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Toimetuskolleegium / Editorial Board:

Jüri Talvet (toimetaja/editor), Kerttu Veldi, Tiina Aunin (abitoimetajad/assistant editors), Kersti Unt, Reet Sool, Marina Grišakova

Aadress / Address:

INTERLITTERARIA, Tartu Ülikool, maailmakirjanduse õppetool, EE2400 Tartu, Estonia
tel./fax: (372-7) 441 542, e-mail: talvet@admin.ut.ee

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Introductory Note

To a foreign reader/observer who until recently has had no knowledge about Estonia and surely has not even suspected that the tiny nation of Estonians (with the population of 1,5 million) has its own language and culture, the inauguration in Tartu of a tetralingual review dedicated to comparative literature might seem a surprising ambition.

But we shall try to explain. If we believe the American analyst Samuel Huntington in his much cited article about the conflict of civilizations (published also in Estonian, *Akadeemia* 6, 1995) to have been right, we in Estonia live on the Eastern border of the Western Christian world. All borders, as the late head of the Tartu—Moscow School of Semiotics Iuri Lotman (1922–1993) has argued, function as mechanisms of dialogue. In the Estonian own context, Tartu (where Iuri Lotman worked and lived since 1950 till his death), despite being a periphery in political and administrative sense, has traditionally been the country's cultural centre. Its university — the only truly national *universitas* in Estonia — was founded under the Swedish rule in 1632 by the king Gustav II Adolf and was later reinaugurated by the enlightened Russian Czar Alexander I in 1802. In the middle of the 19th century the university was tutored by Friedrich Maximilian Klinger, the man who gave the influential German pre-Romantic movement *Sturm und Drang* its name, tutored Tartu University. The first great Estonian who wrote poetry in his native language, Kristjan Jaak Peterson (1801–1822) was a student of Tartu University. In Tartu Friedrich Reinhold Kreutzwald, following the example of *Kalevala* of the Finns, wrote the Estonian national-heroic epic *Kalevipoeg* (1861) and here Lydia Koidula, the great patriotic poetess of Estonian national “awakening”, wrote her emotional verses which inspired for more than a century the Estonian people in their difficult and often tragic fight for independence.

Now we have hinted at the background and at its multicultural symbols. We thus wish our *Interlitteraria* to become, in the newly free Estonia, a sign of a continuing dialogue. We would like to mediate literary-philosophical thought between the East and the West, and the North and the South; would like to become a vehicle by which Estonian literary thought — and why not Estonian literature — reaches the outside world, and by which the outside world (re)animates Estonian intellectual and creative life.

Besides Iuri Lotman, who since the 1970s made the name of Tartu known in the world map of structural semiotics, I would like to mention another symbol of the spirit of openness and dialogue that from Estonia has reached the wider world. For nearly a quarter of the century (1967–1991) Estonian–Latvian-born Ivar Ivask (1927–1992) edited in Oklahoma, US, the prestigious magazine of comparative literature *World Literature Today* (formerly *Books Abroad*). There he gave a wide margin to the literatures of minor nations, including the Baltic peoples, and at the same time built a bridge over the gap, violently rent by political ambitions, between literature in native lands and in exile. One of our *Interlitteraria*'s aims would be, thus, to contribute to a genuine participation of minor literatures in the process of world literature, against the monopoly of economically potent areas.

The same spirit of dialogue should prevail in the methods by which we study literature. The work of Iuri Lotman provides us best cues: it was a polyphony of diachrony and synchrony, of history and theory, of construction and deconstruction. At the present stage of contemporary literary-philosophical developments, an alternative to this openness could hardly be envisaged. But let us remain open ...

The inaugural issue of *Interlitteraria* is purposefully heterogeneous. It should mark a variety of ways and topics by which *Interlitteraria* moves on in the following years. It is true that we plan our next three issues, till the end of the century, as monothematical: the grotesque (1997) and, then, drama (1998), poetry (1999) and fictional prose (2000) of the second half of the 20th century. But we will not exclude *varia*-issues in the future. All serious studies will be welcome to *Interlitteraria*.

In this issue, Tiina Aunin has successfully connected her analysis of Gore Vidal's historical novels with those of Jaan Kross (b.1920),

Estonia's internationally best-known writer whose work has recently gained a wide echo in Western countries. Without any doubt, the intriguing topic of the interplay of "authentic" and "fictional" points of view in the historical novel of the second half of this century — when the earlier traditional methods have decidedly been abandoned by major novelists — invites further treatments. Another Estonian scholar, Luule Epner, stresses the factor of "theatricality" as supposedly the most important one in the development of Estonian drama since the 1960s. She views from a theoretical background the plays of Paul-Eerik Rummo (also one of Estonia's leading poets), Mati Unt (also a novelist) and Madis Kõiv. Here, too, it would be interesting to go on into the concrete interliterary areas, so as to find out, in a wider comparative context, what, for instance, differentiates the quality of a play within the same type of "theatricality".

Strongly influenced by the ideas of the early work of Iuri Lotman, the Italian comparatist Giuseppina Restivo applies the epoch codes, or signs, proposed by Lotman, to the work of Shakespeare. She at the same time stresses the strong intertextuality deriving from Montaigne in Shakespeare's creative philosophy, mostly overlooked till the present day. In the sequence of Medieval, Renaissance, Illustration and Romantic codes there are "fragments" of each code that fall (back or forth) into another, "alien" code, causing confusion in the traditional understanding of literary history. What, if we add to this sequence also the Baroque code, which, according to some scholars, has much to do with our Postmodern codes?

In his article the Spanish professor Manuel Ángel Vázquez Medel proposes to apply some of the most polemical issues of modern semiotics to the narrative art and philosophy of Jorge Luis Borges, the great Argentine master whose work has gained admirers in the entire intellectual world (and is also well known in Estonia). The ontological-gnosiological dilemma of the "real" and the "intellectual/spiritual" that obsessed Borges till his last days, however, as it can be seen from professor Vázquez Medel's suggestive study, has no easy solutions. As Alessandro Baldi demonstrates, the same philosophical dilemma remains unresolved in the narrative work of the Italian writer Tommaso Landolfi (1908–1979) who, by the way, was the translator of Pushkin and Gogol.

The article by the Argentine scholar Susana G. Artal about grotesque imagery in Rabelais is an excellent prelude to the EVKA's International Conference on the language of the grotesque, planned to be held in Tartu in April, 1996. To the codes of *cosificación* and *animalización*, analyzed in detail by professor Artal, no doubt, others could be added, as sub-codes in the total code of the grotesque which has persisted in its "vital ambiguity" till our days.

Besides the above mentioned articles by Tiina Aunin and Luule Epner, aspects of Estonian literature and literary culture have been illuminated in the comparative light by other scholars. The late Mart Mäger, in fact, prepared himself an English translation of his article on Jaan Kaplinski's poem (earlier published in Estonian in *Keel ja Kirjandus*, 4, 1985) for Tartu University's series *Studia metrica et poetica*. However, as the latter ceased to exist, Mäger's article in English was never published. We are pleased to include it in *Interlitteraria*. Though centered on only one poem, the article of Mart Mäger fully exposes the philosophy of Estonia's internationally best known poet Jaan Kaplinski (b.1941). Mäger does not make it explicit, but implicitly, of course, the binary principle of Lotman's semiotics can clearly be seen as the background text of his poetical analysis. The young Tartu scholar Kerttu Veldi compares the work of another major Estonian poet of the second half of this century, the above mentioned Ivar Ivask, with that of Odysseas Elytis, the Greek Nobel Prize winner. All three poets, Kaplinski, Ivask and Elytis, find harmony in Nature, though retaining their individual viewpoints.

Intercultural aspects of the Baltic area are reflected in the articles of Liina Lukas and Jaak Rähesoo. The former touches a wide and not yet sufficiently studied intercultural phenomenon of the Baltic German literature on the example of the work of Edzard Schaper (1908–1984), a German writer who was born in Poland and lived in Estonia between 1930 and 1940. Schaper considered Estonia a "border state", just as (by way of coincidence?) "A Border State" (*Piiririik*, 1993) is the title of a recent successful Estonian novel by Emil Tode (Tõnu Õnnepalu), a work that has already been translated into many European languages. Jaak Rähesoo offers a thorough panorama of the reception of American literature in Estonia, completing in a way the background description of the first passages of this introductory note. There is only one important point that

should be added to Rähesoo's fully comprehensive overview: in his characteristic modesty he fails to mention that the main factor in the “positive reception” of American Literature in Estonia since the 1960s has been the work of himself and another major translator and commentator of US literature, Enn Soosaar.

American literature, though rather in “intraliterary” contexts, are viewed by Reet Sool who establishes parallels and differences between the work of D. J. Salinger (once very popular in Estonia) and the postmodern “Generation X” in US literature. I myself have introduced the terms of the “interliterary” and the “intraliterary” and have tried to apply them, partly in a contrastive relation, to the historical reception process of Spanish and Catalan literature outside Spain and Catalonia. This essay was first published in Estonian in my book *Hispaania vaim* (Tartu: Ilmamaa, 1995).

Finally, although we have declared *Interlitteraria* a mediating point or a “polylogical frontier” between the West and the East, the Oriental facet, in fact, would have been totally absent without the valuable contribution by the young Korean scholar Kim Young-Hae. She treats the three basic signs or, as she defines them, formemes — circle, square and triangle —, in the semiotic process of anamorphosis, which reveals their rich philosophical content in Oriental (and, to some extent, even in Occidental) culture.

Tartu
January, 1996

Jüri Talvet,
Editor

**Discourse Between History and the Novel.
(G. Vidal's *Lincoln*, with Comparative Notes
on J. Kross' *The Czar's Madman*)**

TIINA AUNIN

In a paper presented at the Amsterdam conference on *Adaptions* in 1988, Ann Rigney called for a rethinking and further elaboration of the theoretical relationship between the two discursive genres of historiography and historical novel. Since then a considerable number of publications have been added to the subject. In order to refute the long-existing presumption that the historian respects facts whereas the novelist does not, the new discursive approach fairly recognizes that "even historians do not reproduce a message inscribed once and for all in the past, but a posteriori give form and meaning to the past through their choice of historical subject and selection of relevant facts, and through their subsequent representation and articulation of those facts in discourse" (Rigney 1988: 127).

There is no doubt, however, that the liberties of the novelist in dealing with the question of social changes in the past are much greater than those of the contemporary historian, for the novelist has freedom to organize his narrative around a limited number of events and actors, whereas the historian "must deal with a complex ensemble of events which often lack actorial focus", and which "are not naturally narratable as a single coherent story" (Rigney 1990: 199, 16).

The way in which the individual novelist desires to have the collective historic event (revolution, civil war, reformation, etc.) take on a particular meaning for the reading public is left up to the writer's skill and choice. What is more important, the novelist is

free to incorporate various fictional elements into his narrative. Still, the liberties of the historical novelist can never equal those of the author of invented fiction. There is at least one marked difference between writing invented and documented fiction. "The author of documented fiction needs to specify that the people and events be famous, the reader has preconceptions about the characters and the plot." (Robinson 1981: 23). In this regard, once more, the historical novelist faces many of the representational problems encountered by the historian. Both are greatly concerned to find specific techniques which will help them to confirm or dissolve these preconceptions, in the most expedient way for their artistic and political goals.

I began this paper by citing A. Rigney's call for rethinking of the ways in which the twentieth-century author can adapt historical fact for his purpose. Her paper triggered quite a number of intriguing questions about the function and methods of fictionalizing history — to such a degree that when examining the narrative combination of fictional and factual elements in Gore Vidal's *Lincoln* (1984), I largely adapted her approach to my analyses of the novel.

The primary concern of this paper is to answer the following questions: What are the devices the writer makes use of in his creative process in order to adapt history to the novel? To be more precise, in what ways does Gore Vidal represent a set of nineteenth-century events and characters so as to create a picture in many ways stereotyped, and yet different from the preconceptions attached to the Lincoln era? How are the historical events and characters translated into another medium? I mean "characters" not only in the sense we use the term to describe "people" in works of fiction, but also in the sense of "human nature".

Large scale narrative histories with a predominantly political cast stand nowadays at the centre of novelistic practice. Gore Vidal's *Lincoln* is no exception. The novel can justly be placed in the historico-political genre when one views its interpretive levels and preferences: the way in which the large scale Civil War events find their expression only through the strategical prism of Washington politics.

Simultaneously, it can be read as a grand dramatic account of at least two personal life stories. For the same historical antecedents and consequences which determined Lincoln's victory on a social and political level led nearly to his physical and psychological collapse before his actual assassination, and caused painful dilemmas in his wife's consciousness.

As the title of the novel indicates, the primary focus of the author's representation is on Abraham Lincoln himself, the other characters and their surroundings playing essentially an auxiliary role in the protagonist's revelations, actions and motivations. The actual effect of this representation upon the reader is somewhat unexpected. Partly because of the abundance of the material — since his death more than six thousand volumes dealing with every aspect of Lincoln's history and nature have been published — partly because of the pressure his martyrdom has put on the author, Vidal's Lincoln emerges more stereotyped than any other of the numerous secondary characters of the novel.

There is e.g. a marked myth-making tropism in evaluations of Lincoln given by John Hay: Let us quote here one from document, the other two from fictional passages. Making the best of his rhetorical instrument Hay wrote Nicolay in his letter from Aug. 7, 1863:

"... I am more and more firmly convinced that the good of the country absolutely demands that he should be kept where he is till this thing (the War and Reconstruction — T. A.) is over. There is no man in the country so wise, so gentle and so firm. I believe the hand of God placed him where he is." (Hay 1908: 90–91).

At the end of the novel Hay is equally rhetorical when stressing the critical choices Lincoln made:

"Where," asked Mr. Schuyler, "would you place Mr. Lincoln amongst the presidents of our country?" — "Oh, I would place him first." — "Above Washington?" Mr. Schuyler looked statled. — "Yes," said Hay, who had thought a good deal about the Tycoon's place in history. "Mr. Lincoln had a far greater and more difficult task than Washington's. You see, the Southern States had every constitutional right to go out of the Union. But Lincoln said, no. Lincoln said, this Union can never be broken. Now that was a terrible responsibility for one man to take. But he took it, knowing he

would be obliged to fight the greatest war in human history, which he did, and which he won. So he not only put the Union back together again, but he made an entirely new country, and all of it in his own image." (Vidal 1984: 656). His unfailing belief in the spirit of a God-chosen individual had actually reached its peak a few chapters earlier when "Hay suddenly saw Lincoln as a sort of human lightning conductor, absorbing all the fire from the Heaven for all of them." (Vidal 1984: 637).

From the passages given above it becomes clear how the process by which values and attitudes about politics are passed from one generation to the next is subject to considerable manipulation.

The belated desires, fulfilments and frustrations of Mary Todd Lincoln on the private as well as on the public front are supposed to be secondary biographical events of the novel. In the President's personal drama, Mary Lincoln's character, as presented by Vidal, plays an ambiguous role. Time and again historians have expressed the view that "much of the criticism of her was the result of attempts by foes to discredit him through his wife" and they "decided early that his wife was his Achilles heel" (Turner 1972: 70; Ross 1973: 106). The same assumption is to be found in a number of episodes of the novel (pp. 140; 162; 170; 198-199; 259; 429). Her private secretary Stoddard's remark on the subject is most characteristic:

"Every move she made was chronicled, often with scorn, for Washington was filled with secessionists who watched the Lincolns with unswerving attention. It became a habit to strike at the President through his vulnerable wife". Stoddard could not explain this reckless assailment and unanimous hatred, calling it "one of the moral curiosities of this venomous time". (Stoddard 1890: 52).

In this light, Vidal's Mary Lincoln emerges before the reader most convincingly as a character whose life story is rich in all the elements of human drama. It is mainly because of the disasters of her life (also because of her ambivalent reactions to these disasters) that her image becomes persistent in the reader's consciousness. As presented in the rich Lincoln documentation she manifests herself almost as a typical Victorian woman, embodying in one personage all the contradictions of the human world, the

spiritual and the phenomenal, as well as the subjection, centrality, and marginality of the feminine psyche.

Creating his Mary Todd Lincoln Vidal restrains his own rhetorical instrument and his use of historical documentation does not go far beyond a scholarly conscientiousness about showing the sources of his information. True, among the overwhelming mass of sources — historiographical narratives, biographies, letters, memoirs, diaries and combined genres — the author has stopped primarily at those facts which are universally recognized. Yet, now and then he permits rumours and legends to set in, but only in those cases when he is able to shift his authorial responsibility to another narrator. The most convenient technique for Vidal to accomplish this is “double vision” i.e. to present these created “histories” through another historical character. The purpose of the technique is evident to the reader — it works towards “reducing the figurative diversity characteristic of the historical records, greater objectivity and towards the establishment of the figurative continuity” (Rigney 1989: 135) which Philippe Hamon sees as the principal “opérateur de lisibilité” (Hamon 1977: 161–162). The choice of John Hay as the primary mediator of the author’s view (the third-person narrator seems not to be voicing his opinions) is one of Vidal’s most subtle expository techniques as it helps to render his own vision without overt authorial intervention. Vidal most brilliantly exploits this distancing effect in many intricate ways. In the case of Mary Lincoln Hay’s eye is “cold” (Vidal 1984: 185), he is “not trying to be kind” (Vidal 1984: 259) neither with her, nor with Lincoln’s enemies. He “watches, grimly”, and “comes to the conclusion that the Young Napoleon (McClellan) is a fraud” (Vidal 1984: 254); Stevens and Wade are seen in a corner “grinning like a pair of alligators” (Vidal 1984: 259); Madam looks “somewhat pasty in face”, but “at least no longer insane” (Vidal 1984: 185). In the case of the President, however, the same eye is forgiving, understanding, idolizing. Even on one and the same page Hay’s attitudes are described as easily and intermittently fluctuating from one character to another:

“Hay was personally convinced that Madam had received money from the “Herald” for stealing the President’s message to Congress. A paragraph lower he already “admired the way that the

Tycoon had gradually eased Seward [...] into the role of peace-keeper with England" (p. 237), etc., etc.

It is not uncommon for fiction to present historical figures witnessing and participating in events in which they in fact played no part. In *Lincoln* the omniscience of Hay as the President's personal secretary and as a permanent resident of the Executive Mansion adds its verisimilitude to the fabula and helps the author to combine variable invented and factual elements attributed to the characters of political and military world of Washington: Chase, Seward, Stanton, Sumner, McClellan, Grant, etc. The authority of John Hay's "cold eye" towards the President's wife is especially convincing due to the fact that in his letters and diaries she becomes almost a "non-person". The conspicuous absence of Mary Todd Lincoln from Hay's more than four-year long record of Lincoln's administration speaks for itself. It is only in the *Life of Lincoln* that he took up almost ten years later with John Nicolay and completed in 1890, that contains some allusion to her moods and impulses and gives a tentative account of her dominant qualities. Just the same way, towards the end of the novel, as the narrative progresses. Hay's distance from this particular character starts to vary, his eye becomes more partial, his voice employs irony, his vision acquires subtly intrusive interpretive color, illustrating Vidal's own sentiments towards her double character.

