any fixed idea I had ever had about death, about illness, about probability and luck [...] about the shallowness of sanity, about life itself" (Didion, 2005: 7). As she painfully learns that "[g]rief, when it comes, is nothing we expect it to be" (Didion, 2005: 26), Didion seeks to grapple with it by relating to other people's possibly similar experiences but finds the literature of grief "remarkably spare" (Didion, 2005:44), the practical and/or inspirational guides mostly useless and the professional studies too self-assuredly technical and impersonal for any empathetic response. Moreover, unlike Emily Post – author of an 1922 etiquette book which "spoke to [her] directly" (Didion, 2005: 59) –, Didion is grieving, and writing, in a world which no longer recognizes mourning nor allows it room for public expression. She quotes Philippe Ariès and the social anthropologist Geoffrey Gorer on the recent

change in Western attitudes towards death and reflects on how the novel ethical imperative to “enjoy oneself”, and not disturb the enjoyment of others, has led to the treatment (and rejection) of public mourning as morbid anti-social self-indulgence.

In the privacy of her own “grief observed”, Joan Didion meanders between present and past, juxtaposing a devastating sense of loss with memories from an exceptionally happy marriage. After having seen herself for forty years through her husband’s eyes – in what had felt like a “denial of time” (Didion, 2005: 197) –, Didion finds herself rendered invisible, incorporeal in her vulnerability: “I seemed to have crossed one of those legendary rivers that divide the living from the dead, entering a place in which I could be seen only by those who were themselves recently bereaved” (Didion, 2005: 75). Present thoughts unfailingly trigger past memories in what is described as “the vortex effect” (Didion, 2005: 107); the discipline of keeping herself “on the correct track (the narrow track, the track on which there was no going back)” (Didion, 2005: 53) constantly fails to work. Instead, Didion registers throughout what retrospectively she regards as her “year of magical thinking” the hidden but pervasive belief that “what had happened remained reversible” (Didion, 2005: 32) and, given the right circumstances, a magic trick could be performed so that her thoughts and wishes would have the power to reverse the narrative.

While on a certain level of consciousness Didion’s coping strategy is the unacknowledged expectation that her husband could still come back, the simultaneous awareness of the finality of death triggers another set of conflicting responses – guilt, anger, self-pity. A sense of responsibility for not having been able to avert the accident, as well as culpability for every instance of what are now regarded as past failures of gratitude and appreciation (“a persistent theme by that stage of whatever I was going through” (Didion, 2005: 154)), uneasily alloy with anger at having been left behind (it is one of her dreams that brings to Didion’s conscious attention the fact that on a however irrational level she held her husband responsible for having abandoned her). A recurrent theme throughout the book, which Didion engages differently at different stages, is the question of self-pity and one’s appropriate response to it. The concluding section of *The Year of Magical Thinking* pursues an implicitly polemical line of reflection, as Didion relates abhorrence of self-pity to avoidance of visible mourning. Both are currently construed as “a failure to manage the situation” (Didion, 2005: 192) but Didion’s experience-based contention is, rather, that self-pity is inherent to the process of grieving itself. Part of the normal response of any person who, after years of having projected his/her focus on a significant other, finds that target permanently removed by death, self-pity merely confirms, no guilt attached, that “[w]e are imperfect mortal beings, aware of that mortality even as we push it away, failed by our very complication, so wired that when we mourn our losses we also mourn, for better or for worse, ourselves. As we were. As we no longer are. As we will one day not be at all” (Didion, 2005: 198).

Full assimilation of the thought of “the permanent impassability of the divide” (Didion, 2005: 195) caused by death gradually reshapes Didion’s account and steers it away from provisional self-constructing narratives. The year of magical thinking comes to an end, and so does the identity story informed by the logic of popular songs. As she unobtrusively discards her picturing herself in terms of someone who “looked for the silver lining” and “walked on through the storms” (Didion, 2005: 171), Didion returns to the more fundamental narratives that used to be central to her understanding of life. Having confronted what she feared to be the meaninglessness of existence, a very young Didion eventually found sense and coherence in geology: the scientific account of the constant changing of the earth and

the inexorable shifting of geological structures was interpreted as evidence of order in the great universal frame. At the same time she came to assume a relative insignificance of the individual human destiny, whose possible destruction “might be a personal regret but remained, in the larger picture I had come to recognize, a matter of abiding indifference” (Didion, 2005: 190). Years later, her marriage enables Didion to find “equal meaning” (Didion, 2005: 190) in the rituals of domestic life while not abandoning the earlier narrative: “the two systems existed for me on parallel tracks that occasionally converged [...]. In my unexamined mind there was always a point, John’s and my death, at which the tracks would converge for a final time” (Didion, 2005: 191).