The novel opens with a chapter which demonstrates Vidal's masterly exposition of the volatile conditions in Washington, the uncertainty of the ground Lincoln trod on as a minority President: the hatred among extremist elements, the prejudiced minds of the social leaders of the city, the outright abuse of the press — all inducing him "to sneak in the capital like a chicken thief" (Vidal 1984: 14).

The next chapter gradually deepens the sense of looming menace. From the presidential grounds the narrative account moves into the suburbs of the capital, to the Surratt family where the same ominous threats of violence dominate. Vidal foregrounds the signs of evident plot here. The scene being now set the author proceeds to give a general account of the way the states are divided in deep conflicts and briefly frame the perspectives for the sixteenth president:

"What afix we're in," said the President-elect, stepping up on the brick sidewalk that led past the iron fence of the White House, where he would soon be quartered — caged, was more like it, thought Seward. For a brief moment — very brief, actually — he was glad that Lincoln and not he had been elected sixteenth president of what was left the United States of America." (Vidal 1984: 27)

Thus, with his narrative focus on destructive forces, Vidal gives a figurative representation of the ominous atmosphere prevailing on the scene before Mary Lincoln has even stepped into the action. He is stressing the view of those historians and biographers who claim that "in a sense Mrs. Lincoln was doomed before she set foot in Washington," conditions in the capital being "volatile enough to have tried the nerves of a woman far more stable than she" (Turner 1972: 77). In these circumstances "she was given scant opportunity to display the best that was in her" (Turner 1972: 79) and the author emphasizes her lassitude, resignation, even her sense of fatality when defining the limits and the range of her own resolution and action.

The selection of primary texts, and the manner in which they are incorporated into the fictional text of *Lincoln*, also give rise to specific effects clearly linked to the particular image of Mary Todd Lincoln which Vidal wishes to convey. Comparing, for instance, the non-narrative records of the events of 1864–65s (letters of M. Lincoln) with the author's discursive representation of the same events, of the same period, we can trace two sets of documents reflecting two sides of the fictional character: on one hand, the letters to friends (Charles Sumner, Hannah Shearer, Mary Jane Welles) and to the family members (Emily Helm, Elizabeth Grimsley, Mr. Lincoln) — full of candor, loyalty, devotion and sympathy; on the other hand, letters to protégés (Abram Wakeman) and to subordinates in business (A. T. Stewart, Ruth Harris) — revealing an inclination to intrigues, intercession in political matters, wild jealousy, carelessness in money matters. Perhaps it is something in his wife's dual psychological state to which the novel's Lincoln responds, and the savour of it may be intensified by his sense of her moral struggle which, even in its potential destructiveness towards him, grants him awareness of a kind of im-

portance in another's life. It is, however, evident for the reader that both John Hay and through him the author cannot share this kind of responsiveness, and grow more biased toward her as the narrative progresses. Her increasing debts and political dabbings become a matter of indignation and Vidal succeeds in conveying the mood of prevailing anxiety and fear among Lincoln's supporters:

"Is Madam in good spirit?" Hay enjoyed teasing Stodd.

"We're going to Long Branch in August." [...] "How quiet the White House will seem, with only us and the war."

"That depends on whether or not the President has seen all the bills from the New York Stores."

Stodd was grim [...] it was plain that he was worried. [...] Thus far, the Tycoon seemed to be unaware of the gathering storm of unpaid bills, both private and public. But then there were other storms. Congress was in the city ... (Vidal 1984: 195)

The tender and courageous side of her personality — her work in military hospitals, her attitude towards the "oppressed coloured race" — unannounced by the press and largely neglected by the public, finds a due if not equally enthusiastic recording in the novel. In fact it is Mary Lincoln and not the President who expresses the most righteous sentiments about the Civil War:

"They keep coming and coming, the wounded. We have no more room here. We are trying to take over a floor or two of each hotel, but the politicians fight us."

"Would that they were here," said Mary bitterly. "And these boys at home and well." (Vidal 1984: 429)

Historians might argue that it is not the fate of any single individual as such, but "the collective evolution of a social entity which is by definition transpersonal" (Rigney 1988: 104) that draws the different events of the historical fabula together. But the degree of detail with which Vidal treats particular episodes and characters is somewhat different from the canonical historical treatments. When speaking about the climate in Washington and its bilious effect on human beings the writer, for instance, is free from the obligation to demonstrate bibliographically the source of evidence. He adheres to the aesthetics of vivid narration where, citing M. de Certau, "the vraisemblance of what is uttered takes over from its verifiability" (M. de Certau 1975: 111). It is more

problematic for the author, however, whether Willie Lincoln's death results from malaria or some other infection. But this, too, has totally been left to the reader to puzzle over. However, when Vidal comes to the emotional collapse Mrs. Lincoln experiences as an aftermath of her son's death, and of her divided family loyalty he makes use of the letters the unfortunate woman wrote to her friends and also of E. Keckley's memoirs, because this sort of relevant facts seek to influence the future course of events and the author acts here as a clairvoyant — he and his historical character both being actors in the same historical world. Thus, the writer's primary task here is not so much to "represent" the past as to "make sense" of it. To this end the personal and the collective are closely related in *Lincoln*, and Gore Vidal's view on the causes, nature and course of the Civil War, too, is expressed through his representation of certain key characters and key events which appear not on the battleground, but in the political workshop and the social circle of the Lincoln government. They all play an important role in guiding the reader towards a better understanding of the formation of 19-century progressive thought in America, which, as a result, produced the magnificent document of Emancipation and finally led to the reunion of the States.

Once more comment of interest. The novel's most sensational revelations on the Lincolns are reserved for William Herndon. This historical figure makes an episodic appearance in a few passages of the novel which are purely fictional and ends up in a brothel. It is here, in accordance with the surrounding atmosphere, that his most slanderous secrets are revealed to Hay. Herndon became infamous with his *True Story of a Great Life* only in 1892, but Vidal introduces him as a man already endowed with the reputation of an envious and vicious slanderer, the way he later went down in popular memory. The extent to which Vidal's narrative presumes a certain historical culture on the part of its public is determined by a number of seemingly insignificant but actually meaningful episodes and devices. They say nothing to an uninformed reader, but are actually key notions through which the final decisions are made, and through which Mary Todd Lincoln emerges convincingly in her dual nature, as "a Southern-born

woman who committed heart and soul to the Northern cause at the most crucial period in the nation's history" (Ross 1973: 336).

* * *

While everywhere else historical novels tend to be more and more respectable among academics and other serious readers of contemporary fiction Estonian scholars are still somewhat prejudiced towards the genre — more, at least, than their American and Russian confrères. Despite the fact that two major Estonian novelists of this century — Karl Ristikivi and Jaan Kross have mightily preoccupied themselves with the history of earlier generations, scholarship on Estonian historical fiction has been sketchy and ill-defined. Until the present day there is no book-length study devoted entirely to the Estonian historical novel. Only few articles studying its textual or interpretive issues are available. Indeed, our authors' contribution to the genre deserves more attention.

The advantages the comparative criticism offers in this field for defining the specific traits of national historical fiction are still vastly underestimated. "Viewing the facts of similarity and difference in their broader, international context methodologically enriches the treatment of Estonian literature" (Bassel 1981: 140). These lines written in 1981 are taken from a review to Jaan Kross' novel *The Czar's Madman* (Keisri hull) published three years earlier (1978)*, yet they are vastly neglected up to now. The article views Kross' novel in the light of German literary tradition comparing its ways of stylizing to those of Th. Mann, L. Feuchtwanger, B. Brecht. But it is primarily through its central character Timotheus von Bock, that rebellious outcast of the Baltic nobility and the predecessor of the Decembrists, that Kross surpasses the tradition and takes his due stand among the writers of truly contemporary historical fiction. When comparing Kross' protagonist to that of Vidal's novel one must admit — von Bock certainly was not as great a "mover or shaker" of Estonian (and Russian) history as was Lincoln in America. Yet, his relation to the era, the beginning of the nineteenth century, was as complex in psychological dimension as Lincoln experienced forty years later.

* The first English version came out in 1992.

The tragic lot of Timotheus Eberhard von Bock (1787–1836) a manor lord and a confidant of Alexander I was quite an exception in the colorful history of Livonia. Externally *The Czar's Madman* suggests traditional nineteenth-century devices in its narrative structure imitating a "documented form" (a diary) of historical fiction, but as to its treatment of the protagonist himself, it is even more ontogenetic, or persona-centered than Vidal's *Lincoln*. The latter exhibits larger epic dimension and is more pronouncedly concerned with the interaction of the individual destiny and the national one. In both novels, however, the real emphasis is political and sociological rather than psychological. While focusing upon a morally divided individual Kross is also concerned with society in transition and his character crosses the boundary which symbolizes that transition.

Whatever the dissimilarities in the narrative structure, or in the protagonist's behavior one can trace certain marked typological affinity between the two novels triggering their reader to seek those general undercurrents and principles which have been steering the post-war historical novel to its end-of-the millenium state, to its status quo, so to speak.

First, the novels show a marked shift of interest from ethics towards politics. *Lincoln*, for instance, is straightforwardly political in its form. Kross' novel exhibits juxtaposition of small and large events to provide a complex picture of Russia under Alexander I reign. T. von Bock's memorandum to the Czar, though politically insignificant, heralds and dramatizes the ideas proclaimed later in the Decembrist movement. The reader can experience here both the tension of the political rebellion and the subtle interplay of human motives which subsequently led the Czar to the liberation of Baltic peasantry from serfdom.

Secondly, as reported before, the contemporary historical novels outwardly deal with people far more frequently than with processes or institutions. Nevertheless, the perspective the authors provide by drawing back from the critical choices of the individual to the whole nation is always socio-political in effect. This emphasis on the relation between individuals and their time is present in both novels under discussion. The scenes of private life stress the sense of psychological burdens of being historically significant

(or chosen) figures. Insights into self-diagnosis and powerful criticism of politics in their respective countries go hand in hand.

Thirdly, one can notice certain obliteration of the distinction between the documented and invented historical fiction. No generic problems can be created any more: events and characters are freely shared with historical narratives. The similarities between the fiction and recorded history continually tease the reader. According to J. W. Turner, neither history nor fiction is itself a stable, universally agreed upon, concept (J. W. Turner 1979: 333), or as E. L. Doctorow claims “there is no fiction or non-fiction as we commonly understand the distinction: there is only narrative” (Doctorow 1977: 231).

An examination of *Lincoln* and *The Czar's Madman* in light of each other, and of the ideas forwarded above, reveal something about how concepts of intergrating of history and fiction may really differ nowadays. Thanks to the abundance of the documented material Vidal's book represents the more conventional method. Quite the contrary, the scantiness of biographical details and other documented notes moves a book like Kross' *The Czar's Madman* toward “speculative fiction with its invention of events in addition to the public record. According to J. Kivimäe, only few articles and a short survey on von Bock is all the writer can rely upon. Nevertheless, the man is a fairly well-known figure among the Baltic intellectuals, which means that the reader has preconceptions about the character and the plot. Kross is interested in the transmutation of these preconceptions into legend and myth. In his concluding remarks the author half-mockingly tells the reader about the outcome of his method, how he follows the “spirit” of documented fiction. What he really does is to turn von Bock's story into a kind of “false document” and Kross is interested in playing with the implications of this method.

Fourthly, the mystery of questionable madness, its pros and cons for political scheming become a truly Hamlet-like theme in many contemporary historical novels. In *The Czar's Madman* the enigma remains unresolved as does the mystery of von Bock's death. Murder or suicide, in the political dimension it makes no difference — death is the only logic solution to the crisis.

In Vidal's *Lincoln* Mary Todd Lincoln's disputable madness, though largely an inner struggle, is presented as an amplifier of her husband's tragedy. It is described as a political weapon in the hands of the enemies.

The way both authors tease the reader with deliberate implausibilities is an accomplished device which, in fact, prepare the reader to the tragic ending. At that Vidal reveals his more pessimistic perspective on human nature than does Kross.

The tragic predestination is often enforced by the "cold eye" or the "common sense" of the narrator (or viewer), either historical (John Hay) or fictional (Jacob Mättik). It is through their adequate characterization that Lincoln's and von Bock's significance for the succeeding generations comes forth. They also underline the "meaning" of risk and suffering. A major role has often been designated for the female characters whose absolute loyalty to their husband's cause prepares them to martyrdom and self-denial.

Finally, the constant change in the scene and time of action that enables the writer to escape from the necessity to fill in numerous biographical gaps and, to some extent, mitigates the impression left by the unmerciful narrator (or observer).

This article, by far not comprehensive, suggests that the contemporary writers on both continents have found new possibilities in expanding the traditional genre of historical fiction, they are willing "to undermine the ideas they have inherited from their nineteenth-century counterparts" (Robinson 1981: 201). By one means or another, the evidence of the two novels treated here suggests that the writers are still tempted by the "eyes of Clio". Or, as D. B. Robinson pointedly says, "It may be that our historical fiction has so changed that we can no longer share the confidence [...] in its power to awaken a love of historical truth, or even be sure to know that truth. But [...] they (writers — T. A.) will always be inspired by the challenge of creating the past anew" (Robinson 1981: 202).

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Text and Stage: Theatricalism in Modern Estonian Drama

LUULE EPNER

Dramatic texts, as a general rule, are in some way related to theatrical art, considering basic stage conventions. As far as the author, choosing the form of drama for his visions and ideas, is oriented to their stage realization, be it a particular contemporary or future or only imaginable production, theatre is from the very beginning implied in the text. Definition of drama as a mode of fiction designed for stage representation and constructed according to particular ('dramatic') conventions (Elam 1980: 2) is generally accepted. This basic distinguishing feature of drama that makes it producible in theatre may be called *theatricality*. A. Ubersfeld has described this relation in terms of *genotexte*, the theatrical code of a period playing "le rôle de matrice textuelle "informant" le texte" (Ubersfeld 1981: 15).

From the standpoint of a reader, dramatic texts (like all fictional texts) can be interpreted "as a set of instructions according to which the fictional world is to be recovered and reassembled" (Dolezel 1989: 236). *A fictional world of a play*, mediated by text, seems to be the concept, allowing more particular analysis of relations between drama and theatre. According to P. Pavis, "the passage from text to performance is mediated by a fictional universe, one first of all structured by a *reading*, then reproduced by a stage figuration. /---/ This mediation T/P /---/ passes through a possible world which is structured in a fictional discourse" (Pavis 1982: 153). These fictional worlds have an ontology of their own, their internal relations. Of course, they are incomplete, not "filled" to the end. It is a reader's task to construct the fictional world of a

play filling the gaps, clearing up indeterminacies, reconstructing patterns of meaning into integral spatio-temporal structure. Pavis describes this creative activity of a reader as a process of *concretization*; a staging, accordingly, is concretization of concretization, accomplished by reading. He speaks of an hermeneutic circle "insofern, als einerseits nach einer szenischen Konkretisation gestrebt wird, die dem Text eine bestimmte textuelle Konkretisation verleiht, die sich jedoch niemals unabhängig von einer möglichen oder zukünftigen szenischen Konkretisation vollzieht." (Pavis 1988: 59).

Generally, in case of dramatic texts, one can concretize the fictional world in the form of an imaginary performance, taking place on the stage. It is necessary to stress, that

- an imaginary performance lacks the "physical reality" of a performance, its facture integral;
- it is not fully inscribed into the text, but is represented in the form of mere fragments.

Because of its fragmentary, diffuse and abstract (non-physical) character, an imaginary performance constitutes only a kind of starting area, which opens several perspectives of interpretation. It is in any case not obligatory for the theatre practitioners, who can always resist the prescriptions in the text, but it nevertheless serves as an impulse for the further imaginative work, influencing its direction.

Textual mechanisms, shaping the reception of a play (i.e. reception strategy), thereby, can stimulate the concretization of the fictional world of a play in the mind's eye of the reader just as a performance does, or be neutral in this respect, or even prevent a reader from identifying the fictional world with a theatrical performance. In the present article we deal with the first case: dramatic text is to be visualized and interpreted as a performance, theatre, play — in opposition to the illusion of an actual world (everyday reality). The reading model for a play is decidedly that of imaginary performance. The author as if takes the producer's position and the implied reader is addressed as if the spectator, sitting in the hall and looking at the stage. Specifically theatrical means of expression (in the first place, nonverbal ones — basic spatial conception, symbolic audiovisual images, pantomimic

scenes (dumb show), etc.) are described and the virtual performance is determined with respect to the predominant or alternative theatrical styles of the period. The indications of how to perform the play, may coalesce into a kind of authorial programme for staging which is sometimes presented in great detail.

The fictional world of such plays is theatre-like, it operates according to the basic characteristics of the art of theatre:

— Theatrical space is divided into two parts — auditorium and stage, and this division implies a series of semiotic oppositions. The stage functions like a frame; framed action on the stage is meant to be looked at and to be given the meaning. The primary meaning of *theatre* is *theatron* — place for watching, seeing. All tentative efforts of breaking the boundary between actors and spectators and integrating them in the play is based on the awareness of such fundamental division of theatrical space.

— Theatre is action; actors are playing roles. So, the playing/acting is another feature, revealing the nature of theatrical art. *Role, mask, otherness* are central categories of theatre, and, resulting from them, the tension between appearance (seemingness) and reality constitutes a core of epistemology of theatre.

We will call the plays, drawing inspiration from the very essence of theatrical art, *theatricalist*. Theatricalism is generally defined as the movement in 20th-century modernist theatre, opposing the naturalistic illusion and activating the cognition of the world through playing, as well as frank acceptance of theatrical artifices, and foregrounding of visual and spatial images. Theatricalism in drama means that text refers explicitly to the theatrical language (primarily, spatial imagery and role-acting). The form of being of this fictional world is performance. So, theatricalist plays as if double the fictional universe, locating it on the stage, in the theatre that is the most possible world of all possible worlds. Thereby, the plot has no determinating importance: one can write about theatre and actors, preserving the illusion of reality, and, on the other hand, one can represent any sphere of life through the medium of theatre. Theatricalism is also a broader concept than “play within a play”, which includes only scenes and dramas, reproducing directly a performance situation, but similarly to the latter, theatricalism always implies metatheatrical reflection.

Below we shall discuss some outstanding dramas written by contemporary Estonian playwrights, which exemplify the theatricalism of drama and reveal different aspects of the text — stage relationship. The context of Estonian drama — 20th-century modernist theatre and drama — will be examined, in broad outline.

Paul-Eerik Rummo: Theatre as Metaphor of Existence

Theatricalism breaks forth in the plays by young writers at the end of the 1960s. The modernization of Estonian drama occurred under the influence of Western European modernist literary experience. In the 1960s, several plays by such playwrights as Beckett, Ionesco, Mrozek, Havel, Frisch, Dürrenmatt, Weiss, etc. were translated into Estonian and/or performed (especially on TV). For Estonian dramatic literature, the most influential literary movements, forming the background to the aspirations of the young generation, were the French existentialists (Camus, Sartre, Anouilh) and the theatre of the absurd. Changes in drama were related to the radical theatrical innovation at the same time, inspired essentially by the ideas and theories of Artaud, Grotowski, by the experience of *Living Theatre*, etc. The main purpose of the Estonian theatre reforms was the actualization of exclusively theatrical means of expression. The visual elements of performance and the actor's body language were emphasized and the verbal text was treated as only one component of the multidimensional imagery of performance.

In 1969, a young producer Evald Hermaküla (born in 1941) staged *Cinderellagame* by Paul-Eerik Rummo, then a young poet (born in 1942). The production can be considered to be a turning point in the development both of Estonian theatre and drama, marking a break with the old realism of everyday life type and introducing the playful, visual, bodily (physical) theatre that comprised elements of the theatre of cruelty in Artaud's spirit as well. It is remarkable that Rummo's stage directions, describing modernist imaginary performance were basically followed in the production. So Rummo acted as a reformer of theatrical language through his dramatic ideas.

The play is like an epilogue of the well-known fairy-tale: the story begins nine years after the latter's end. The Prince is searching for a "true" Cinderella, suspecting that she has been replaced with his present wife in the interests of someone. The plot serves as a means for constructing a model of human existence, by means of turning the action into theatrical images and interpreting persons as roles in a universal and eternal play. The place of action — a lonely house in the grip of a snowstorm — is very fairytale-like, but at the same time it becomes an equivalent of the whole universe. The modelling function of the stage is powerfully stressed by the metaphorization of spatial relations and setting. The intentionally two-dimensional scenery (all props are placed in one line, backstage is not used, the action is carried out in a linear fashion, the height of the stage is unlit), described in the stage directions, widens into a three-dimensional one when the Prince meets the Mistress. The Mistress denotes all-powerful Life, but, paradoxically, she is chained to a wheelchair — the ambiguous symbol of omnipotence and inability. In this scene the stage is empty and the audience can see all theatrical mechanisms — spotlights, lifts, etc. —, metaphorising the inner "mechanism" of the universe, which the Prince strives to comprehend. The equation of stage and the wholeness turns the quest of the Prince into an eternal betrayal of Man, the questioning of Life itself. The Mistress-Life, indeed, reveals the essence of existence: it consists in the casual nature of it, in the absence of any firm truths, in an indeterminacy. She says: "My means, dear Prince, / I said, is chance. My moves a game, my acts / Experimental. And how they end is all / The same to me." (Rummo 1992: 91). These words are doubled by the movement and gestural language: the Mistress in a wheelchair moves around on the stage, making sudden doublings and whimsical turns at random, the Prince tries to get hold of her in vain. So, the relations of cosmic and earthly, Man and Universe, found visual expression through the setting and physical imagery.

The universe of *Cinderellagame* is decisively indeterminate, deprived of rational causes and goals. Firstly, the parallels with the theatre of the absurd may be drawn, firstly. It is true, indeed, that Rummo attempts to overcome the deeply pessimistic consequences of existentialism. His critical approach to existentialist philosophy

finds expression in the character of Master: in the opinion of J. Rähesoo, this person impersonates a comic failure of existentialist pessimism (Rähesoo 1995: 44). Rejecting a pessimistic attitude (and offering, instead, a kind of resignation, an acceptance of the world just as it is, without any illusions), Rummo, nevertheless, reveals in his play the absurdity of the human condition in a world deprived of God, deprived of meaning and purpose. The basic idea of his play accords with ideas of the theatre of the absurd, as formulated by M. Esslin: the dignity of Man lies in his ability to face reality in all its senselessness, to accept it without illusions (Esslin 1991: 429).

M. Valgemäe has characterised the position of *Cinderellagame* in the co-ordinate system of the theatre of the absurd as follows: "Rummo's play moves away from the mechanistic approach of, say, Ionesco toward the more humanistic world of someone like Beckett, thus endowing everything it touches with deep universal concerns that are hidden under a layer of absurdism." (Valgemäe 1992: 121). *Cinderellagame*, indeed, can be compared in some respects with *Waiting for Godot*, though its central problems have no such universal validity. Both plays represent metaphorically the human condition and in both plays we see Man's hidden despair who is unable to find the meaning of existence. Or the basic situation is different: Beckett's *waiting* is a rather passive experience of life, while Rummo's Prince is *acting* — searching for the meaning. Beckett's Godot does not appear and, thus, remains a highly ambiguous symbol. The Prince, too, is searching for the Supreme force governing the world — only this force or being can give meaning to his life. *Cinderellagame* presents two persons symbolising the supernatural forces — one, missing on the stage, and one that the Prince really meets. The Mistress — a personification of life and of matter reveals to the Prince the truth about the very essence of the world (its fundamental absurdity); the truth, already known to Beckett's persons (that is why they do not search for anything any more). Closer to Beckett's Godot is another figure: Cinderella's Fairy Godmother. In the final scene the Prince, who has given up hope, beats Cinderella to force the Fairy Godmother to intervene. The Fairy Godmother means "justice and redemption", she "knows everything and wishes no evil" (Rummo

1992: 100–101). But, in the meaningless world of *Cinderellagame*, there is no fairy, no God(ot).

The play also offers a series of answers to the question of how one can live in such a universe. We return to the theatrical pattern, since the common denominator of “negative” mental attitudes can be considered a *role*. This fictitious world is populated by puppet-like role-players, directed by the Mistress. The existence within conceded limits of the role acquires a mark of automatism and, through that, of nonhumanity. Human life in such a representation is associated with a performance, conducted by a steady hand of a producer — having yet no conception. Such a performance differs fundamentally from an ideal the young producers of the 1960s strove for: a free game without rigid rules, acting that proceeds from inner impulses of players and helps to come closer to the deepest secrets of man’s soul and existence.

The performance situation penetrates into the imaginary world of *Cinderellagame* and occupies the place of its very meaning-bearing framework. Similarly to the theatre of the absurd, Rummo’s play is based not on philosophical discussions, but on stage metaphors. The production of 1969 took up the basically theatricalist vision, offered by text — the production spoke of the Man/Actor on the Stage of *Theatrum Mundi*.

Mati Unt: Metatheatrical Games

Mati Unt (born in 1944), an outstanding prose-writer and playwright, acted at the end of the 1960s as an ideologist of the theatrical innovation movement and wrote plays (“Phaethon, the Son of Sun” 1968, influenced by Anouilh). Afterwards, he was active as a critic, reflecting in his articles general problems of the theatre. At present, he is active as a producer in the Estonian Drama Theatre. One might presume that such a symbiosis (writer — producer) must affect the poetics of his plays.

Unt consistently avoids any “reality” effect, constantly and explicitly referring to the stage. The stage is treated as a mere playing area, which should not “reflect” everyday life. One of the most characteristic features of his plays is the metatheatrical im-

plication, manifested not so much in debates about theatre, but in scenes which function as models of different theatrical practices, presented usually in a slightly ironical mood. So, along with the story, Unt deals with the different possible interpretations of it, trying to disclose the nature of theatre and its paradoxes. The tension reigning between fiction and stage reality (within the framework of imaginary performance) constitutes a basic triggering mechanism of his plays.

Unt's works since the middle of the 1970s are written in post-modernist style; the experience of the postmodernist age influences their attitude towards theatre and fiction in general. Such features, suggested by I. Hassan as characteristics of postmodernism (see Hassan 1987: 167–173), like fragmentation of form, decanonization by means of all-including irony, extensive intertextual references and teasing play on the boundaries between mass and elitist culture, emerge vigorously in his plays. Concerning the theatre, two aspects must be foregrounded. First, making use of the “play within a play”-technique and/or shaping the fictional world of the play in accordance with the stage, Unt raises ontological problems. Unlike Rummo, a stage serves him not as a metaphor, but as an experimental field, a laboratory for investigating the relationship between fiction (play) and actual reality (life). What is real, what is “mere game”? When, where and whether the play turns into reality? What is the ontological status of theatrical art? These are questions Unt strives if not to answer, then, at least, to specify, demonstrate.

The instability of the fictional worlds of Unt's plays (oscillation between everyday reality and theatre as secondary reality, fiction) is reinforced by the exceptionally dense intertextuality. B. McHale has argued that postmodernist fictions view reality as constructed in and through languages, discourses, semiotic systems; everything is treated as a sign of a semiotic system in which the dialogues between different voices are acted out (McHale 1987: 164–165). Unt, who has always been very responsive to the ideas and discursive patterns, characteristic of a certain period, constructs his fictional worlds to a high degree from the so-called “atoms of culture” (M. Mutt). Free, even anarchistic game with different cultural elements, “acting out” of their dialogic relations

with other elements, constitutes the very structural principle of his works. In plays, theatre as play being a basic principle, just anything can happen and every possible cultural element can be put together — theatricalist reception strategy (all that is mere play) assures a minimal necessary coherence.

A good example here is the play *Good-bye, baby* (1975). It consists of 13 wholly separate scenes, so having a distinctly fragmentary composition. The title refers to a rather formal integrative motif: that of *leaving* or *loosing*, appearing in the scene titles (for instance, scenes as “Parsifal leaves the enchanted palace”, “Woman loses her shame”, “The actor loses his head”, etc.). The integration happens only owing to the same playing area (stage), where all scenes occur. Through these different scenes we can follow how the world is cognised/experienced and shaped by means of theatre. The author comments in a stage direction: “When the performance goes on, different things acquire special meanings and become carriers of information. Simplifying, we may say that the basic image connecting separate scenes can demonstrate different ways of cognizing the world, different objects, means and styles of that cognition.” (Unt 1985: 112). So, the stage is sometimes treated as a tribune for addressing rhetorical monologues to the audience; sometimes as a place for focusing attention on the authentic documents (documentary theatre); sometimes as a model of existential situations (actualization of myths); finally, as an illusory double of the reality. The reader has to move from one type of theatre to another, to change perspectives and compare different ways of making theatre. His competence and interest in theatrical ideas is not an inevitable, but rather a profitable presumption for enjoying the play. An interesting example is the scene “The actor loses his head”. A young actor has to replace an experienced one in the part of Holofernes. An old actor teaches him his art of impersonation (inner identification with character) to let him, when totally merged with Holofernes, to enter the story that ends with “real” death as an ironical climax of perfect impersonation. Thus, a certain method of acting is alienated and put under critical light.

Another play by Unt, tragical farce *Imperaator Nero eraelu* (*Private Life of Emperor Nero*) (first version, written in the 1970s, was neither published nor staged for political reasons) is an exem-

plary work, based on theatre-oriented reading strategy. In the opening stage direction the situation is explicitly described as a game; the actor puts on Nero's costume and this act is accompanied by the monologue *ad spectatores*, thematizing the basic pattern of theatre (it is "here and now", but it is not true). The actor says: "I am dressing here, because I want you to see me and be convinced: I am a most ordinary man. Approximately like you. /---/ Nero dreamt of the conquest of all the world, he set houses on fire and killed. I, indeed, have not dreamt up to now of the conquest of the world, neither burnt nor killed, etc." (Unt 1991: 3-4). The stage becomes the main integrating factor for all dissimilar elements of the play. References to extremely different historical, cultural and theatrical contexts pass through all the text. The frequent shifting from one historical age or culture to another, an abundance of anachronisms confronts the reader constantly with stage, which is to be interpreted only as a playground, without any claim to it "reflecting" certain historical situation. Unt brings together Marxist social theory and the world view of ancient Romans (i.e. they describe their activity themselves in terms of Marxism) with cutting irony. This basic strategy is supported by the far-reaching intertextual play on the level of the dialogue — allusions and quotations from Shakespeare to Kafka, including broad selection of Estonian classical and modern literature (Tammsaare, Tuglas, Under, Rummo, Unt himself, etc.). A particularly significant role is given to various theatrical references, introducing the metatheatrical level. The play includes inscriptions of episodes (reminiscent of Brecht), masks of *commedia dell'arte* (Nero's commanders are Dottore and Tartaglia), contemporary variety show, some happening-like, improvisatory scenes; the scene of the trial is carried out in the form of puppet theatre.

The most interesting intertextual relationship is that with Shakespeare and, primarily, with *Hamlet*. Unt's Nero quotes Shakespeare several times. In opening monologue he refers to "Hamlet", asking "Where is my father's ghost?". Allusions to "Hamlet" culminate when Nero performs the famous monologue "To be or not to be". With respect to Nero, Hamlet does not function as an archetypal parallel figure (such a parallel was Hamlet for Rummo's Prince). Nero's Hamlet-like world weariness after

another murder is not serious. Hamlet's monologue rather inscribes into the metatheatrical layer. Nero recites it on a little box-stage, exactly duplicating the setting. This involves an alienating effect and turns the scene into an autoparody of theatre. In such context, "Hamlet" denotes rather the quintessence of theatre, the sign of total theatre. Nero's false, actorial suicide after the monologue is "theatre" in a double sense and, again, emphasises the basically theatrical nature of the play: nothing can be taken seriously in the fictional world like this. Relation Hamlet — Nero illustrates the transformation of tragedy into farce.

Unlike Rummo's *Cinderellagame*, which carefully built up an integral metaphor of existence as theatre, Unt's dramas have a rather loose, decentred structure. The author determines distinctly the starting-point and direction, but after that he leaves several gaps that are to be filled with actorial improvisations, or the outlines some scenes only schematically, leaving much space to the creative *mise en scene*. The separate sequences of the story can be varied, new elements added to the framework offered by the text: the play submits easily, without resistance, to far-reaching transformation and context-related supplements. So, in the production by K. Komissarov in 1991, several substitutions and additions took place. The staging provided an opportunity to fit into it political allegory, primarily disclosing the corruptive power of the Soviet system, with contemporary political references, so as to criticize the negative tendencies in the independent Estonia as well.

Madis Kõiv: Framed Reality

Whereas the theatricalist model of reading in Rummo's and Unt's plays is determined from the very beginning, though not non-prescriptive in details because of numerous gaps and indeterminacies in the text, the dramas by a philosopher and physicist M. Kõiv (born in 1929) are completely different. One of their striking features is a sort of inconsiderateness, as to the possibility of a stage realization. The critics have repeatedly put a question if these plays are intended for staging at all. Despite an apparent ignorance of stage conditions — or, perhaps, just due to problems the wilful

author raises before a producer — Kõiv's dramas are widely performed at present.

Põud ja vihm Põlva kihelkonnas nelatõistkümnendama aasta suvõl (*Drought and Rain in Põlva Parish in Summer 1914*) (written together with Aivo Lõhmus in 1987, in the dialect of Võru, staged only in 1993 by Ingo Normet) depicts the life of simple Estonian peasants in the summer of the breaking out of World War I. Everyday work, long talks, love relationships, etc. are presented leisurely and minutely, without any complicated intrigue or central conflict. The charm of the play consists in its astonishing effect of authenticity, the ultimate concreteness of the manner of depiction. Extensive stage directions help to visualize landscapes and farm life with all its nuances, including such details as buzzing flies, air loaded with thunder, the movement of sunbeams on the floor, etc. The visionary, dense facture of reality arises from the authorial descriptions and speeches of persons. But from time to time, a fascinated reader is surprisingly confronted with stage directions clearly pertaining to the theatre. In Kõiv's theatre the stage begins to function like a frame, delimiting a certain cut of reality. The evoked life must fit itself into a space, fixed by the limits of the stage. Sometimes cutouts are made and put on the stage quite inconsiderately, as regards the audience. In the corn threshing scene, the cutting is as if "placed" on the stage cornerwise, so that the rearmost part of the threshing machine is behind the stage, "because the strewn straw would cast enormous clouds of dust into the auditorium and the threshing would be probably prohibited," whereas the steam engine could be placed "half in the auditorium, /---/ half in the foyer behind"; chaff and straw would, indeed, fly into the hall, but "it can't be helped, work's got to be done." (Kõiv 1987: 87–88). At the same time, the author describes minutely the action behind the stage: horses, cartloads of grain, farm servants bustling in the hay barn, etc. Such descriptions cannot, as a matter of fact, provide any instructions to the producer. They lay stress on the inaccordance of theatrical space and "natural reality", without making concessions to neither of them. The reader has to reconcile two spatial conceptions: that of imitating the actual reality (mimetic) and that of the theatrical space divided into the stage and the hall (ludic).

Tagasitulek isa juurde (Return to the Father) (1993) is even more complicated in this respect. The scene of action — a room in an old two-storey house in a provincial town of Valga — is called forth in the reader's imagination with utter concreteness: we can read about the freshly painted, creaking floor, chicken rustling in the dust, a sleeper's breathing, the rustle of an oak behind the window, etc. Such subtle details, referring to the "natural" reality in all its sensibility, traverse the whole play. The fictional universe is loaded with colours, voices, noises, light, smells, having a mere aggressive influence because of its sensuous concreteness. However, this life seems to move and breathe on the stage boards — it is sharply accentuated, for example, in a stage direction demanding that persons who enter two fictional rooms, located as if in the hall (but, of course, they are invisible), would disappear in a flash.

But the framing concerns only the space. The fourth dimension — time — is, on the contrary, treated with ultimate freedom in this respect. The location being stable and delimited, determined by the stage, the time moves arbitrarily backward and forward, oscillates between the past and the present, and the fictional reality oscillates and changes along with it. The flux of time takes the Returner, a middle-aged man, back into his childhood and brings the dead Father from the past to the present day; the flux of time mixes youth and old age, the dead and the quick, the dream and reality, all this flowing, obeying the unknown rules, through the room in the Returner's childhood home. Fast metamorphoses, strange contacts of different temporal perspectives that are astonishingly linked with natural, sensuous manner of depiction give to the fictional universe the character of charming indeterminacy and relativity. In this strongly framed, but permanently changing space, the Returner confronts the Past as an epistemological problem: he has to recognize, to embrace and understand the lived life and the meaning of it. The meaning of existence reveals itself in the room and things; it must be recorded in the memory, remembered and recognized.

Kõiv's plays are untheatrical in a habitual sense, in the aspect of taking into account real stage conditions and manipulating the stage-auditorium relationship. The fictional world of the play, comprising conflicting, incompatible spatial perspectives, is inher-

ently contradictory and even seems, for this reason, to lose an attribute of "possibility". It looks almost as if we have here several possible worlds that intersect with one another at some points and create rather impossible combinations from the point of view of reference. On the other hand, the actualization of the basic relations of a performance — life/actual reality and theatre/fictional reality, the touching of limits clears up the fundamentals of theatre, its very nature. Performance is, foremost, a framed reality, something that is "here and now" to be looked at.