When, subsequent to her husband’s death, Didion experiences absence and grief as “the very opposite of meaning” (Didion, 2005: 189) while no longer being able to shelter herself against meaninglessness in the stability of domestic life, she intuitively incorporates the new life events into the geological narrative. The last chapter of *The Year of Magical Thinking* is saturated with references to it, even as non-coincidentally opening up the possibility of acceptance and recovery. On Christmas Eve, Didion entertains guests, as a pledge that she will not lead the rest of her life as “someone who could not function on her own” (Didion, 2005: 222). At the same time that she resents the ending of the year, since it triggers the guilt-ridden contemplation of the inevitability of a gradual decrease in her focus on her husband and their past life together, Didion professes to have come to recognize “that if we are to live ourselves there comes a point at which we must relinquish the dead, let them go, keep them dead” (Didion, 2005: 226). This acknowledgement, however, is framed by a larger argument hinted at in the opening section of the last chapter – a quotation from *Democracy* (Didion’s 1984 novel), which recounts the protagonist, grandchild of a geologist, having learned “early to anticipate the absolute mutability of hills and waterfalls and even islands [...]. A hill is a transitional accommodation to stress, and ego may be a similar accommodation” (Didion, 2005: 220). With obvious symmetry, the words on the last page of *The Year of Magical Thinking* reinforce the argument: “Leis go brown, tectonic plates shift, deep currents move, islands vanish, rooms get forgotten [...]. You had to go with the change” (Didion, 2005: 227). At this particular existential juncture, Didion’s enduring identity narrative is once more called to aid; while perhaps grim and providing little personal comfort in its trans-individual scientific generality, it is nevertheless deployed to lend some measure of coherence and continuity to a life otherwise threatened by dissolution and loss of sanity.

Encountering illness

“[D]oes mastery over the story become mastery over a life?”. In its original context, the question (posed by Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan (2005/2008: 402)) addresses some of the complex ethical implications of the decisions terminally ill patients may need to confront. I believe, however, that the same question can illuminate significant aspects of illness narratives recounted not by the patients themselves but by a close family member and/or caregiver. It is the case of Joan Didion, who undergoes her process of mourning while also sharing in the experience of her daughter, Quintana Roo Dunne, whose repeated hospitalisations for life-threatening issues become the other major focus of *The Year of Magical Thinking*. Throughout the book, Didion’s reflections on illness and the medical system are related on several levels to the question of whether “information is control” (Didion, 2005: 44, 94) so that mastery over one’s own (or somebody else’s) life narrative translates indeed into controlling (i.e. safeguarding) that life itself. As she reflects on the absolute trust many of

her acquaintances had in their personal management skills, Didion recognizes the thinking as her own while at the same time registering a deeper level at which, being “born fearful”, she has always apprehended “that some events in life would remain beyond my ability to control or manage them” (Didion, 2005: 98). Both Quintana’s pneumonia, which results in septic shock and induced coma, and her emergency neurosurgery belong to this category, forcing on Didion the struggle between the irrepressible need to find answers, learn why, redress (“I recall pressing the surgeon on this point, myself trying (one more time) to manage the situation” (Didion, 2005: 100)) and an understanding that no explanation would, in actual fact, undo the damage (“I realized that the answer to the question made no difference. It had happened. It was the new fact on the ground” (Didion, 2005: 100)).