Kõiv does not use openly theatrical metaphors. Nevertheless, the fictional worlds of his plays are located on the stage, and he refers to the auditorium as well. Why the theatre? Kõiv needs the stage, primarily, in his function as *theatron* — as the place for showing and watching. U. Eco has argued that "Ostension is one of the various ways of signifying" and it is, at the same time, "the most basic instance of performance" (Eco 1977: 110). The frame separates objects from the "natural" reality and creates a necessary spatial and psychological distance that makes the aesthetic experience possible. In theatre, the stage functions as the frame; the stage generates meaning, while "every element of that portion of the world that has been framed (put upon the platform) becomes significant." (Eco 1977: 112). Kõiv is not a conscious innovator of the theatrical language; nevertheless, his plays actualize the primary nature of the theatre (theatre as *theatron*), the basic pattern that makes possible all forms and styles of theatrical art, be it realistic, modernist or postmodernist. .

The theatricalism is one of the features, characteristic of modern Estonian drama. The text refers explicitly and directly to the stage as a place for representing, modelling or symbolising the reality. The receiver is directed to read the play with a theatrical imagination; stage directions offer a kind of staging programme, even if fragmentary and schematic. Such a direct reference to the stage reveals powerfully metatheatrical aspects of these plays, the questioning of the theatre, its nature and boundaries.

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Shakespeare between Machiavelli and Montaigne: an Exploration Through Lotman's Codes

GIUSEPPINA RESTIVO

The Dynamics of Codes

Within the frame of Juri Lotman's work, the essay "The Problem of Sign and of Sign Systems in the Typology of Russian Culture Before the Twentieth Century" (Lotman 1973) contains many seeds for a potential renovation of literary criticism. It could be regarded, to my mind, as the core of Lotman's theories, in spite of the fact that he does not openly refer to it in his subsequent work, probably out of modesty, and owing to the relative incompleteness of a theory of such great scope. But it underlies both his literary essays and the development of his theory of culture, and acts as the implicit source of their unity and coherence. It will probably take an entire generation of scholars to achieve a clear assessment and a sufficiently deep examination of the more complex aspects of Lotman's unique form of dynamic semantics, at the same time synchronic and diachronic.

In "The Problem of Sign and of Sign Systems" Lotman identifies four different dominant codes of culture, respectively characteristic of the Middle Ages, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment and Romanticism. On a synchronic level, Lotman starts from the two basic relationships of the sign: firstly with what "it stands for" (its symbolic, referential function) and, secondly, with other signs

(its syntagmatic connection). The same elementary principles were identified in Carnap's work between 1934 and 1950¹.

Lotman proceeds to combine the two basic relationships in four different ways, by considering both present or both absent or, in turn, either present in the absence of the other.

On a diachronic level, on the other hand, the four types of codes that have been produced in this way, as combinations of the symbolic and syntagmatic possibilities of the sign, appear as historically present in the four cultural periods mentioned. While the medieval age appears to stress the symbolic code and the Renaissance the syntagmatic one, the Enlightenment seems, through an act of "double liberation", to negate both, "creating the signs of this double negation", as Lotman puts it. Complete negation would, in fact, lead to utter silence. By reacting against this form of negation or semantic reduction, Romanticism finally experiments with the full combination of both the symbolic and the syntagmatic principles. After the nineteenth century Lotman hints the two latter codes, typical of Enlightenment and of Romanticism, continue to combine for a while; unfortunately his analysis stops short at the beginning of the twentieth century.

The actual texts be they literary or not are usually based on a combination of different codes, one of them being a dominant one. While a text is therefore plural, in the periods considered it is organized according to a hierarchic order. After Romanticism, though, the equal forces of the two latter types of code appear to produce "half and half" combinations: a kind of dialogue on an even basis. Lotman draws no further conclusions.

What is striking about this theory is the double move towards both simplification and complication in the constitution of a text.

A model of only four code types explains the basic characteristics of the four periods considered, the general logical assets of which are made to stand forth cogently, through a procedure typical of simplifying and non-reductive scientific generalization,

¹ See Rudolf Carnap, *Logische Syntax der Sprache* (1934), on the relation among signs, and *Meaning and Necessity* (1947), where the sign/object relationship is analysed.

probably suggested by the scientific culture in particular biology, neurology and mathematics underlying Lotman's thought.

At the same time, each text appears composite, and its interpretation even more complex. It consists in the encounter of virtually contrasting sets of code combinations, both the set that gave rise to the text and the set belonging to the interpreter. This opens up an enormous gap on the hermeneutic side, as the coincidence between the two sets, belonging to different points of view, appears of low probability and offers a semiotic justification for the infinite openness of interpretation. Interpretation becomes in fact a form of partial intersection, and potentially the series of all possible intersections.

The code combinations are practically infinite, considering the different weight of each component and its incidence in the final overall result, especially from the point of view of contemporary theories of complexity. A comparison with the four bases of human DNA, the combinations of which give rise to the infinite diversity of persons, and at the same time to the precise identification of each individual, comes easily to mind.

The combinations of Lotman's codes constituting texts suggest important implications, as the dynamics of the codes:

1. is incompatible with the fixed, questionable chronological periodization in histories of literatures;

2. brings about its own rhythms of anticipation and recurrence, accounting for the contradictions that any periodization inevitably encounters;

3. imports rhythms that are both context-bound and unforeseeable, as they are, at any given moment, both diachronically determined and synchronically open to the full range of creative possibilities;

4. accounts for the complex architectures and plurality of texts as an effect of code combinations: semantic structuring is free but seldom casual, except for reasons of polemics;

5. enables not only the identification of different codes in the texts, but an explanation of interpretation as resulting from the semantic intersection of the models in the texts and those used by the interpreter, to the exclusion of what remains outside the intersection area.

These important considerations, made evident by Lotman's thought, can help the interpreter avoid some of his typical prejudices due to his chronological or ideological expectancies.

In particular, they can encourage new perspectives in dealing with Shakespeare's plays and the many problems they pose to criticism. Their so-called ambiguities could be re-read as distinguishable conflicts of codes reflecting the contemporary debate, rather than as a form of ironic non-committment, incoherence or careless text transmission. Viewed as a conflict of codes, the Shakespearian text allows a much wider semantic intersection between its elements and how much of them may be construed along meaningful semantic lines, recapturing from within the text, not from an externally imposed historiography the plurality of the cultural-historical setting. Many passages, today considered as mere delay of action or possibly spurious, in spite of lack of evidence to that effect, seem to regain a polemical and ideological role. Influences such as Montaigne's may moreover appear not only as a literary curiosity, explaining the origin of a few linguistic choices, but as relevant to Shakespeare's overall meaning².

Centralization characterizes Lotman's syntagmatic code as dominant during the Renaissance. It brings about the growth of towns and their organization, it enhances the state as an effective machine, the functioning of which supersedes the symbolic values and the rural decentration of medieval civilization. While, to the medieval mind, innovation was not a value, and the world of his-

² The importance for Shakespeare's thought of Montaigne's influence in Florio's translation since 1603/1604 — causing "kindling by contact" and implying that "he that takes becomes co-thinker" was expressed by John Robertson in *Montaigne and Shakespeare* (Burt Franklin, New York 1909, reprinted in 1969), together with a complaint on "unwillingness in England to conceive of Shakespeare as owing much to foreign influences" (p. 65). But, although Robertson prompted an important recognition of Montaigne's influence on Shakespeare, this has not greatly influenced Shakespearian interpretation. The parallel passages selected and analysed by Robertson, showing Montaigne's relevance in particular for *Hamlet*, did not lead to a re-reading of the play: even Dover Wilson, though convinced, along with Brandes, of Montaigne's presence in *Hamlet*, failed to develop the point.

tory received its legitimation from its correspondence to the eternal world of symbolic reality as in Dante's *Divina Commedia* the syntagmatic code of the Renaissance overturns the preceding point of view. Its different semantic principle modifies abstract medieval symbolism, appraises effectiveness, admits novelty and infinite perfectibility, and focuses on worldly events. No longer split between actual facts and a transcendent symbolic meaning, reality is now referred upon one central structure, common to all, betraying the first signs of a move towards democracy at the level of social organization. England develops, for instance, the centralized and urban forms of government conceived by Thomas More in *Utopia* (1516) and later by Francis Bacon in *The New Atlantis* (1626). Here, on the island of Bensalem, centralization turns into control over nature, as achieved in a huge scientific research program. But centralization also means the subjection of the individual to the general structure, and justifies a greater power conferred on the prince. A syntagmatic code can allow space for a state policy as Machiavelli suggested in *Il principe*, the amoral logic of which gave rise to a widespread debate in England.

Just as the Renaissance syntagmatic code supersedes the medieval semiotic principle of symbolism, the code of the Enlightenment, in its turn, supersedes the syntagmatic principle of the Renaissance: the simultaneous crisis of the two semantic principles causes a "desemiotization" of social and cultural structures along with a rejection of history, its institutions and hierarchies, as super-imposed artificial constrictions. Conceived as a double form of semantic criticism, the code of the Enlightenment coincides with the primitive or natural man's point of view: it appraises nature, the individual, or a society of individuals on an equal basis, developing in the direction of the *égalité-liberté-fraternité* formula of French Revolution. Lotman points out, however, that before becoming dominant in the eighteenth-century Enlightenment, this code had made its appearance much earlier, in the transition from medieval to Renaissance culture, and again as a progressive corrective of Renaissance syntagmatism.

In England, following the end of a conception of history as ultimately directed by Providence, the new Renaissance responsibility for the "invention of history" brings about two different atti-

tudes: Utopian, or that connected with the search for the best possible form of an ethically-oriented government, and Machiavellian, dispensing with ethical restrictions and far from the tradition of Plato's Republic. The debate between them characterizes both Elizabethan and Jacobean politics, philosophy and literature. A thread connects Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* (1580), Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta* (1589) opening with Machiavelli as a character on the stage with Shakespeare's *Richard III* (1592-'93), Iago (1604) and Edmund (1604), extending as late as Webster's theatre; while a second line of development extends from More's to Bacon's Utopia, involving Shakespeare's plays from *As You Like It* (1590) to *The Tempest* (1611). But the "Utopian answer" in England is actually of two different kinds. While the tradition from More to Bacon is a Renaissance one, Shakespeare shifts towards a different code. Like Montaigne on the other side of the Channel, he anticipates, through a criticism of the dominant contemporary code, attitudes that can be semantically described in terms of what Lotman calls the code of Enlightenment. Within the restricted limits of these pages, this issue will only be rapidly traced, from a circumscribed point of view, to suggest a re-reading of Shakespeare's work, and some of the possibilities implicit in Lotman's theories (Restivo 1994: 51-65). These seem to promote a critical "sympathy" with all different codes and a full-range understanding of semantic organization.

Shakespeare's "unprincely" prince

Hamlet, *King Lear* and *The Tempest* share a strange common factor, that cannot at first sight be easily accounted for: the figure of a prince who disregards power or drifts away from it.

Hamlet, the Duke of Albany and Prospero have some common traits. Surrounded by Machiavellian villains, they are all characterized by a strong moral sense and hesitation or inability to take action against close relatives. They are all intellectuals, though to a different degree, ranging from Albany's meditative temperance to Hamlet's love for scholarly study at the University of Wittenberg and Prospero's exceptional knowledge, enhanced by his magical

power. Each of them appears, at a certain moment in the play, entitled to the throne. yet, in spite of moral and intellectual qualities that would make them good rulers, none of them seems eager to grasp his opportunity. Curiously, each of them seems rather to qualify well as an appropriate counterpart to Julius Caesar's ambition for power: an ambition depicted in Shakespeare's own play on the Roman hero immediately preceding *Hamlet*, and also peculiarly singled out in Montaigne's *Essays*³, the translation of which, licensed by Florio in 1601, most probably circulated among friends and was then published in 1603.

Hamlet, Albany and Prospero all seem to turn their back on the Renaissance tradition of the strong state leader, capable of rhetorical ability and simulation, and rather mirror attitudes that Lotman describes as later typical of the Enlightenment code. Hamlet consistently conforms to such values as individuality, moral drive, disgust for public ostentation, artificiality and all forms of "seems" ("Nay, madam, I know not seems"). He expresses an intellectual criticism of history (the events at court) not at variance with Montaigne's own anticipations of Enlightenment.

Hamlet does not crave for his succession to the throne of Denmark. While his dead father's identity coincided with his public symbolic function, and his ghost is defined as "the majesty of buried Denmark" in arms, Hamlet's identity is that of a solitary intellectual, not determined by a state function or by public consideration: "I could be bounded in a nutshell and count myself a king of infinite space". He prefers meditative university life to an imposed court life, the court being dominated by a Machiavellian villain, Claudius, who poses not so much the problem of succession to his own father, as that of ethical scandal: "My tables meet it is I set it down/That one may smile, and smile and be a villain". This forces upon him the moral duty of counteraction ("The time is out of joint") that he feels disruptive for him "O cursed spite,

³ See *The History of Spurlina* in the *Essays* (II,33), which discusses at great length the character of Julius Caesar, whose many great qualities were "eclipsed by this furious passion of ambition", his one vice that to Montaigne, as he claims, "hath made his memory abominable to all honest minds".

that ever I was born to set it right!" as he would rather be in Wittenberg with his books.

The four "models of revenge" he considers in the play cannot really drive him, as they cannot stir his moral sense or be attractive to a scholar like him. His father's ghost demanding revenge is a medieval example of epic symbolism, opposed to the new values of study, reflection and love that Hamlet shares and should renounce, as he says, to devote himself to vengeance. Pyrrhus, whose part is played on Hamlet's request by an actor, takes revenge on old defenceless Priam with grotesque violence, in a horrifying hyperbolic way. The stylistic exaggerations that describe him as a "Hyrcanian beast", "hellish", "rugged", "head to foot total gules, horribly tricked with blood", even "o'ersized with coagulate gore", imply some irony, as they cannot invite an Elizabethan intellectual's emulation. Laertes, on the other hand, striving to revenge his father's and sister's death, becomes a naive and instrumental victim of Claudius' Machiavellism: his determination makes him vulnerable and unable to cope with an insidious Renaissance court, far too complex for him. As for Fortinbras, he acts to revenge his father's defeat and losses according to an abstract sense of honour, and "by divine ambition puff'd": an implicit parodic tone describes him even as he "Makes mouths at the invisible event". One of his captains openly says that Fortinbras is leading an army and bringing thousands of men to death, to conquer a land that is not worth five ducats to till. Hamlet could not possibly imitate any of these examples.

If and when they have been noticed, these ironies have not been underlined, as they are seemingly embarrassing, in apparent contradiction with Hamlet's statements in praise of revenge, taken at their face value. But what if their face value were questioned? If so, Hamlet's whole behaviour would appear as consistently befitting a pre-Enlightenment code in Lotman's terms. And evident linguistic borrowings from Montaigne would find their ideological correspondence.

The captain's comments on Fortinbras' military expedition have in fact been related to a number of essays in Florio's Montaigne by John M. Robertson (Robertson 1909:58-61), who selects passages first from "Of Diversion", then from "Of Controlling

One's Will", "Of Bad Means Employed to a Good End", "Of Solitariness" and the "Apology of Raymond Sebonde".

Montaigne never actually tires of exposing the expensive princely folly dictated by imaginary glory. In "Of Solitariness" glory and reputation are defined as "the most unprofitable, vain and counterfeit coin that is in use with us" (III, 2): an apt comment on Fortinbras' honour and a good illustration of Lotman's code of enlightenment.

But Robertson does not connect this point, that yet he sees as common to Montaigne and Shakespeare, with Montaigne's parallel rejection of revenge in the same essay "Of Diversion", or "De la diversion", he quotes for the Fortinbras passage. He misses considering Montaigne's essay as a likely source for Hamlet's double reason of resistance to revenge, a resistance which is indeed vested with an appreciation for Fortinbras. Robertson ends at a loss: Montaigne's vain glory applying to Fortinbras appears inconsistent with Hamlet's self-denigration, that he accepts as real, and he overlooks Montaigne's rejection of revenge as apparently extraneous to Shakespeare, whose play is actually centred on this very rejection.

In "De la diversion" Montaigne recommends "a young prince" most probably Henri of Navarre, who, after his victory over the Catholics at Coutras (1587) was a guest in Montaigne's castle to relinquish revenge for the sake of different virtues:

"C'est une douce passion que la vengeance, de grande impression et naturelle; je le vois bien, encore que je n'en aie aucune expérience. Pour en distraire dernièrement un jeune prince, je ne lui allais pas disant qu'il fallait prêter la joue à celui qui vous avait frappé l'autre, pour le devoir de charité; ni ne lui allais représenter les tragiques événements que la poésie attribue à cette passion. Je la laissai là et m'amusai à lui faire goûter la beauté d'une image contraire; l'honneur, la faveur, la bienveillance qu'il acquerrait par clémence et bonté; je le détournai à l'ambition. Voilà comment on en fait".⁴ (Montaigne 1965: 80)

⁴ Montaigne, *De la diversion*, *Essays* III,4, Gallimard, Paris 1965, p. 80. This passage, which was overlooked with respect to *Hamlet*, has however been indicated in connection with *The Tempest*: see Gail

A son of his age, Hamlet is caught between the problems raised by Machiavelli's outlook, as practised by Claudius, and Montaigne's tenets, that he seems to share. Rather than a prince of indecision, he might be a prince obstinate in shaping new values, for the sake of an outlook that he cannot speak out openly on stage, but only insinuate, behind a veil of conformity, necessary to pass official censorship and made more transparent by irony and parody. But this would imply a split audience and public opinion, part of which at least would have been an appropriate addressee for such a complex intellectual message, an addressee capable of appreciating Montaigne innuendos and an anticipation of the code of Enlightenment.

We know for certain that Hamlet was well received by an intellectual university audience. In 1601 Gabriel Harvey, a well-known Cambridge Professor, pointed out that the "wiser sort" of students appreciated Shakespeare's *Lucrece* and *Hamlet* (Wilson 1936: 22). Moreover, the 1603 entry in the Stationer's Register confirms that *Hamlet* had played to university audiences. The play was, the entry reads, "diverse times acted by His Highnesse servants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford and elsewhere" (Bullough 1978: 3). In his Introduction to the Cambridge edition of Hamlet, Dover Wilson described the attention with which young gentlemen and students used to take down notes from plays, marking relevant passages in their "tables", which accounts for Shakespeare's highly quotable verses, as well as for Hamlet's allusion to such habits, when, in I,5 he exclaims "My tables, My tables meet it is I set it down/That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain": he even suggests what should be taken down. *Hamlet* is certainly the Shakespearian text that focuses most on university students, as Hamlet and Horatio both study at the University of Wittenberg, while Laertes is attending Paris University.

In *The Causes of the English Revolution 1529–1642*, the British historian Lawrence Stone describes the England of this period as a

K. Paster in *Montaigne, Dido and The Tempest: "How Came that Widow in?"* in "Shakespeare Quarterly", Spring 1984, vol. 35, n. 1.

country with a split public opinion (Stone 1972: Part II). While in other European countries monarchs were able to control contemporary media, the English government, in spite of official censorship, could not silence the opposition of groups of intellectuals. Stone depicts a society with two different cultures, evident in all its aspects, from religion to art, from literature and the theatre to styles of dressing and ways of behaviour. Four lines of thought were, Stone says, feeding the intellectual opposition: the Puritans, the Common Law, opposing the king's bench and represented in particular by Edward Coke (possibly a personal friend of Shakespeare), the so-called Country, opposed to court life and its corruption; and the "sceptical" philosophy of both Bacon and Montaigne. As for the Country, which was for a time probably led by Coke, it appealed to gentlemen who had received a new kind of education at Oxford and Cambridge, and had studied Vergil's *Georgics*, polemically preferring it to the *Aeneid*, obviously a more monarchic or imperial text.

In France in the meantime, against a background of religious conflicts between Catholics and Protestants, a political debate on religious tolerance was going on, concerning the king's powers; and among the Huguenot monarchomaques a vast production of pamphlets circulated. Hubert Languet's *Vindiciae contra tyrannos* (1579), in particular, was published thanks to Philippe du Plessis Mornay, a renowned politician and adviser to Henri IV, Montaigne's young prince turned king (Simonutti 1990: 106).

Shakespeare was addressing an audience that cannot be considered as coinciding with the king's (or queen's) will, or as simply popular. Especially for such texts as *Hamlet*, recommended by a university don like Harvey, a double addressee is implicit, as Shakespeare knew he was catering for a monarchic-popular audience as well as an intellectual opposition audience. As Dover Wilson pointed out, evidence of Montaigne's influence on Shakespeare's plays starts with *Hamlet*, where, Wilson admits, Montaigne is present "throughout" (Wilson 1936: 24).

Montaigne is also present in *King Lear*, where classical Greek philosophy is paralleled, as in Montaigne, with the anthropology of the man of nature, free from civilization and the ties of history: Edgar, transformed into poor Tom of Bedlam, is called by Lear, in

his seeing madness, "a noble philosopher", a Theban or Athenian. He is therefore placed in a position comparable with the wisdom and knowledge of the Greeks, like Montaigne's cannibales with Lycurgus or Plato. Montaigne, in fact, laments that Lycurgus and Plato were inevitably not acquainted with the recently discovered primitive American cannibals.

Edgar's testing and "re-education" through his *reductio ad naturam* later to be repeated in Ferdinand's imprisonment in *The Tempest* could be one of the reasons for which Albany resigns his power in his favour. In *The Tempest*, in fact, the ideal new prince must first stand "the natural test". At the same time Albany's final resignation and "retirement" pose wider problems.

The Duke of Albany is a secondary character and has not particularly attracted the critics' attention. But his rejection of the throne is apparently motiveless, even scandalous from a monarchical point of view: with Lear and Cordelia dead, he is entitled to the throne, yet he confers the crown on Edgar. Does he lack the necessary energy?

It is he who restores royal power and saves the national interests, thanks to the army he has raised and led. He has also escaped his wife's mortal trap, and, alone, has taken important decisions, torn between national interest and ethics. He has checked Edmund while exploiting his military ability in war, and has neutralized him in the end, by depriving him of the army at the right moment. Throughout, he has proved able to discern between good and evil allies, something Lear had failed to do. His hesitation before choosing action, vehemently reviled by Goneril as a form of cowardice, gives him the time necessary to evaluate the situation and dissociate himself from Machiavellian practices. He actually discusses these as disruptive for the state itself, until he is able to break the tie with his wife. Then he acts against her, as Hamlet acts against Claudius in the end, only when certain of her betrayal and attempt on his life. By renouncing the crown, he makes it clear to the audience that he is not acting to gain the succession: a "Machiavellian" implication otherwise possible. Politically, his final offer of the throne to both Kent who is actually dying and Edgar, who will accept, is as unnecessary as it is surprising, but it asserts the possibility of taking ethical action for its own sake. The

words he uses imply that the rule of a state is a duty that must be performed and not a privilege he personally would enjoy: "Friends of my soul, you twain/Rule in this realm, and the gor'd state sustain".

Albany seems to stand midway between Hamlet and Prospero. All three should be seen against the background of this progression: Shakespeare's ambiguities seem less ambiguous if single texts are seen not in isolation but within the "macrotext" of his entire production, viewed as a reflection developing from one play to the next.

In itself Albany's choice might escape attention if it were not followed by a similar case of much greater evidence in *The Tempest*. Here, in the course of the play, the Renaissance syntagmatic ideal of monarchy is contested at least three times.

At first sight the play seems to share a certain affinity with Bacon's *The New Atlantis*, the two works appearing within a comparatively short time 15 years of each other.

Prospero's wisdom and extraordinary powers over nature seem to anticipate the wise sovereign of Bensalem and the scientific control of nature he promotes, while expressing an exceptional and highly centralized rule: nothing on Prospero's island seems to escape his command, not even the weather, as he orders the tempest that gives the play its title. He can actually undo the past, prevent new crimes, readdress history, and he is in command of everyone on the island, be he man or spirit. But the structure of the play does not consent the dominance of these syntagmatic traits.

The first "contradiction" is stated by Gonzalo, the statesman who had helped Prospero to land safely with his books on the island, together with Miranda. During the second act Gonzalo quotes Florio's translation of Montaigne's essay "Of the Cannibals"⁵ to

⁵ This passage has been recognized by all commentators since Capell (1767). Florio was the friend of Ben Jonson, and Shakespeare and Jonson were very close. Florio's translation, though licensed in 1601, was not published till 1603, the year of the publication of the first Quarto of *Hamlet*, while the second Quarto was printed in 1604. It is probable that Shakespeare saw parts of Florio's translation before 1603, or heard passages from it read.

describe the way he would dispose of the island were it in his power. His Utopian design is so astonishing that it has to be expressed with the counterpoint of Antonio and Sebastian's derision. Considering the nature of the island, which offers abundance of food and easy survival with no work, Gonzalo envisages a free life totally asyntagmatic without any constrictions, work, laws, contracts, institutions or authority, money, riches or arms. If he were king of the island, paradoxically, he would avoid all forms of state.

Gonzalo's utopia introduced through Antonio and Sebastian's rumours to prevent the public's probable rumours, were it introduced in a different way is a carnivalization (Bachtin 1965) of the Renaissance syntagmatic utopia.

As the play develops, Gonzalo's prestige grows until Prospero defines him as "holy Gonzalo". At the same time, Gonzalo's detractors are later revealed as among the worst villains treading the contemporary stage, and their words have no authority to contest Montaigne's and Gonzalo's meaning, when recollected at the end of the play. In Act two the dialogue between Gonzalo on one side and Antonio and Sebastian on the other may therefore be read not as a longish delay but, to some degree, as an implicit "duel" between Montaigne and Machiavelli, through their respective representatives.

While in the contemporary debate Florio's Montaigne was frequently used, according to Ben Jonson's allusions in *Volpone*, III, 2, and easily recognizable by at least a part of the audience, time distance, a long-term national pride, an eagerness not to overstate foreign influence (Montaigne's), and the filtering of ideologies allowing no "sympathetic intersection", have tended to conceal this debate from many critics' eyes. Lotman's theory, giving voice to difference, renders it more visible, unavoidable in a critical analysis. It makes the plurality of codes feeding the debate of the play stand out more clearly, whatever status is chosen for each code. Gonzalo's statement has often been taken at face value: as silly as defined by Antonio and Sebastian's comments, and also as not only a delay passage, but as one of the many "inconsistencies" in which the play allegedly abounds (Orgel 1994: 5-18).

The second "contradiction" concerning a dominant syntagmatic view in *The Tempest* is directly described by Prospero himself.

The masque he evokes to celebrate Ferdinand and Miranda's marriage in Ferdinand's appreciation "a Paradise" he would like to live in shows a pastoral idyll different from More's and Bacon's urban centralized Utopia. It also differs from Gonzalo's Utopia as it purports a lesser degree of desemiocratization of the social institutions. It allows in fact some work in the fields, and marks marriage with a ceremony, if not an official contract or a proper religious celebration, ignoring the dynastic aspects of the union.

The third "contradiction", or rather series of contradictions, concerns Prospero's behaviour. First of all, in his past life in Milan he preferred his studies to the exercise of power, a preference he never renounces. On the island he still openly reasserts it when alluding to his books: using the present tense and not the past tense as he says "I prize (them) above my dukedom". Moreover, thinking of his future back in Milan, he plans to "retire" rather than rule.

Many more details enforce a choice denying absolute authority. Miranda's education, which Prospero is so proud of, allows her an independence and self-determination that bring her to the verge of rebellion against his orders, that are likewise questioned by Ariel and Caliban, who both aim at their freedom. Prospero finally frees them, while at the same time giving up his magician's powers and acknowledging his former slave Caliban as a part of himself: "This thing of darkness I acknowledge mine". What is more, the ideal couple of future rulers, Miranda and Ferdinand, have undergone Emile's rural education or re-education (in Ferdinand's case), before facing their social duties: a desemiocratizing pre-Enlightenment code has been introduced, actually disseminated, in the play, gaining dominance and qualifying Shakespeare's final Utopian project.

The Split Scene

While Montaigne's influence on Shakespeare becomes linguistically detectable from *Hamlet* onwards, Machiavelli's presence, as feeding the Shakespearian villain typology, is evident much earlier and protracts as far as *The Tempest*. In *Hamlet*, *Lear* and *The Tem-*

pest, Machiavelli and Montaigne actually act as a common double intertextuality, one opposed to the other and each contending for the prince's formation. From Richard III to Antonio and Sebastian, Shakespeare's plays reflect Machiavelli's impact on English culture and the current political debate. In the third part of Henry VI Richard of Gloucester, the future Richard III, specifically refers to Machiavelli: "I can [...] set the murderous Machiavel to school", he says, as he boasts of his ability to dissemble: "I can smile and murder whiles I smile" (III, 2).

In Hamlet, Claudius who "may smile and smile and be a villain" (I, 5), recalling Richard's words and in *King Lear* Edmund, Regan and Goneril, clearly express their Machiavellian ideology as do Antonio and Sebastian later in *The Tempest*. They all remain within the tradition of the Machiavellian villain, who was expected to be, according to *Il principe*, both "volpe e leone", "a fox and a lion", as in Richard's case. This model can extend beyond the court, as with Iago.

If the Machiavellian villain "justifies" a criticism of court life and an escape from history into pastoral Utopia (a choice appealing to the Country), he also generates his own positive "double". This "counterplotting hero", ethically his opposite, is capable of reversing his pernicious effects, as in the Edgar/Albany alliance opposed to the Edmund/Cornwall one, or in Hamlet's handling of Claudius' letter to the king of England.

So, along with a double addressee and a double intertextuality, both already pointed out, Shakespeare's plays imply a double code, a Renaissance syntagmatic one, largely but not entirely Machiavellian, and an asyntagmatic one, forerunning the Enlightenment. The plays move along three parallel central "splittings":

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| | 1. monarchic/popular |
| I addressee | 2. intellectual oppositions |
| | 1. Machiavelli |
| II intertextuality | 2. Montaigne |

1. syntagmatic (Renaissance)

III code

2. asyntagmatic (pre-Enlightenment)

Through Lotman's codes Shakespeare's ambiguity finds here both a new description and its negation, as the three "splittings" described imply an ideological scene where different voices may be consistently followed, confirming the dual England described by Stone. In Lotman's terms, a synchronic interplay of codes brings together different semantic organizations of diachronic origin, as a medieval outlook yields to Renaissance culture, and both of them to forms of desemiologization anticipating the future Enlightenment code. These were at the time evident as "current semantics", as everyday experience and confrontation, but centuries later they appeared more enigmatic, as some of the voices, left out of the semantic intersections, lapsed into silence.

Code dynamics in texts may be unrestricted by contemporary code dominance, especially in complex authors like Shakespeare. This leads back to the five points derived from the reflections on Lotman's theories in paragraph 1, confirming, first of all, points one and two:

1. Chronological periodization cannot lead to a proper classification, as Shakespeare's three plays mentioned here include medieval, Renaissance and Enlightenment outlooks, while the Renaissance codification does not usually play a dominant role, as might be expected, and as it does in More's *Utopia*, in Bacon's *New Atlantis* or in other Elizabethan playwrights, such as Marlowe. A failure to take this into account can lead to a forcing of the texts within a given frame, putting large sections of the plays out of focus and of the interpreting semantic intersection.

2. Texts follow their own internal rhythms, anticipating or re-using codes in their "diachronically synchronic" dynamics.

An example of a wide chronological range of codes simultaneously present is offered by Shakespeare in the "love test scene" of *King Lear*, where three different codes meet at the same time, each with its own system of evaluation opposed to the others. From a logical viewpoint of value assessment, codes turn a father's dialogic exchange with his three daughters into a Babel of foreign languages.

Lear acts out Lotman's medieval symbolic code. He has prepared a ceremonial scene in which all exchanges must be visualized or made verbally explicit, since for him the only mark of reality is public existence symbolically shared: each of his daughters is expected publicly to express her love for him. He intends to resign his present power, but, as his identity resides in his symbolic status as a king, he intends to retain his regal quality, even if this means separating the symbolic expression from its referent.

Regan and Goneril use the symbolic words their father wants to hear, but detached from reality, from a viewpoint opposite to their father's. While for him symbols stand for reality even when the material basis giving sense to the substitution function is absent for them symbols are fiction which acts when it produces communicative effects. No reality needs lie behind them, the only reality being that they can produce or forge with cunning. They actually overturn Lear's "guaranteed" quality of sign.

Cordelia, on the other hand, rejects the symbolic equation in favour of silence, in a sense to avoid both her father's and her sisters' fallacies, stopping Regan and Goneril's hyperbolic word inflation as well as Lear's equally hyperbolic symbolic inflation. To do so, she points out the limits of nature assumed as a measure: "I love Your Majesty according to my bond: no more nor less". The king of France then plays a confirming role by polemically using the same evaluation system in taking her as his wife.

In this scene, three different forms of semantic organization of both identity and knowledge give voice to three different ages of culture and their diachronic periods of dominance: the past medieval age, the Renaissance and the future Enlightenment.

The Semantic Intersection

The mixture of codes bringing about meaning in a text appears in these examples as more context-bound than chronologically-bound, which implies points three, four and five from the first paragraph list derived from Lotman:

3. Shakespeare chooses a full range of possibilities, focusing not on the code dominant at present the syntagmatic one but rather

counteracting it, on one hand with a past medieval code and on the other with a code that was to become dominant in the future, thus confounding the spectator's expectations, if limited.

4. Semantic composition appears therefore to be free from time determinism, although context-bound: the analysis of possible reactions to Machiavellism is the context dictating the strategies of the text, but "time pertinence" is dissolved, as characters meet speaking from different ages.

5. Lotman's codes are recognizable in Shakespeare's texts, and their acknowledgement makes these texts appear better organized: details or scenes which have slipped into irrelevance emerge from shade into light, and a larger semantic intersection becomes possible.

Semantic intersection actually lies at the core of these last three points at different levels. In the production of a work of art, the context "captures" the codes it needs, or it is contrasted with a set of codes suitable to counterbalance it; in criticism, Lotman's codes bring textual architecture to light and reduce uninterpreted areas.

The semantic intersections in texts cannot come into play, in a communicative sense, unless they are filtered through the addressee's intersection. Of course the interpreter's semantic organization is potentially as wide as that of the text, but like the text it is usually a compound organized hierarchically, and imposing its viewpoint. Consciousness of the interactions between the two compounds of codes, the set of the text and the interpreter's, could shed more light on possible interpretations.

Although the critical attitude usually operates, as has already been pointed out, on the basis of a code compound, it can prove of experimental interest to explore and compare the interpretations each of Lotman's four basic codes tends to suggest, for instance in the case of *Hamlet*.

From a hypothetical interpreter's symbolic or medieval viewpoint, *Hamlet's* tragedy may appear as basically a tragedy centred on his inability to meet the ghost's royal canons and model of honour: revenge is the act necessary to signify the restoration of the royal dignity. It is, therefore, the real issue, while no important evaluation or cognitive problem stands out in the text to justify the prince's hesitation.

According to a syntagmatic code revenge changes nature and in part loses momentum: Hamlet seems rather to become a case of ineptitude for effective action and state control. The prince of Denmark shows something of the fox, with his feigned madness, but nothing of the lion. Choice of values and epistemological uncertainties must not hinder operative choices, the only real test.

Desemiotization and the epistemic crisis come to the fore, however, through the third of Lotman's codes: the Machiavelli/Montaigne opposition becomes visible, revenge models questionable, kingship debatable, self-denigration ironical and at least in the eyes of the gentlemen of the Country and of the other opposition groups partly a form of ironical inner debate and partly a parodic veneer, necessary to face the different reactions of a composite audience. There are two Hamlets, in a more complex sense than one for the groundlings and one for the highbrows.

The evaluation and cognitive problem becomes the point, along with the ethic-stoic issue ("readiness is all"). But as the enlightenment code can produce, Lotman points out, two main outcomes Utopian and absurd (Lotman 1975: 178–181) the interpreter's emphasis may shift, from a sense of political and cultural anticipation of different values to a sense of the "paleness of thought": desemiotization can produce both scepticism and renewal.

Shakespeare's text is as composite as its "implied addressee". The richness of the different codes certainly contributed to its lasting success, as it communicated through a wide range of possible semantic intersections; the number of which was further increased when in the nineteenth century a fourth viewpoint gained pre-eminence: the romantic.

Hamlet's case became the crux of Western individuality and critics' competition. In fact, by its very nature, the romantic code tends to turn *Hamlet* into either a plot failure (Eliot's wellknown critique, or indirectly Schmidt's theory of historical taboos curtailing plot organization⁶), or a personality failure, ranging from Go-

⁶ See T. S. Eliot, *Hamlet and His Problems* in T. S. Eliot, *The Sacred Wood*, Methuen, London, 1920, where the author claims that "far from being Shakespeare's masterpiece, the play is most certainly and artistic failure"; and see C. Schmidt, *Hamlet oder Hecuba*, Eugen Diederichs, Düsseldorf-Köln 1956.

ethe's interpretation of Hamlet as an oversensitive young prince, to Schlegel's intellectual pervert or Ernest Jones' Freudian oedipal case. From such a semantic-syntagmatic standpoint, Hamlet's behaviour is disappointing: his failure to take action implies the lack of a project which would enable the prince to deal with his historical responsibility. His self-denigration is authentic, while Hamlet's intellectual disposition a value in itself, as for romantic philosophy Thought forges history and reality turns here into a hindrance, as hesitation impedes action and the control of history. Starting from Coleridge's highly influential insistence on Hamlet's "aversion to real action", revenge is superseded by inaction, and this action problem requires explanation. But explanation is sought by investigating not clashing value systems and cognitive questions, but Hamlet's supposed intrinsic disarray, preventing him from embracing his obvious duty.