Dealing with the new facts on the ground, however great the uncertainty about their outcome, involves engagement with the medical system as well as the medical jargon. With reference to the latter, Rimmon-Kenan has noticed that “[p]atients often try to adopt the language of medicine, perhaps because it gives them the feeling of control and the illusion of being able to discuss their condition with their doctors as peers. At the same time, this language is completely dissociated from embodied experience, and it may inadvertently reinforce the appropriation of the patient by the medical establishment” (Rimmon-Kenan, 2006: 246). If there is any apprehension of the system ‘taking over’ the patient in *The Year of Magical Thinking*, it remains mostly muted although on several occasions Didion does attempt to influence the course of treatment and/or medical investigations, efforts which make her feel “less helpless” but do not “endear [her] to the young men and women who made up the [UCLA] house staff” (Didion, 2005: 128). The medical language, however, rings distinctly clear in long sections of the book, as Didion learns “the names of many tests and scales” whose meaning “remained obscure” (Didion, 2005: 128) as well as other specialized jargon which she comprehends more fully. Unlike the illness narratives Rimmon-Kenan refers to, the appropriation of the language of medicine in *The Year of Magical Thinking* is never unambiguous, nor is it performed without clear awareness of its ‘alien-ness’. Prominently marked as ‘other’, the medical jargon may contribute the appearance of precision and control but Didion does not entirely give in to the illusion. There is bitter irony in her seemingly taking comfort in the language of drug advertising: “This seemed in some way a positive prism through which to view the situation: Quintana was not the child who had been a deliriously happy bride five months before and whose chance of surviving the next day or two could now be calibrated at a point between 56 and 69 percent, she was “the sepsis market”, suggesting that there was still a consumer choice to be made” (Didion, 2005: 65). However skillfully and effectively deployed to shift perspectives on any given situation, language only offers Didion cold comfort: mastery over a narrative does not become mastery over a life.

The rhetoric of grief

Still, it is to language that Didion turns when disaster strikes. Not unlike many other life narratives which recount traumatic events, *The Year of Magical Thinking* begins with a statement to the effect that language as previously known and trusted no longer suffices to give adequate expression to this particular experience: “I have been a writer my entire life [...], I developed a sense that meaning itself was resident in the rhythms of words and sentences and paragraphs [...]. The way I write is who I am, or have become, yet this is a case in which I wish I had instead of words and their rhythms a cutting room, equipped with an Avid, a digital editing system on which I could touch a key and collapse the sequence of

time, show you simultaneously all the frames of memory that come to me now, let you pick the takes, the marginally different expressions, the variant readings of the same lines. This is a case in which I need more than words to find the meaning” (Didion, 2005: 7-8). Just as she professes reluctance to rely on the sequentiality of writing and preference for the concomitant unedited rendering of all the facets of her experience, Didion embarks on writing a life narrative whose most striking formal features are precisely conspicuous structuring and effective rhetoric. In what have otherwise been highly favourable reviews of the book, critics have pointed out as a “significant problem with *The Year of Magical Thinking*” (Skloot, 2006: 256) the understated emotion and well-wrought quality of its prose. While deploring the circumstance that “Didion could not shed old habits of language and tone as she sought to write in a new genre and about the rattled new self she had become [...] cold, dispassionate distance remains what she does” (Skloot, 2006: 256), Floyd Skloot finds himself moved instead by the book’s “repetitions and disjointedness” which he regards as more powerfully and authentically suggesting “what it is like to be shattered by grief” (Skloot, 2006: 256).