From a romantic point of view *Hamlet* is tantalizing: the attractive centrality of thought and ethical questioning of history in the play meet romantic philosophy, but the prince fails to control the philosophy of history he seems to evoke. The play is fascinating, the protagonist inadequate. The range of conceivable Hamlets resulting from a romantic filter varies from the picture of a young man richly endowed, but spoiled by a fundamental flaw, to that of a character shorn of admirable qualities, or even positively evil.

From the obviously positive character of the Hamlet of seventeenth-century criticism a complete overturning has gradually taken place, admitting a decline of Hamlet's character in twentieth century criticism: to Wilson Knight or Salvador de Madariaga Hamlet appears destructive, sickly, corrupted. Or, to more recent interpreters, merely entangled in paralysing, senseless contradictions. The semantic intersection may appear null.

The identification of a typology of criticism parallel to a typology of culture, as explored by Lotman, would increase critical consciousness and self-criticism, and help define choices. Lotman's codes and the semantic intersections the perception of which they enable, may at the same time, explain the infinite hermeneutic potentialities, the actual readings influenced by dominant attitudes and the dynamic possibility of critical renewal.

Today they may even account for the postmodern dismay fol-

lowing what has been called the "end of the récit" or of Hegel's *Überwindung*, replaced by Heidegger's *Verwindung*: a change that could be seen as the end of a dominant code and of a hierarchic semantic principle in the compound nature of textual meaning.

For the future, Lotman's codes seem moreover to suggest new criteria for histories of literature, as well as for comparative studies. And they are likely to foster a more analytical semantic awareness.

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Narratividad y transdiscursividad.
A propósito de *La escritura del Dios*,
de J. L. Borges

MANUEL ÁNGEL VÁZQUEZ MEDEL

Algunas claves teóricas para el análisis transdiscursivo

En varias intervenciones y publicaciones en los últimos años hemos tenido ocasión de esbozar los fundamentos de una semiótica transdiscursiva capaz de sostener la tensión entre identidad y diferencia, entre singularidad y pluralidad, entre estabilidad significativa y apropiación del sentido. Una semiótica que soslaye, precisamente, el conflicto entre las estructuras y sistemas de significación (códigos, “lenguas”), por un lado, y las pulsiones personales que construyen el ámbito de la vida y del deseo a través del “habla”, de la “parole”, por otro. El primer paso para ello es, desde luego, restituir a su propio lugar los procesos simbólicos -en sentido peirceano-: este no es otro que la íntegra unidad de la conciencia de los sujetos, su módulo experiencial, su caudal de conocimientos e ignorancias y su red de intereses. El ámbito de la interacción pragmática. Todo lo que queda fuera de ese lugar es, en terminología ahora morrisiana, vehículo sígnico, *señal*, para otros semiólogos, estímulo, pura materialidad que se transforma en energía cognitiva y representativa en virtud de la acción simbólica del sujeto.

En tales procesos, el discurrir humano es, literalmente, un llevar unas cosas hacia otras, haciendo pertinentes ciertos nexos que (suponemos) deben existir en lo real y obviando otros; insertando en una estructura valorativa cada nuevo componente de nuestro pensamiento o de nuestra experiencia, en relación con

todos los demás, que van quedando progresivamente desplazados o resituados como consecuencia de esta constante retroalimentación, cuya sustancia nutriente son los discursos.

Umberto Eco recordaba recientemente, al oponer dinámicamente signo y texto: “es cierto que la llamada cadena significativa produce *textos* que arrastran el recuerdo de la *intertextualidad* que los sustenta. Textos que generan, o que pueden generar, diferentes lecturas o interpretaciones, teóricamente infinitas. Se afirma, entonces (pensemos, sin olvidar las distintas inflexiones, en la línea que enlaza al último Barthes con el último Derrida, con Kristeva), que la significación pasa sólo a través de los textos, porque los textos serían el lugar donde el sentido se produce y produce (práctica significativa)” (Eco 1990: 37).

Señalemos, de pasada, que más que los textos, por muy dinámicamente que los consideremos, es la actividad discursiva la que produce *semiosis*. Un juego en el que, progresivamente, se van construyendo (son distinciones más conceptuales que reales) la *intentio auctoris*, como actividad que objetiva y cristaliza un estado de conciencia; la *intentio operis*, consecuencia de dicha cristalización, con elementos que van más allá y más acá de la *intentio auctoris*, y, por último, ahora sí en una virtual semiosis ilimitada (pero realmente no tanto), la *intentio lectoris*, que no sólo es diferente para cada lector, sino para cada distinto momento o estado de conciencia de un lector.

Así, la actividad discursiva no sólo constituye discursos, sino que nos constituye en tanto que somos transidos por ellos, y ellos forman el material de nuestras representaciones mentales.

La **interdiscursividad** o, mejor, la **transdiscursividad** -si consideramos aquélla una de las posibilidades de ésta- no remite a un hecho aislado o que afecte en exclusiva a la relación entre *algunos* textos y discursos. Esto es: no se trata de que, por ejemplo, descubramos en unos textos sí y en otros no la huella de otros textos que los hacen posibles e inteligibles. Por el contrario, todo texto, por su propia naturaleza, está abierto y remite a otros textos: unos previstos desde la productividad emisora, y otros postulados por esa re-productividad receptora sin la cual el texto no existe como contenido de conciencia (único estatuto gnoseológica y humanamente posible de un texto). Una lectura será tanto más co-

recta (estará más equilibradamente regida por la obra y por el lector) cuando los discursos a que apela un discurso concreto en dicho lector más se aproximen a la interacción o transcendencia discursiva del discurso que produjo el autor. Por ello es tan cierto que las palabras significan lo que les hacemos significar, cuanto que este hacer-significar no es totalmente arbitrario, sino que está co-rregido por el texto, que de ser muy desplazado de su *intention*, daría lugar a una lectura in-correcta, por más enriquecedora que sea. Otro problema será, en efecto, el de quién o quiénes determinan, en virtud de qué principios, qué lectura es más correcta (lo cual es muy difícil) o que lectura es más incorrecta (lo cual sí es relativamente fácil). La noción, aún por desarrollar, de *emplazamiento*, nos salva del relativismo y de la arbitrariedad en la consideración de las interacciones discursivas.

No estamos hablando, como se comprenderá, con una nueva y ociosa terminología remozada o abstrusa, de la tradicional perspectiva de las *fuentes e influencias* que, con todo, supone un importante antecedente para la elaboración y desarrollo de las nuevas teorías transdiscursivas y, en general, del comparatismo literario y cultural... Pero que -como veremos más adelante- carece de instrumentos operativos y formales de identificación de procesos trans-discursivos en el *flujo* de la cultura. Y que, sobre todo, no suele tener en cuenta las condiciones materiales en las que se produce la semiosis y la red en que queda anclado cada individuo en su propia productividad comunicativa.

Todo **texto** -y habrá que recordar más adelante nuestra teoría extendida del texto- se constituye en una retícula de encrucijadas, y es captado y significa, no por su inmanencia, sino precisamente por todo aquello que le trasciende: desde el código verbal, audiovisual, etc. en que queda cristalizado, hasta las determinaciones genéricas que nos permiten adoptar, en relación con él, unas determinadas actitudes y unas concretas expectativas. A partir de ahí, toda realidad se constituye en un anclaje con otros textos de la cultura, en relación con los cuales debe ser definida y comprendida. Esta enriquecedora perspectiva de consideración de la realidad social está razonablemente planteada por la semiótica de la cultura de raíz lotmaniana.

Hemos de dejar aquí simplemente mencionado el grave problema acerca de la capacidad de referencia de los textos a algo externo a otros textos: ¿es posible que la referencia nos lleve más allá de esa pared en la que se establece la ósmosis entre textos (que someten, a través de codificaciones, el principio de entropía) y el caos pre-gnoseológico que para nosotros se da en la fluencia de lo real?

Sostenemos esta fundamentación radical de los procesos trans-textuales, a pesar de que hasta cierto punto estamos de acuerdo con Ruprecht cuando afirma: “la investigación de vanguardia rechaza ahora el empleo del concepto de intertexto en el sentido más bien vago de una *textualidad* infinitamente expansiva, aglutinante y autogeneradora de asociaciones múltiples”. Pero, como él mismo afirma más adelante, “queda por saber si es oportuno fundar, con G. Genette (1982), la construcción del concepto de intertexto a partir de la noción de “transtextualidad o transcendencia del texto”, noción participante, según él, de un “estructuralismo abierto”, a fin de cuentas neo-idealista” (Greimas-Courtés 1982: 147–148). Pues bien: nosotros pensamos que es oportuno, y que es posible salvar la fundamentación teórica y varios postulados de aplicación metodológica de ese pretendido “neo-idealismo”. Por el momento, y a las objeciones planteadas, sólo responderemos brevemente: a) que las asociaciones múltiples que establecería una textualidad expansiva, alutinante y autogeneradora, carecen para nosotros de sentido si no incorporamos a una teoría abierta de la transdiscursividad el intérprete, quien a través de un esquema o módulo interpretante activa y potencia, reconoce o soslaya tales asociaciones, que desde su radical contingencia no son, ni mucho menos, ilimitadas; b) que el pretendido estructuralismo abierto que puede caer en excesos neoidealistas debe ser superado por una visión post-estructural, que sin negar alguna de las claves y conceptos operativos de la investigación estructural haga hincapié en la inexistencia de estructura en la realidad, en la importancia del concepto de forma y, por tanto, en la refinición de las nociones de estructura y de modelo como “simulacros”, pero “simulacros” que aspiran a una co-rrespondencia con el objeto al que se refieren; c) Que dicha teoría de la “transcendencia” simbólica, opuesta a la de la “inmanencia” fundadora de un buen

número de poéticas de nuestro siglo, lo sea en relación con el discurso y la actividad discursiva, ahora llevados a un límite muy radical, pero no por ello menos de-limitado.

Ya hemos señalado desde el principio que el fenómeno de la transdiscursividad no es, a nuestro juicio, una ocurrencia que afecte sólo a determinados textos o discursos bajo determinadas condiciones. Aunque percibamos un texto en su radical singularidad y no seamos conscientes del conjunto de lazos que lo remiten a otros textos, dichos lazos existen. Incluso cuando ni siquiera su mismo productor sea capaz, explícitamente, de establecerlos. Gracias, precisamente, a esos lazos -como ya dijimos- es posible el establecimiento de un significado (precariamente) autónomo y una cierta co-rrección del sentido. Por ello, no se puede oponer un pretendido semantismo autónomo al pacto social en que toda actividad humana se desarrolla. Nada hay más social que la semántica, puesto que la construcción de significados y sentidos sólo tiene valor en el seno de concretos colectivos que, por otra parte, se subdividen, marcan y sobredeterminan espacios concretos de significación, según las *comunidades interpretantes* en que se insertan. O, dicho de otro modo, más que de significados podríamos hablar de *efectos de significación*, que son consecuencia tanto del origen como del destino y de la mediación en el proceso comunicativo.

Algunas consideraciones (complementarias) sobre imagen e imaginario

Intentemos construir un **sistema explicativo** -simulacro, pues, y pálida aproximación- de los fenómenos que incumben a la propia *imagen* que el hombre se construye del mundo y de la realidad. Tal construcción, pues, se propone no como un sistema real y superador, sino contingente y distinto a otros y, desde luego, más completo, complejo e integrado desde nuestro horizonte de conocimientos que aquellos que han sido previamente tomados en consideración.

1. El hombre -y tal concepto es ya en sí mismo una construcción que no tiene el mismo valor ni en todo tiempo, ni en todo

lugar, ni para distintas personas- es un animal dotado de una estructura somática que hace posible *complejos procesos de relación con lo real*. Lo más singular de esta criatura es la posibilidad de abarcar el campo de experiencia de forma distanciadora. Tal es la clave misma del pensar, de la reflexión, que a la vez desvela y vela la naturaleza de *lo real*, construida culturalmente y configurada como su correlato: la realidad. En otras palabras, la experiencia humana se constituye en la biosfera, que determina las condiciones materiales de la existencia, pero también en la semiosfera que surge de dichas condiciones y las construye como sistema axiológico.

2. En efecto, como afirma González Requena (1989: 16), “lo real no es transparente sino esencialmente opaco y por ello mismo es necesaria una operación que lo vuelva inteligible: es aquí donde el Lenguaje desempeña su papel fundador. La inteligibilidad es pues, esencialmente, el resultado de un proceso de codificación, de discursivización. De ahí, por lo demás, la imperiosa necesidad de diferenciar dos planos en lo que habitualmente denominamos “realidad”: uno que remite a lo que en ella hay de inteligible, de sometido a razón y por tanto previsible, manipulable, comunicable -llamémoslo **realidad**- otro, que se refiera a lo que en ella hay de ininteligible, de imprevisible y azaroso -lo **real**”. Lo **real** mismo, en su dimensión conceptual, forma parte de la realidad, del mismo modo que todo aquello a lo que nosotros llamamos **realidad** como consecuencia de un proceso de codificación y discursivización es, también, parte de eso a lo que hemos llamado lo **real** y que en el propio acto de designación es abarcado y se nos escapa en una dialéctica de la que no podemos sustraernos.

3. El hombre “roza” lo **real**, pero en ese roce, como un rey Midas que cambia en oro cuanto toca, el hombre va transmutando lo real en realidad. Nunca lo real podrá ser su alimento porque, en el roce mismo con el organismo que precisa ser nutrido, queda transformado en un sucedáneo, no sabemos si, como en el caso del rey Midas, totalmente indigerible...

4. El hombre, sin embargo, tiene vocación de acceder a lo **real**. Esto es: de participar del *continuum* indiferenciado que, desde visiones parciales, constituye el conjunto de hechos, dichos, pensamientos y sentimientos no dirimidos por ningún principio

unitario superador. En esta vocación participa -inevitablemente- de las construcciones que le vienen dadas, pero aspira a trascenderlas desde la visión que históricamente le corresponde. Esta vocación se manifiesta no en el principio metafísico-transcendental de Verdad, sino en la voluntad de co-rrección, esto es, de regir simultáneamente la función que resulta de su propia ubicación y el objeto contemplado. Para ello acepta la Verdad como límite hacia el que tiende y no como logro o posesión. Como afirmaba Foucault, no basta “decir” la Verdad, sino que hay que “estar” en el entramado de poder que permite asignar a un discurso determinado sobre lo real la atribución de veracidad.

5. Toda representación mental, en el hombre, tiene su punto de partida **radical** en el universo de los sentidos, que constituye su anclaje en el mundo. Creemos, pues, que la raíz de nuestro conocimiento es de índole sensorial y originariamente -en uno de sus polos- perceptiva. Pero a la vez el mundo, cosmos ordenado, fuga del caos, es ya una re-presentación cultural, un aprendizaje que codifica y organiza todas nuestras percepciones, que no se dan jamás de forma inmediata, sino al modo aprendido de captación. Con todo, y a pesar de la importancia de las mediaciones históricas -espacio-temporales- en la configuración de los modos de representación de la realidad, tales modos no son del todo arbitrarios. Hay un fondo, un poso, un fundamento (el único), en el que late el mismo pulso de nuestra propia vida y de nuestra propia muerte. Tal fundamento no tiene contenidos -en el sentido semántico del término. Es dinamismo puro, factor de homogeneidad en la representación. Es la propia *dynamis*. Esto es *el* imaginario: “nada más que ese trayecto en el que la representación del objeto se deja asimilar y modelar por los imperativos pulsionales del sujeto, y en el que recíprocamente, como magistralmente ha demostrado Piaget, las representaciones subjetivas se explican ‘por las acomodaciones anteriores del sujeto’ al medio objetivo” (Durand 1979: 36).

6. *El* imaginario rige las representaciones mentales. Es el mecanismo por el cual se amoldan las percepciones y a la vez se modifican los criterios axiológicos. Está en la misma raíz del llamado “pensamiento objetivo” y de las “construcciones fantásticas”. Todo es, en tal sentido, imaginario. **Lo** real y **lo** imaginario

son dos (de entre los varios) modos de re-presentación que siguen trayectos, normas y reglas de configuración y representación distintas. Como afirma Durand “lo Imaginario -es decir, el conjunto de imágenes y de relaciones de imágenes que constituye el capital pensado del *homo sapiens*- se nos aparece como el gran denominador fundamental donde se sitúan todos los procedimientos del pensamiento humano”.

7. Puesto que el hombre se representa mentalmente las percepciones y las relaciona en el mismo acto perceptivo o posteriormente en función de unas normas aprendidas de representación, es posible establecer las dicotomías “real/ideal” o “real/imaginario”, en función de los siguientes criterios:

a) El hombre asigna el estatuto de “real” a todo discurso sobre un acontecimiento, pensamiento o sentimiento, que considera co-rrrelativo inmediatamente -esto es, sin elaboración mental distanciadora. Lo real, pues, en este sentido, sería una propiedad del discurso y no de su referente. Dicho de otro modo, es un movimiento reificante que atribuye a la construcción-realidad una co-rrespondencia total con lo real, en la medida en que nos es dado apreciarlo. A diferencia de estas construcciones co-rrrelativas inmediatamente con el material perceptivo o con el universo axiológico que tales materiales sedimentan, hay otras que no se plantean dicha correspondencia. Son las construcciones que organizan en el nivel del deseo y aun en el del poder **lo imaginario**: aquellos productos de la construcción mental no inmediatamente correlativos con un material perceptivo, o que se sitúan pragmáticamente más allá de ese nivel de permitencia que permite el juicio verificador o falsador. Es el ámbito privilegiado de la ficción y de la fantasía.

b) En tal sentido, lo imaginario está más allá del nivel de pertinencia lógico, ontológico y ético del binomio verdad/mentira.

Narratividad y transdiscursividad en Borges

Ningún autor contemporáneo ha elaborado, como Borges, una teoría y una práctica de la transdiscursividad como manifestación del entramado al que pertenecemos. Nadie como él ha insistido en

el juego especular de la escritura y de la lectura, en el que van reflejándose retazos o fragmentos de la única realidad a la que pertenecemos.

Uno de los relatos que Borges agrupara en 1949 bajo el título genérico de *El Aleph*, “La escritura del Dios”, nos presenta a Tzinacán, mago de la pirámide de Qaholom, que Pedro de Alvarado incendió, en la penumbra de una cárcel profunda de piedra que comparte con un jaguar, del que le separa un muro, y al que puede ver un instante, en el que el carcelero baja los alimentos atados en un cordel. Tzinacán, “urgido por la fatalidad de hacer algo”, intenta recordar la sentencia mágica que el primer día de la creación escribió el dios para conjurar los males del fin de los tiempos. Pero cualquiera de las formas de la tierra podía ser el símbolo buscado. Por fin recuerda que el jaguar era uno de los atributos del dios, y dedica largos años a aprender el orden y la configuración de las manchas del animal, que vislumbraba en un instante de luz en cada jornada ciega:

“No diré las fatigas de mi labor. Más de una vez grité a la bóveda que era imposible descifrar aquel texto. Gradualmente el enigma concreto que me atareaba me inquietó menos que el enigma genérico de una sentencia escrita por un dios. ¿Qué tipo de sentencia (me pregunté) construirá una mente absoluta? Consideré que aun en los lenguajes humanos no hay proposición que no implique el universo entero; decir *el tigre* es decir los tigres que lo engendraron, los ciervos y las tortugas que devoró, el pasto de que se alimentaron los ciervos, la tierra que fue madre del pasto, el cielo que dio a luz a la tierra. Consideré que en el lenguaje de un dios toda palabra enunciaría esa infinita concatenación de los hechos, y no de un modo implícito, sino explícito, y no de un modo progresivo, sino inmediato. Con el tiempo, la noción de una sentencia divina parecióme pueril o blasfematoria. Un dios, reflexioné, sólo debe decir una palabra y en esa palabra la plenitud. Ninguna voz articulada por él puede ser inferior al universo o menos que la suma del tiempo. Sombras o simulacros de esa voz que equivale a un lenguaje y a cuanto puede comprender un lenguaje son las ambiciosas y pobres voces humanas, *todo, mundo, universo*” (J. L. Borges, 1989: 596–599).