Indeed, there seems to be a level at which people expect that the most genuine expression of grief should be the spontaneous wail or, short of that, the disconnected fragmented narrative. Although she accounts for the coherence and structuring encountered in most illness narratives in terms of both external circumstances (e.g. writing invites tighter organization than oral narratives) and inner needs (writing “is a way of taking control, creating order, thus keeping chaos at bay” (Rimmon-Kenan, 2002: 23)), Shlomith Rimmon-Kenan grounds her own stronger interest in fragmentation in the assumption that the latter more genuinely “lay[s] bare the ill subject’s vulnerability, thereby suggesting the limitations, perhaps even the *hubris*, of the better-structured narratives” (Rimmon-Kenan, 2002: 22). While undoubtedly the raw expression of feeling or the disjointed segmented narrative remain available writing options, I would argue that Didion’s *The Year of Magical Thinking* brilliantly indicates that focus on form and authenticity of emotion are not incompatible. Nor does the former necessarily imply an act of *hubris*; on the contrary, the cultivation of a carefully wrought prose may as well testify to an effort at effacement, to the discretion of placing raw feelings behind a screen of polished language. As one will not find it surprising from a former contributor to Tom Wolfe’s *The New Journalism*, Didion writes autobiography with the tools of literature, as well as blending into her memoir fictional excerpts from both her own and her husband’s novels. The long series of analepses *The Year of Magical Thinking* consists of are only occasionally triggered by random associations; frequently there is, instead, a sense of deliberate structuring and purposeful insertion of a particular episode at a particular narrative juncture (each of the book’s twenty-two chapters is divided into several sub-chapters, graphically marked by blank spaces and more or less immediately interconnected by semantic links). The repetitions and leitmotifs – perhaps the most prominent formal feature of the text – bear witness to recurrent points of reflection and obsessive personal concerns while at the same time relating the narrative to the Western literary tradition that thematizes death and mourning. Removed (like any other published work) from the lived experience of its author, Didion’s autobiographic narrative may unwittingly prompt some readers to withhold empathy on account of its array of formal devices possibly being construed as artificiality. However, these same formal devices may equally be regarded as the accomplished and rhetorically effective handling of language in order to convey, with dignity and distinction – “a work of much majesty” (Kehe, 2005: 1) has been one reviewer’s felicitously phrased assessment –, an experience which, by its very nature, hovers on the threshold of incommunicability.

Conclusions

“Were you watching *Tenko* with me and “the lost one” in Brentwood Park, did you go to dinner with us at Morton’s?”— thus comes, early in the book (Didion, 2005: 56), the abrupt interrogation mentally addressed to a dr. V. D. Volkan, whose self-assured self-congratulatory description of his “re-grief therapy” triggers Didion’s “irrational anger” (Didion, 2005: 57). Indeed, neither dr. Volkan nor the readers of *The Year of Magical Thinking* were there. Like other life narratives of major trauma and loss, Didion’s account further divides its audience between those who have undergone their own experience(s) of mourning for an especially close person and those who have not. To whichever category one finds oneself belonging, a related question may be felt to tag the endeavour to approach such autobiographical writing in a scholarly manner. Is it ethically acceptable to dissect a book like *The Year of Magical Thinking* in search of the identity narratives it is shaped by and those it discards, then neatly compartmentalize it in analytical slots the better to meet the demands of an academic paper? The positive answer which I would like to believe one can give to this question is grounded in a sense of (already existent or eventually-to-be) shared experience. Didion’s book recounts the story of her own loss and sorrow, which she appears to comprehend, at length, in the light of her ever-trusted scientific narrative of mutability and perpetual transformation. While some readers (myself included) will not join Didion in this understanding of bereavement and death, the appointment in *Samarra is* the appointment all of us have, which lends to any reading of *The Year of Magical Thinking*, be it scholarly in its intention and unfolding, the underlying quality of an intensely personal reflection on suffering and death. For, as one of the book’s leitmotifs recites its reminder,

“Elena’s dreams were about dying.

Elena’s dreams were about getting old.

Nobody here has not had (will not have) Elena’s [and Joan Didion’s] dreams”.

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THE TRADITION OF POETIC PROSE IN JAPANESE LITERATURE. HYPOTHESES, CONTINUATIONS, CHARACTERISTICS

ADRIANA STAN*

ABSTRACT. *The tradition of poetic prose in Japanese literature. Hypotheses, continuations, characteristics.* The present study discusses typical structures and forms of the Japanese traditional literature, trying to dwell from a syncretical point of view upon the specific poetic dimension of the Nippon prose, and brings forth, in support of its hypotheses, analytical insights into several works confined to the area mentioned.

Key Words: *poetic, narrative, style, fragmentarism, haiku*

In cultural theories, Japan was generally seen as an "abstract civilization", Roland Barthes being one of the most recent thinkers to use the famous formula of "empire of signs" (Barthes, 1982: 5). Traditionalist and conservative, Nippon society has been always preserving its (attempted) order through well-established codes, pervasive in all domains of life. The propension towards the stability of the sign is also reflected by the Japanese Apollinian aesthetics. Although *Mono no aware*, the melancholy feeling of passage of time, represents the general vision underlying Japanese artistic forms, most of them could be characterized metaphorically as attempts to "freeze" in fixed structures momentary, ephemeral splendors. As illustrated by one of the paradigmatic genres of Japanese art, the *haiku*, a discernible tension between individual and universal lies at the core of any aesthetic configuration, which plays, in this respect, for the culture as a whole, the same function of symbolic ordering and cosmic equilibrium as the political organization of the *demos* would play, for instance, in ancient Greece. Society maintains its life as an homeostatic organism relying upon symbols of temporary beauty rendered in formal frames of eternity. Such symbols circulate among several spheres of culture, from pure art to popular icons or elements of everyday decorum: cherry flowers, the flowing silk, the fan, sparkly snows, reddish maple flowers, the ceremonial tea, the sign-gestures of the *kabuki* theatre.

Considering the propension towards abstractization dominant in Japanese culture and art, the literary theorist could easily explain why Nippon literature is in the least concerned with *mimesis*, an enduring and long canonic notion in Western prose. Rather than expanding on social or psychological realms in order to better embrace the real, Japanese modern writing shrinks in a bidimensional epic. Instead of a fully developed story with flesh-and-blood characters, living at the utmost tremolo of their feelings and sensations, we witness in often uncompleted succession clusters of anecdote moments, revelatory, yet never entirely revealed. We took several novels of the famous writer Yasunari Kawabata in support of these

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observations. We also believe it necessary to draw some hypotheses concerning the maintenance of the so-called "poetic prose", by bringing into discussion two of the literary milestones that helped shaping this specific sensibility: Matsuo Bashō's works and Sei Shōnagon's diary.

Chronologically the first one, having lived and written around the turn of the first and second millenniums, "Lady-in-Waiting" Sei Shōnagon brought the Japanese manner of perception towards the realms of literature, by composing an authentic and sparkly account of everyday actions, gestures, habits: *The Pillow Book*. The historical context was that of a mannerist age treasuring high, refined taste. For example, imperial attendants were supposed to display rich poetic culture, at all times and on all occasions, which led to a literary overload of even the commonest of conversations, stylized and ritualized as such.

Although sometimes vigorously bookish in usual notations, Sei Shōnagon is nevertheless personal in her laconic, elliptic, abrupt style, in her concise descriptions underlining subtle perceptive qualities and great sensibility. She writes not only an intrinsically lyrical journal, but also an *avant la lettre* diary. Fresh candid highlights of daily gestures, rhythms of nature or seasons discretely intertwine (although somehow in a gossip-like manner) with poignant moral observations concerning human nature. Although apparently not in the least concerned with the evolution of her inner self, she shows a perky insight for alterity, notices idiosyncrasies in the behavior of others, accounting for a certain Montagnean characteristic of her writing. On doing so, she takes full liberty in lucidity and criticism, an aspect which still makes her book modern and, in a revolutionary way regarding the age, even feminist. Miss Shōnagon is an intelligent, cultivated woman, quick at temper and with a keen spirit of observation.

What is relevant for the purpose of this paper is the fact that, even among strict cultural codes, dictating social behavior, speech and writing, the author does in reaction to the outer world much more than simply repeating traditional formulas of discourse. Her expression is lively, bright and spontaneously poetic. Actually, it seems that several of the images thus created were even incorporated by tradition, canonized in the aesthetics of *haiku* (see Chance, 1997:29). A beautiful translation by Henry Mittwer (see home.infionline.net/~ddisse/shonagon.html) points out the natural manner in which initially prosaic observations float within the substance of pure lyricism:

*Summer is best in the evening
on a moonlit night ...
Even if it is dark without moon, it is lovely
when the fireflies dart all over,
or even one or two fly by here and there
with cool lights.
It is also wonderful when it rains.*

Sei Shōnagon alternates prose and poetry often without being aware of the artistic juxtaposition. On the other hand, at the ancient master Matsuo Bashō, the alternation is already a conscious rhetoric device, although the inevitable fusion of the two genres becomes even more obvious. Bashō's *Narrow Road to the Interior* is a *nikki*, or a travel journal, written as *haibun*; in other words, it intertwines *haikus* and *haiku*-like descriptions of landscapes. The proper prosodic part is close to prose through the preceding explanatory text, which helps it to further disseminate into the narrative texture. The *haibun* evolves asymptotically as a kind of movement back and forth from prose-like descriptive narrative bridges into shorter "poem"-like lines. Spare, tight rethoric enhances in both cases an acute awareness of time, of the moment in time, to be more specific. A light flow of sensibility fills both prose and *haiku* sections.