Dejemos, por un momento, a nuestro Tzinacán en su indiferenciado tejido de días y de noches, y reflexionemos sobre estas palabras: “Consideré que aun en los lenguajes humanos no hay proposición que no implique el universo entero; decir *el tigre* es decir los tigres que lo engendraron, los ciervos y las tortugas que devoró, el pasto de que se alimentaron los ciervos, la tierra que fue madre del pasto, el cielo que dio a luz a la tierra”. Permítaseme señalar que este prodigio de hermosura encierra una no pequeña trampa; o, al menos, un sutil juego cuyo desciframiento nos permitirá iniciar nuestra propia reflexión. Como se verá, por sutil que parezca, negaremos que sea inmediatamente cierto lo que se afirma, para, más adelante, reconocer en dicha afirmación otra suerte distinta de verdad.

Dice Borges, por boca de este narrador -que es la causa incausada del relato mismo (narrador extradiegético) y participa de los acontecimientos narrados en calidad de protagonista (narrador homodiegético)- que “en los lenguajes humanos no hay proposición que no implique el universo entero”. Detengámonos por un momento. Consideremos el breve sintagma “el tigre” -que por cierto no es una proposición, y por tanto, según Aristóteles, no es algo de lo que quepa predicar verdad o mentira. Pues bien: *tigre*, en cuanto símbolo o signo que asocia una secuencia fónica a una imagen mental o significado, apunta a un referente, suplanta la ausencia de objetos en el lenguaje. No olvidemos que, por ejemplo, la palabra *tigre* no araña, aunque a esa actividad del objeto-fuera-del lenguaje, amoldada por nuestra comprensión cultural, hayamos ofrecido el paralelo de otras palabras que la designan. Una visión ingenua del lenguaje (como sistema de etiquetas) establecería que el conjunto de elementos y relaciones en lo real tiene sus co-rratos en el marco de su representación discursiva. A una cadena de objetos, de atributos de dichos objetos y de acciones, co-rrespondería una cadena de símbolos que pueden articular discursos, que discurren paralelos a la esencial simultaneidad de lo real. Lo cual es sólo cierto en un sentido amplio, ya que esa “respuesta” del discurso a lo real, esa co-rrespondencia, sería consecuencia de nuestra inalienable vocación por lo real, más que de la capacidad misma del lenguaje. Por eso nos revolvemos, desde los lenguajes contra los lenguajes para arañar lo real que a la

vez nos atrae y nos espanta, como en una sutil atracción del abismo.

Lo real nos llama, nos voca, nos convoca. Aunque sabemos que el lugar desde el que se formula esa llamada es un “lugar” terrible, porque está más allá de significados y sentidos. Es, por tanto, ininteligible. Excede nuestra propia inteligencia. Esa llamada de lo real se articula, para nosotros, en dos ejes: el eje del amor y el eje de la muerte. Tal es la capacidad convocadora de lo real. Y nosotros sabemos que sólo a través del amor es posible vencer la muerte. Pero ese acto de amor sólo se puede realizar en y a través de la Palabra. Y es evidente que no me refiero a la palabra en su instrumental dimensión fónica, sino en su esencial realidad constituyente.

Aristóteles -a quien tantas veces habría que volver- comienza con estas impresionantes palabras su *Política*: “La naturaleza no hace nada en vano. Mas solo el hombre entre todos los seres vivos posee el lenguaje. El sonido de las voces es un indicativo tanto para lo opresivo del dolor como para lo enaltecendor del placer y por ello aparece también en otros seres vivos. La naturaleza está justamente en los hombres tan desarrollada, que tienen sensación de dolor y de placer y se lo muestran mutuamente. El lenguaje (el discurso), en cambio, revela lo que siempre está en nosotros y lo que nos rehúye y así también revela lo justo y lo injusto. Pues esto es lo específico del hombre frente a los otros seres vivos, que sólo él tiene sentido de lo bueno y de lo malo, de lo justo y de lo injusto y de cosas de esta índole, y es comunidad (solidaridad) en estas cosas lo que constituye la esencia de la casa y de la ciudad”. Aun dentro de una visión no contrapositiva entre naturaleza y cultura como la de Aristóteles, se reconoce esa exclusividad de la capacidad discursiva humana, pues como bien señala Gadamer, refiriéndose al Estagirita:

“el hombre es el ser vivo que posee el *logos*. De un solo golpe estamos en medio de las cosas. Muy cerca de la palabra originaria de la cultura, de la palabra. Si bien ‘logos’ no significa la palabra, sino discurso, lengua, dar cuenta de algo, y finalmente, todo lo que se expresa en el habla, pensamiento, razón. Por eso, la definición del hombre como el *animal rationale*, el ser que posee razón, ha atravesado los siglos ratificando el tardío orgullo de la razón. Mas

logos no es 'Razón' sino 'discurso': justamente la palabra que se dice a otro. No es un conglomerado de términos clasificables como fragmentos de palabras que componen el llamado diccionario. El *logos* es más bien una disposición de palabras para la unidad de un sentido, el sentido del discurso" (Gadamer 1983: 10).

Lo específico del hombre, es pues, su capacidad de valorar y de comunicar estas visiones parciales del mundo organizado en la palabra a los otros. Y esta capacidad le viene a través del lenguaje, pues como afirmara Saussure, toda lengua no es más (ni menos) que un sistema de valores. Su capacidad de conocer el bien y el mal es, según muchos relatos cosmogónicos, y muy notablemente según el libro del *Génesis*, consecuencia de una transgresión y por tanto, fruto de una caída originaria. Más adelante veremos que tanto lo genérico como lo genético apuntan al origen. Y este origen no es otro que el origen mismo del discurrir.

Recordemos algunos versículos: "El Señor Dios hizo brotar del suelo toda clase de árboles hermosos de ver y buenos de comer; además, el árbol de la vida en mitad del parque y el árbol de conocer el bien y el mal" (Gn. 2,9). Notemos que se trata de dos árboles diferentes, con funciones distintas. Inmediatamente, surge la única prohibición: "Puedes comer de todos los árboles del jardín; pero del árbol de conocer el bien y el mal no comas; porque el día en que comas de él, tendrás que morir" (Gn. 2,17). Vemos la inmediata relación entre ese conocer y la muerte. Otro será el argumento de la serpiente para intentar convencer a Eva: "¡Nada de pena de muerte! Lo que pasa es que sabe Dios que, en cuanto comáis de él, se os abrirán los ojos y seréis como Dios, versados en el bien y en el mal" (Gn. 3,5).

Perpetrada la transgresión "se les abrieron los ojos a los dos, y descubrieron que estaban desnudos" (Gn. 3,7). Por primera vez el hombre, con esta primera conciencia de su desnudez, y curiosamente de que ha hecho algo mal (conciencia que antes no podía tener sin comer del árbol), siente miedo: "Te oí en el jardín, me entró miedo porque estaba desnudo, y me escondí" (Gn. 3,10). Lo cierto no es que le entrara miedo porque estaba desnudo, pues antes (Gn. 2,25) se nos ha dicho que "los dos estaban desnudos, el hombre y la mujer, pero no sentían vergüenza". Ahora tienen conciencia de esta desnudez. Porque se han hecho iguales a Dios

en el conocimiento del bien y del mal. Reparemos en la causa real de la expulsión del Edén, según el *Génesis*: “Y el Señor Dios dijo: -Si el hombre es ya como uno de nosotros, versado en el bien y en el mal, ahora sólo le falta echar mano al árbol de la vida, coger, comer y vivir para siempre. Y el Señor Dios lo expulsó del paraíso, para que labrase la tierra de donde lo había sacado. Echó al hombre y a oriente del parque de Edén colocó a los querubines y la espada llameante que oscilaba, para cerrar el camino del árbol de la vida” (Gn. 3,22-24). Todos sabemos que ese árbol de la vida, cuyo acceso queda impedido tras la transgresión (ese ir más allá de sus límites) y la desobediencia, queda refigurado en ese contrapunto de la cruz como un nuevo árbol en el que se produce el proceso contrario: es Dios el que ahora se hace hombre, logos encarnado, obediente hasta la muerte -*Christus factus est pro nobis obediens usque ad mortem*, dice el versículo del Salmo que inspira el primer tema del *Miserere* de Eslava- para superarla definitivamente.

No deja tampoco de ser significativo lo que de inmediato acontece tras la expulsión del Paraíso: el nacimiento de Caín y Abel, y el asesinato de éste por aquél. La primera muerte humana no es consecuencia del destino “natural” del hombre como animal, ni siquiera de la sentencia de maldición tras la caída: “polvo eres y al polvo volverás”. La primera muerte de este relato de fundación es “cultural”, provocada, y no del todo infundada desde la nueva perspectiva de la caída: “El Señor se fijó en Abel y en su ofrenda más que en Caín y en su ofrenda. Por lo cual Caín se enfureció y andaba cabizbajo” (Gn. 4,5).

Pero retomemos el hilo de nuestra reflexión, ya que no es nuestra intención hacer una exégesis de los capítulos iniciales del *Génesis*, sino destacar esa extraña asociación entre “conciencia del bien y del mal” a través de la palabra, y caída. Entre caída y muerte. Y todo ello por una transgresión. Una transgresión originaria -pecado original se llama en la tradición cristiana- a partir de la cual surge la relatividad ontológica. La capacidad de ver objetos distintos, de jerarquizar sus relaciones, de expresarlos en el lenguaje. De discurrir.

He afirmado en otras ocasiones que tal vez no sea descabellada la idea de representarnos, en términos de hoy, que el Edén o los

Paraísos perdidos por el hombre sean, curiosamente, los que ni siquiera podía apreciar cuando no era aún hombre. Esto es, en los que no tenía conciencia, en su doble sentido de capacidad de conocer y capacidad de valorar, que no son más que la cara y la cruz de una misma moneda. Paraísos que habitaba cuando no tenía capacidad de conocimiento ni de lenguaje. Volvamos a recordar, con Aristóteles que “esto es lo específico del hombre frente a los otros seres vivos, que sólo él tiene sentido de lo bueno y de lo malo, de lo justo y de lo injusto y de cosas de esta índole”. La naturaleza de la que irremediamente se separó por obra y gracia del lenguaje, de su capacidad de valorar, de comprender lo que tiene delante ya como objeto, del discurso, es el paraíso perdido. Con la conciencia el hombre se construye como sujeto. Precisamente de eso es sujeto: sujeto de su conciencia de su capacidad de conocer. Pero por ello todo lo que tiene delante lo percibe como arrojado fuera de sí: es para él objeto. Ha perdido la esencial unidad en el todo, en la que posiblemente no se trataba de que fuera feliz. Estaba más allá de la felicidad y de la infelicidad, porque no tenía conciencia. Porque no tenía *logos*, discurso. Y en ese estado de no conciencia no existe la muerte (al menos, no la conciencia de ella), que es el primero de los hallazgos culturales del hombre. El hombre inventa la muerte en el sentido más radicalmente etimológico: se encamina hacia la muerte. Tiene conciencia de ello. Abre los ojos, y descubre la muerte. Se siente un ser-para-la-muerte por haber transgredido algo que su naturaleza animal le dice que no debería haber sobrepasado. Es, a partir de entonces, un ser escindido, dividido. También en eso consiste su conciencia, su capacidad reflexiva: esto es, de reflejar en un juego de espejos interiores lo que le viene de un afuera, que antes no percibía como tal porque se sentía integrado en él. El pensamiento del hombre es, así, como Michel Foucault diría, un “pensamiento del afuera”:

“el acontecimiento que ha dado origen a lo que en sentido estricto se entiende por ‘literatura’ no pertenece al orden de la interiorización más que para una mirada superficial; se trata mucho más de un tránsito al ‘afuera’: el lenguaje escapa al modo de ser del discurso -es decir, a la dinastía de la representación-, y la palabra literaria se desarrolla a partir de sí misma, formando una red en la que cada punto, distinto de los demás, a distancia incluso

de los más próximos, se sitúa por relación a todos los otros en un espacio que los contiene y los separa al mismo tiempo. La literatura no es el lenguaje que se identifica consigo mismo hasta el punto de su incandescente manifestación, es el lenguaje alejándose lo más posible de sí mismo; y este ponerse 'fuera de sí mismo', pone al descubierto su propio ser, esta claridad repentina revela una distancia más que un doblez, una dispersión más que un retorno de los signos sobre sí mismos" (Foucault 1986: 12-13).

La caída es separación radical de lo natural. Radicalidad de un afuera, que posible y paradójicamente nos albergue. Fragmentación y distancia. Emergencia del yo y de lo otro. Capacidad discursiva. Capacidad de re-lacionar, de re-latar. De re-ferir. El relato primordial surge de una transgresión, una transgresión, que tal y como significa etimológicamente, egresa al hombre más allá de su origen indiferenciado con el todo, de ese espacio gobernado por los principios imprevisibles de la entropía. Y el hombre ordena, organiza, discurre, hace correr unas cosas hacia otras.

Son -suponemos- **los objetos**, más que las palabras que los designan, los que se insertan en una complejísima red de relaciones ("infinita concatenación de los hechos"), en la que cada elemento llama a los restantes, hasta convocar esa esencial unidad de lo real, ahora confirmada por las teorías físicas. El *tigre real* forma parte, pues, de un *continuum*, de un todo, de algo sin límites ni fronteras, de algo más allá de significados y sentidos, de algo que escapa a nuestra misma inteligibilidad. *Lo real* no es inteligible, y cuando lo es, desaparece transformado en *realidad*, que se encuentra ya en este más-acá de la conciencia, y que constituye el tejido de lo cultural humano.

Prueba de cuanto aquí se dice es el hecho mismo de que las proposiciones que quieren aludir a esa esencial concatenación de las cosas son, ellas mismas, discretas, y se conducen por una peculiar concatenación discursiva, que no real, aunque no dejemos de reconocer una voluntad de co-rrespondencia, algo que hemos llamado en otras ocasiones "vocación por lo real". Cada proposición concreta no nos recuerda *realmente* todo el cúmulo de proposiciones que, a su vez, podrían implicar, al menos en su dimensión puramente designativa. Recuerdo que, entre otras consecuencias, impediría la posibilidad misma de seguir un relato.

Porque un relato sólo es posible re-firiendo, re-lacionando (y sólo se puede relacionar lo que es distinto); llevando unos signos hacia otros; estableciendo prioridades: un antes, un ahora y un después, sean lógicos, sean cronológicos; un aquí, un ahí y un allí; un yo, un tú y un él en esos juegos triádicos, deixis esenciales que apuntan también a una lógica triádica, y en última instancia a una lógica genérica del discurso.

La posibilidad misma de relatar, de narrar, aparece con la propia Palabra como unidad discreta, esto es, como algo que corta un fragmento de sustancia material como soporte de la expresión o vehículo sígnico y le hace corresponder un fragmento de sustancia de contenido. Fragmento de sustancia del contenido que hace las veces de objeto, considerado en algún aspecto o disposición, y que por tanto, convierte lo real en realidad, haciéndolo inteligible. Entre una y otra sustancia se encuentra la pura realidad formal de lo simbólico, de lo sígnico, que a pesar de implicar lo sustancial no consiste en ello, sino en pura forma. Forma sostenida e inter-relacionada por la propia actividad de la conciencia. Forma que continuamente llevamos más allá (trans-formamos) en los procesos comunicativos.

¿Qué tipo de relato puede, pues, se pregunta Tzinacán, construir una mente absoluta? Obviamente ninguno. Sólo se construyen relatos desde mentes relativas, mentes que se experimentan como tales en la esencial relatividad y narratividad de la conciencia y del lenguaje. Mentes que han surgido por un proceso de separación de la naturaleza indiferenciada para construir el universo de la cultura, tras la expulsión del Paraíso.

Primera lección: la narratividad no es sólo, como quiso hacernos creer la semiótica estructural inmanentista, una característica intrínseca y formalmente objetivable de unos discursos frente a otros. En primer lugar, porque, radicalmente, todo discurso es narrativo, sea en el plano de la enunciación o en el plano de los enunciados, aunque reservemos operativamente la consideración de narrativos para aquellos textos cuyos enunciados desarrollan transformaciones, acciones, acontecimientos o sucesos. En segundo lugar, y como consecuencia de lo anterior, porque todo decir establece un proceso, en el que alguien "dice" unas cosas antes que otras. Proceso en el que, por cierto, se transforma

también la conciencia misma de quien va desarrollando la actividad discursiva.

Dicho de otro modo: la narratividad no es un atributo de los discursos, sino del discurrir mismo. Vale decir: de la conciencia, de los seres humanos. Nuestra conciencia relaciona, establece nexos, discurre: configura discursos. Fuera de eso no es conciencia. Su ser-conciencia consiste, precisamente, en esta capacidad de articular relatos. Se experimenta en el discurrir mismo. Es el discurrir mismo, ya que la mera materialidad que hace posible el discurso es sólo una condición de la conciencia, mas no su misma realidad. Por ello, en el proceso filogenético de afloramiento de la conciencia, el proceso de fragmentación del todo en el que el niño se siente inmerso es fundamental. El todo y lo uno se han partido. Han estallado hechos pedazos. Es el Big-Bang de la conciencia.

Esta esencial capacidad de comprender *-cum-prehendere* es abrazar, agrupar, asir, coger, prender conjuntamente lo que ha sido previamente separado, disociado- nuestra propia existencia como discurrir, y los hechos que la configuran como discursos, es la clave misma de la narratividad. Una narratividad ontológica, existencial, está en la raíz misma de la capacidad productiva de relatos. Nos sabemos actantes de un conjunto de acciones que realizamos o padecemos en el espacio y el tiempo. Acciones que focalizamos desde el "lugar" imaginario que ocupamos. Y que nos permiten entrar en la dialéctica de la acción discursiva. Para cada uno de nosotros, en última instancia, todos los relatos se refieren a la íntima unidad de nuestra conciencia.