The prose resonates with the poetry, but does not repeat or explain it. A concise delineation of the matter is offered in the following quotation: "If a *haiku* is an insight into a moment of experience, a *haibun* is a story or narrative of how one came to have that experience" (Ross, 2002: 34). Prose and poetry no longer function as distinctly featured discursive modes, but share substance like communication vessels: "Like *haiku*, *haibun* begins in the everyday events of the author's life. These events occur as minute particulars of object, person, place, action. The author recognizes that these events connect with others in the fabric of time and literature, and waves a pattern demonstrating this connection. And if this writing is to be truly *haibun*, the author does this with a striking economy of language, without any unnecessary grammar, so that each word carries rich layers of meaning." (Higginson, 1989: 46).

With Bashō we witness the qualitative mutation of the *haiku*. This can no longer be regarded as mere aphorism, but has to be defined in terms of atmosphere and emotion. Its secret lies in the point of impact: the interaction between invariable and fluctuating, ephemeral and eternal. An extremely tight structure, with no deviations whatsoever, manages to comprise impressive vivid immediacy and sensory iridescence. The unbearable lightness of being, we could infer, becomes bearable only through its aesthetic mutation. For Western literature, the notion closest to the Japanese structure is believed to be that of the Joycean *epiphany*: a concept related to the artist's search to circumscribe the object in its full-of-significance-concreteness. In this respect, *haibun* has been defined as "narrative of an epiphany" (Bruce Ross in *The World Haiku Review*, vol. 1, no. 2, 2002).

In order to illustrate the previous conclusions, we quote an excerpt from *Bashō's Narrow Road. Spring and Autumn Passages*, as translated to English by Hiroaki Sato:

"After many days of solitary wandering, I came at last to the barrier-gate of Shirakawa, which marks the entrance to the northern regions. Here, for the first time, my mind was able to gain a certain balance and composure, no longer victim to pestering anxiety, so it was with a mild sense of detachment that I thought about the ancient traveller who had passed through this gate with a burning desire to write home. (...) I walked through trees laden with thick foliage with the distant sound of autumn wind in my ears and a vision of autumn tints before my eyes. There were hundreds and thousands of pure white blossoms of unohana in full bloom on either side of the road, in addition to the equally white blossoms of brambles, so that the ground, at a glance, seemed to be covered with early snow. (...)

*Decorating my hair
With white blossoms of unohana,
I walked through the gate,
My only gala dress.*

(Bashō, 1996: 42).

A few lines pondering upon the master's literary credo will help us understand the continuity between an artist like Bashō and Japanese modern literature. In both instances, a poignantly visual narrative puts in improbable balance the concreteness of perception and the generality of vision: "In matters of art, one should follow into the steps of creative nature and consort with the four seasons. From what we see, there's nothing to not be flower, from what we feel, there's nothing to not be moon" (Bashō, 1998: 47).¹

¹ The translation belongs to us.

Based on a narrative line of utter simplicity, with minimal rhetorical devices, vague causality and blurred denouements, Kawabata's novels owe much, as literary criticism has already pointed out, to the aesthetics of the Heian age, to the descriptivism and discrete sensitivity of the ancient *monogatari* (Keene, 1998: 776). Their lack of clearly-cut structural guidelines, typically assigned to a common development of plot, resembles a lot the fragmentary, hazardous, diary-like flowing of the above mentioned tradition, another representant of which was, of course, Sei Shōnagon. On the other hand, these formal characteristics also account for the deep intimacy between prose and poetry, anecdote and lyricism in Kawabata's novels, up to the point where their distinction would be, practically, impossible.

Whereas in Western literature, the modernist aesthetics triggered off the expansion of narrative prose in the realm of poetry only as far as the 20th century (Albérès, 1968: 221), Japanese literature was from its very beginnings imagistic and lyrical in nature. Virginia Woolf, James Joyce or Joseph Conrad resorted to the technical achievements of Symbolism in order to enlarge the areas of narrative realism and on enhancing their prose with musicality, mystery, indeterminacy, they tried to suggest the world and the human mind are larger than rational and analytical categories of discourse could ever confine. Therefore, in subsidiary, Western poetical prose also developed as a philosophical stance towards reality, tightly connected to the general trend of irrationalism pervading the thinking of the 19th and 20th centuries.

Unlike the ideological reasons of this formal turn in Western literature, the Japanese poetical narrative evolves from an old lineage of tradition, it is therefore conservative and by no means subversive. Within this economy of discourse, prose and poetry are not elements of an incongruous mixture of genres, but form substantially, in balanced proportions, a single organic genre, rather atypical and difficult to approach by Western concepts.

In fact, the first work of Japanese prose, *Tosa nikki*, compiled by Ki no Tsurayuki around 935, belongs to a genre known to modern scholars as the poetic diary, *uta nikki*. The poetic diaries of classical Japanese literature were anthologies of poems strung together by narrative prose sections. However, these so-called diaries were written not only as mere records of daily events, but also included reminiscences, remembrances of the past.

On placing modern Japanese novels in continuation of the first poetic forms discussed above, one should keep in mind an essentially non-Western characteristic of the Nippon diary. Opposed to a whole tradition of confession which could be traced in Europe back to the works of St. Augustine, the Japanese diary is rather objective than subjective. Its focus on recording significant details of life as well as that of collecting sensitive reminiscences does not function for the sole profit of subjectivity, the purpose of self-construction, of finding the perennial moral truths of the psyche - as Western journals do. In fact, Japanese diary concentrates maximum efforts of imagination to observe, in all its striking concreteness, a situation, a state of spirit, an object, a landscape outside the psychological being of the observer.

A dominant psychological discretion, responsible for a certain impression of elementarity, has been preserved in Kawabata's otherwise strongly melodramatic plots. The characters take part in intricate stories of love, seem to be experiencing despair, desolation or passion, yet very little of their suggested inner turmoil perfuses the surface of the stylized writing. The vane romance of Komako and Shimamura in *Snow Country*, the remorseful nostalgia and utopian desires of Kikuji in *Thousand Cranes*, the spiritual vertigo on the verge of failure and death of Shingo in *the Sound of the Mountain*, can only be accessed by the reader through presuppositions, suggestions or symbols. Contrary to the evolution of a paradigmatically Western writer as Thomas Mann, for instance, the dionysian nature of

such heroes remains delicately drafted behind an allusive curtain. The tea ceremony in *Thousand Cranes*, the mountain landscapes or the spectacular change of seasonal colors in *Snow Country*, the oniric strangeness and the web of impressions in *The Sound of the Mountain*, even elements of vestimentation and decorum provide the symbolic background against which human dramas whirl in partially phantomatic tension. Highly significant in this respect is the fact that the thick lines of description contrast with the sketchy, abbreviated structure of dialogue. The inner monologue – a turning point in the development of Western prose – is missing in Japanese prose, being replaced by utter contemplation. More than often, fragmentary views of nature or spectacular landscapes, rich in full colouring, work as substitutes for the characters' thoughts or torments. Nature, as sum of compressed energies, supports the play of meanings. The descriptive touches may be minute, yet they evoke rather in a vague characters' particular feelings. The puzzle of emotional landscapes solves the riddle of the soul.

Not even Mr. Shingo's intensely disturbing experimentation of nocturnal dreams does offer insight into subconscious realms. The sense of loss and old age shipwreck, the nightmarish closeness of death, the unbearable feeling of broken ideals have famous counterparts in Malcolm Lowry's *Under the Volcano*, Hemingway's *Old Man and the Sea* or even Melville's *Moby Dick*. Alienated in his wasted family life, regretting past choices, illicitly attracted by his daughter in law, Shingo floats passively between states of anxiety and serenity, as echoed by imaginary voices of nature, disquieting premonitory images of dream or impressions of tenderness that Kikuko's gestures spread around her. The entire desolation of personal failure and the tragic futility of human actions – metaphysical intrigues which are vaguely traced and get no solution within the proper narrative – remain ultimately comprised and sublimated, as a Buddhist lamento, in the impersonal, yet full of pathos "sound of the mountain".

With a similarly dramatic family plot deals the novel *Thousand Cranes*. Trapped between the trivial and superficial side of life embodied by Chikako and the candour and verticality that Fumako, on the other hand, represents, young Kikuji is left pondering upon reconciliation with an intricate past that estranged him from his dearly beloved father. The latter resorted to extramarital affairs, one of which seemed even to conclude in true love. With a kind of torn nostalgia, Kikuji falls for Mrs. Ōta, his parent's former mistress, grasping in her joyful warmth a hint of the father's soul that he has never previously known. He succeeds in coming to terms with his own past, somehow reversely, and becomes able again to encounter moral purity in the person of Fumako, Mrs. Ōta's daughter, herself an affectionate companion of his late father. The poetic strangeness of the book does not reside in the intricate plot, out of which a Western writer would have simply made a common-day (melo)drama. Most of the past history and of the present web of emotions is covered by a secretive veil and comes to surface only through accidental gestures, half-uttered phrases, intermittent scenes. Morals is not studied through direct discourse, but by means of allusive imagery. This narrative device bears certain resemblance to Henry James' novels, although his overloaded florid style, meant to drill in the depth of psychologies, is the farthest possible from Kawabata's minimal, elliptical writing.

Thousand Cranes interplays powerful, sometimes contrasting, moral overtones – Chikako's petty vulgarity, Mrs. Ōta's passionate openness, Fumako's tender devotion – and, by positing young Kikuji as observer at their conjunction, can also be regarded as a nuanced study of femininity. Consequently, character levelling can actually be noticed in the

fact that one single feature, as mentioned above, seems to expand until absorbing the heroines' personalities, to the extent that they become embodiments of moral/spiritual values (different, thus, from the notion of social *type* exploited in Western literature).

In a movement generally characteristic to traditional Japanese literature, much of the human particulars, concerning their desires, motivations, pleasures etc., is confined to a dim background, embellished as it is with delicate imagery. On the other hand however, foregrounded in the narrative is a recurrent situation/motive around which all eventual significations revolve; the rhythmical display of such a central symbol accounts for the *haiku*-like concentration of Kawabata's prose. Whether it is the tea ceremony in *Thousand Cranes* or the change of mountainous vegetation in *Snow Country*, the symbolic core of the narrative reflects human thoughts or emotions and sheds various lights upon them. In spite of their icy frailty, the delicate china involved in the tea ceremony are prone to transcend time, fluctuations and even bear the specific imprint of human touch (the precious ancient cup of tea Fumako eventually breaks displays a shady remembrance of Mrs. Ōta's lipstick).

Irradiating layered meanings, objects often take the scene as characters in their own. Much sensory care is assigned to their description, so the more as people simultaneously become rather abstruse and enigmatical. Women's beauty, for instance, appears as elusive and cold. Even the incandescent aura of geishas, their hazy eroticism could never collapse into lurid carnality. Totally opposed to Western character counterparts, the feminine mystery as such is ever far from being exhausted, consummated through senses. On the contrary, it remains partially floating in imponderable realms of spiritualization. As subtly shown in *Snow Country*, romance is, in these terms, less palpable chemistry than superpersonal negotiation of the *yin-yang* principles: "The heamp thread could be spun and woven only in the chilly and dark season, so as to be worn after during hot midsummer, to freshen and cool the skin. Likewise was Komako: she surrounded Shimamura with her warm love, yet one could grasp a pale of cold within the core of her being"².

Instead of complex theoretical concepts, traditional Japanese literature requires very few prejudices and a lot of patience to relish it. Arguably unique among the world literatures, the type of visual poetic narrative it has preserved through centuries can be truly considered an enduring form of art, refined in its stated simplicity, yet sophisticated in its multiprismatic texture of meanings.

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² The translation belongs to us.

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