Pero, ¿cómo hemos adquirido, o potenciado, esa capacidad esencial de discurrir? A través de otros discursos. A partir de los discursos que otros hacen correr a nuestro alrededor, y a partir de los cuales *inferimos* ciertas regularidades que -más o menos- estabilizamos en una zona común de comunicabilidad formal, a la vez que inevitablemente recubrimos de otros sentidos personales proyectados. Pensemos en cómo aprendemos nuestra lengua materna, el más complejo de los códigos a que jamás accederemos: nadie nos enseña ninguna lengua, ningún código. Accedemos a y aprendemos discursos. Discursos a veces muy elementales, cuya reiteración nos permite asociar una imagen acústica a un referente, que sustituye en nuestra mente el objeto que, obviamente, está

fuera de ella. A partir de ese momento, no tendremos otra manera posible de referirnos a los objetos del mundo más que a través de otros discursos. Aunque sean los elementales discursos ostensivos, en los que apreciamos el propio objeto como signo-de-sí-mismo. Todo discurso se refiere a otros discursos, y sólo se refiere al mundo en el sentido de que *mundo* ya es algo construido comunitariamente por todos más que algo dado, ajeno y externo a mí mismo, porque yo soy ser-en-el-mundo. Estoy arrojado a esa maraña de discursos que sostiene los mundos reales y los mundos posibles.

Aunque se trate de una interpretación ajena a la más estricta ortodoxia lógica, el discurrir a que nos estamos refiriendo, este correr o hacer correr unos objetos hacia los otros, unas situaciones hacia otras, no es sólo de naturaleza lógica (en el sentido restrictivo del *logos*). Posiblemente, porque aunque los mecanismos de aquello a que llamamos lógico tengan su propia sede y asiento en nuestro propio cerebro, nunca nuestra conciencia es exclusivamente lógica. Dicho brevemente: hay discursos de la voluntad como hay discursos del entendimiento. Ese discurrir de la voluntad, también ahormado por un complejo proceso de interferencias discursivas de la acción, es tan importante como el discurrir lógico. Introduce las categorías tímicas que orientan nuestra volición, el ámbito de la libido, y a la vez nos conectan con esa irrenunciable dimensión de nuestra materialidad corporal. Y su proceso de aprendizaje (el de los discursos de las pasiones) es esencialmente el mismo. Observamos acciones, gestos, reacciones, y discurrimos. Asociamos rasgos, gestos, pulsiones, etc. con otros rasgos, gestos, reacciones, etc. y construimos una "gramática" abierta de la acción que modeliza (a la vez que es modelizada por) nuestros comportamientos.

La aparición de la conciencia del hombre -así nos lo dicen todos los relatos míticos y todas las cosmogonías- está, como hemos señalado, esencialmente vinculada a su propia caída, a la expulsión de un ámbito en el que se creía feliz -más bien la felicidad o infelicidad no eran pertinentes-. Ahora, expulsado del paraíso de su esencial comunión (no diferenciada) con la naturaleza, el hombre discurre. Relaciona unas cosas con otras, unos acontecimientos con otros. Ha dado comienzo a la historicidad

humana, al aparecer la relatividad de su vivir. Con esa relatividad nace también la conciencia de la diferencia y todo lo que ella trae consigo: la envidia y la destrucción. Alguien en quien estaba sembrada la semilla de la Unidad y del Todo, y sin que dicha semilla se haya desarraigado, se siente limitado, distinto. Quisiera ser Otro. Y, como no puede serlo sin dejar de ser él mismo, decide destruirlo. Es el germen mismo de la muerte, del asesinato.

Por ello, si como Scherezade no podemos dejar de narrar para poder vivir, puesto que el relato es el único hilo que conecta nuestra existencia relativa... Puesto que cada narración vive en y a través de los discursos concretos que la formulan, y estos discursos, a su vez, remiten a otros discursos que establecen la comunidad simbólica de los hombres, y nuestra singularidad sólo consiste (incluso en nuestra radicalidad biológica) en la especial configuración que adoptan las diversas configuraciones discursivas, nuestro destino está en la proliferación de discursos que establecieran la total maraña que constituye lo uno. Sólo que tal tela de araña nos atraparía fatalmente. Y en ella desaparecería la propia conciencia, llamada por lo real a su total correspondencia. Se trataría de comunicar y comunicarnos hasta llegar a la más radical fusión, y posiblemente a la más radical incomunicación, por encontrarnos en una radical comunión indiferenciada.

Nos acercamos al final aparente de este discurso que ni se inició aquí ni aquí concluye. Volvamos al origen. Tzinacán acaba por encontrar, en el éxtasis, la fórmula verdadera de un poder, de su fusión con el todo, en el que ya no es nadie y, por tanto, no utilizará más ese poder. Sólo queda un problema, imposible de resolver: si Tzinacán-actante ha llegado ya a ese estado de verdad, es imposible que hable, que construya más discursos. Ya no es nadie. Está más allá de su conciencia. Es ese agazapado Tzinacán-narrador el que a la vez nos construye un discurso y nos lo echa por tierra. Tzinacán-actante está ya dentro. Tzinacán-narrador está en el afuera. Pero esa es ya otra historia. Quedémonos con los últimos párrafos de "La escritura del Dios", que pueden justificar, en sí mismos, la existencia de este ya mi (su) discurso:

"...Vi infinitos procesos que formaban una sola felicidad y, entendiéndolo todo, alcancé también a entender la escritura del tigre.

Es una fórmula de catorce palabras casuales (que parecen casuales) y me bastaría decirla en voz alta para ser todopoderoso. Me bastaría decirla para abolir esta cárcel de piedra, para que el día entrara en mi noche, para ser joven, para ser inmortal, para que el tigre destrozara a Alvarado, para sumir el santo cuchillo en pechos españoles, para reconstruir la pirámide, para reconstruir el imperio. Cuarenta sílabas, catorce palabras, y yo, Tzinacán, regiría las tierras que rigió Moctezuma. Pero yo sé que nunca diré esas palabras, porque ya no me acuerdo de Tzinacán.

Que muera conmigo el misterio que está escrito en los tigres. Quien ha entrevisto el universo, quien ha entrevisto los ardientes designios del universo, no puede pensar en un hombre, en sus triviales dichas o desentuas, aunque ese hombre sea él. Ese hombre *ha sido él* y ahora no le importa. Qué le importa la suerte de aquel otro, qué le importa la nación de aquel otro, si él, ahora es nadie. Por eso no pronuncio la fórmula, por eso dejo que me olviden los días, acostado en la oscuridad" (J. L. Borges, p. 599).

La densidad significativa del texto de Borges no es accesible si no activamos una serie de mediaciones simbólicas: el significado profundo del tigre, el valor de la palabra, el problema de la identidad, la cabalística del catorce como expresión de la totalidad o el infinito...

Hemos de *llevar* las virtualidades significativas del discurso hacia otros elementos convocados por él. Esto es: proceder por inferencias, de entre las cuales la filosofía suele distinguir dos tipos básicos:

"aun definida la inferencia como el conjunto de todos los procesos discursivos, es menester distinguir entre dos tipos de tales procesos: los inmediatos y los mediatos. El proceso discursivo inmediato da lugar a la *inferencia inmediata*; en ella se concluye una proposición de otra sin intervención de una tercera. El proceso discursivo mediato da lugar a la llamada *inferencia mediata*; en ella se concluye una proposición de otra por medio de otra u otras proposiciones" (J. Ferrater Mora 1991: 1680).

También llamados *procesos discursivos simples y complejos*, entre estos últimos estarían la inducción, la deducción y el razonamiento por analogía.

Pero, ¿realmente puede existir una *inferencia inmediata*? Tal vez en nuestro proceso de constitución e iniciación cultural. A partir de este momento, todo es mediación: porque, sea en virtud de los mecanismos del propio sistema expresivo o, más bien, de su actualización en un concreto sistema de escritura, en el fondo como dice Borges “decir *el tigre* es decir los tigres que lo engendraron, los ciervos y las tortugas que devoró, el pasto de que se alimentaron los ciervos, la tierra que fue madre del pasto, el cielo que dio a luz a la tierra...”

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Animalización y cosificación. Dos claves en la constitución del canon grotesco en la obra de François Rabelais

SUSANA G. ARTAL

El objetivo de este artículo es estudiar uno de los recursos empleados por Rabelais para articular la representación literaria del cuerpo: las imágenes que denominaré deshumanizantes. En ellas, se establece una relación entre el cuerpo humano o una de sus partes (que llamaré A) y un elemento no humano (que llamaré B). El conjunto así definido abarca tanto las animalizaciones (imágenes en las que B es un animal) como las cosificaciones (imágenes en las que B es un objeto).

Las imágenes de este tipo son muy numerosas en la obra de Rabelais y no constituyen un rasgo estilístico aislado sino que se integran como uno de los elementos con que el autor construye la imagen grotesca del cuerpo humano. Esto porque, recordando los conceptos enunciados por Bajtín (Bakhtine 1970: Introducción y cap. V), una de las características fundamentales del cuerpo grotesco es su carácter cósmico e ilimitado. El cuerpo grotesco “représente l’ensemble du monde matériel et corporel dans tous ses éléments” y es, por lo tanto, un cuerpo abierto, que carece de límites precisos con el mundo. Muy por el contrario, “il est mêlé au monde, mêlé aux animaux, mêlé aux choses.” (Bakhtine 1970: 36).

Para estudiar este tipo de imágenes, he partido de su relevamiento en *Pantagruel*, *Gargantua*, *Tiers* y *Quart Livre*, excluyendo de mi campo de trabajo el *Cinquiesme Livre*, acerca de cuya autenticidad aún subsiste la polémica. Este relevamiento permitió establecer una clasificación, cuyos resultados se resumen en el siguiente cuadro clasificatorio:

Imágenes deshumanizantes en la obra de Rabelais

I D E S H U M A N I Z A N T E S	I. Con mención explícita de B	a. de semejanza no circumscrip <u>t</u> a		1. A (o parte de A) es (Parece) B 2. B (por A o parte de A) 3. x parte de A (o A) es x parte de B 4. x parte de A es B 5. $A_1 + A_2$ es (parece) B.
		b. de se mejanza circumscrip <u>t</u> a por	1. el desarrollo de una acción	1. A realiza la acción x como B 2. A sufre la acción x como si fuera B 3. A haciendo x parece B haciendo y 4. A parece B haciendo x
			2. una caracte rística de A	1. A posee x cualidad como B 2. A posee x parte propia de B
	II. Sin mención explícita de B	a. A (o parte de A) + sintagma verbal asociado a B b. A (o parte de A) + modificador asociado a B		

A continuación, intentaré una caracterización de los grupos de imágenes incluidos en el cuadro. Como la clasificación abarca tanto las animalizaciones como las cosificaciones, en todos los casos en que sea posible, ejemplificaré con dos imágenes: una animalizante y una cosificante.

1. Imágenes con mención explícita de B e imágenes sin mención explícita de B.

En primer lugar, es necesario distinguir las imágenes en las que el elemento B aparece directamente mencionado de aquellas en las que el elemento B no figura explícitamente sino que es aludido mediante sintagmas relacionados con él. Esta distinción se puede ejemplificar observando los casos siguientes:

- 1) Frère Jan les reguardoit de cousté, **comme un chien qui emporte un plumail** (QL, 717)¹
- 2) [refiriéndose al hambre] [...] pour à laquelle remédier **abaye** l'estomach. (TL, 416)

3) Frère Jan **hennisoit** du bout du nez [...] (*QL*, 764)

4) Panurge llama a Frère Jean “couillon **plombé**” (*TL*, 466)

En los dos primeros ejemplos aparece un término humano (Frère Jean, el estómago) relacionado con un animal (el perro). Pero, mientras que en el primero el elemento B está mencionado directamente, en el segundo el término humano no está presente sino aludido.

En las imágenes en que B no está explícitamente mencionado, la alusión al término no humano se logra mediante un sintagma verbal (los verbos *hennir* y *aboyer* en los ej. 2 y 3) o un modificador asociado a B (el adjetivo *plombé* en el ej. 4) que, en la imagen, se vinculan con el término humano.

La alusión a B puede ser perfectamente unívoca, como en los ejemplos 2 y 3. En estos casos, la referencia es inequívoca porque los verbos empleados designan el grito de animales determinados (perro, caballo). En otros casos (y esto ocurre especialmente en las cosificaciones), el elemento B no está totalmente definido: se relaciona con A una característica o acción propia de varios objetos y no de uno en particular. Esto ocurre en el cuarto ejemplo que citamos (*couillon plombé*), donde la alusión no determina ningún objeto en particular. Muchos objetos pueden compartir esta característica pero, indudablemente, no se trata de una característica propia de una parte corporal.

La mecánica de estos ejemplos podría resumirse diciendo que, al asignarle a A una acción o una característica propias de B, aunque B no esté mencionado, se establece una relación entre A y B.

2. Semejanza circumscripita y no circumscripita.

Entre las imágenes en las que el elemento B está explícitamente mencionado -grupo extremadamente amplio pues a él pertenece la mayoría de las imágenes deshumanizantes en la obra de Rabelais- he creído conveniente diferenciar dos subgrupos, de acuerdo con los criterios que paso a detallar.

En las imágenes deshumanizantes se establece, como ya señalamos, una relación de semejanza (que puede llegar inclusive a la

identidad) entre la totalidad o una parte de un elemento humano (A) y la totalidad o una parte de un elemento no humano (B). Pero hay imágenes en las que la validez de la relación de semejanza entre A y B aparece circunscripta, limitada por circunstancias determinadas y hay imágenes en las que la relación establecida no está limitada por circunstancia alguna. Llamaré a las primeras **imágenes de semejanza circunscripta** y a las segundas, **imágenes de semejanza no circunscripta**.

La limitación de la validez de la relación entre A y B, en la obra de Rabelais, se realiza en general mediante una acción (la semejanza es válida cuando uno de los términos realiza o sufre una cierta acción) o mediante una característica (la semejanza es válida solo para cierta parte o característica de A). Observemos los siguientes ejemplos:

- 1) [las viejas] ce sont vrays chiens de monstre (*TL*, 429).
- 2) [Panurge] estoit eximé comme un haran soret (*P*, 271).
- 3) [Gargantua] pleuroit comme une vache; mais tout soubdain rioit comme un veau (*P*, 226).

En el primer caso, la imagen no está circunscripta por ninguna circunstancia, es siempre válida. En los ejemplos 2 y 3, en cambio, la comparación tiene límites precisos. Gargantua no es ni parece una vaca en cualquier circunstancia: la relación solo es válida cuando el gigante llora. Panurge no es ni parece un arenque ahumado, esta relación solo se aplica a su delgadez.

En imágenes como la del ejemplo 1, el grado de deshumanización que sufre el elemento A es mucho mayor que en imágenes como las de los ejemplos 2 y 3.

2.1. Imágenes de semejanza no circunscripta

Este tipo de imágenes puede referirse a la totalidad de A y de B o a una parte de A y una parte de B. Dentro de este subgrupo, podemos diferenciar cinco formas o esquemas distintos de imágenes.

Las imágenes que presentan un mecanismo interno más sencillo son aquellas en las que se establece una relación de identidad o de

semejanza entre la totalidad de ambos elementos. Esta relación se manifiesta mediante la mención explícita de A y de B vinculados por un nexo como los verbos *ser* o *parecer*, lo que puede formularse como **A es (parece) B**

[Pantagruel] de sa faulx (c'estoit Loup Garou) abbatoit l'herbe d'un pré (c'estoyent les géans)[...] (P, 332).

[Pierre Ramus] est un fin et cauld renard (QL, 573).

Otra manera de estructurar este tipo de imágenes consiste en colocar a uno de los términos como aposición del otro:

[...] feut faict un joyeux mariage d'une **poyre, femme bien gaillarde** [...] avecques un jeune fromaige[...] (QL, 608).

Par Dieu, **Panurge le veau** [...], tu feroys beaucoup mieulx nous aydant icy [...] (QL, 636).

En otras imágenes de este subgrupo, se establece una relación de identidad entre la totalidad de A y de B, pero el elemento A no es mencionado. De ese modo, la relación entre ambos términos se establece mediante una metáfora, que responde al esquema **B (por A)**.

Al referirse a Panurge, Frère Jean lo llama “grand veau pleurant”, “ô veau marin” (QL, 644). El narrador explicita los efectos fisiológicos del miedo de Panurge diciéndonos: “Car un des symptômes et accidens de paour est que par luy ordinairement se ouvre le **guischet du serrail** onquel est à temps la matière fécale retenue” (QL, 763).

Entre las imágenes de semejanza no circumspecta que estamos considerando, ofrecen en general mayor interés las que conciernen no a la totalidad de los términos sino a sus partes. A menudo, estas imágenes se vinculan con una de las características del canon grotesco: la posibilidad de que las partes corporales cobren autonomía y puedan manifestar un comportamiento independiente. Por otra parte, también contribuyen en la creación de efectos que subrayan juegos de tamaños mediante los cuales el cuerpo aparece agigantado o, por el contrario, reducido a dimensiones mínimas.

Las imágenes pueden asociar partes de ambos términos: una parte del elemento humano con una del no humano, lo que podría formularse como **x parte de A es x parte de B**. Los pasajes siguientes ilustran ese mecanismo:

[Panurge] estendant toute la main comme une aesele d'oyseau ou une pinne de poisson [...] (P, 296)

Quaresmeprenant (dist Xenomanes), quant aux parties internes, a (au moins de mon temps avoit) [...]. Le plèvre comme un bec de corbin.² (QL, 665).

También puede ocurrir que la relación de semejanza o identidad se establezca entre la totalidad del elemento humano y una parte del término no humano, de acuerdo con la fórmula **A es (parece) x parte de B**. Al referirse a uno de los peregrinos que Gargantua come en ensalada, por ejemplo, Grandgousier dice: “Je croy que c'est là une corne de limasson [...]” (G, 156).

El pasaje citado muestra además claramente la manera como estas imágenes pueden intervenir en el juego que Rabelais establece entre dimensiones colosales y mínimas. La asociación de la totalidad del término humano (peregrino) con una parte diminuta de un animal pequeño (cuerno de caracol) reduce al peregrino a una talla ínfima. Pero, al mismo tiempo, al poner esas palabras en boca de Gargantua, el narrador está planteando esa relación desde la perspectiva del personaje. Esto contribuye a subrayar de manera indirecta la talla descomunal del gigante para quien las dimensiones de un hombre normal equivalen a las de un cuerno de caracol.³

Las imágenes en que todo A se vincula con una parte de B no son demasiado numerosas en la obra de Rabelais. Por ese motivo, en el cuadro clasificatorio, se ha adoptado como criterio reunir en una sola fórmula (**x parte de A (o A) es x parte de B**) a las imágenes en las que B es una parte de un animal o de un objeto.

Existen también imágenes en las que una parte de A se vincula con la totalidad del elemento no humano, lo que se sintetiza en la fórmula **x parte de A es (parece) B**. Ejemplificaré recurriendo nuevamente al retrato de Quaresmeprenant⁴, quien, además de los atributos que señalamos más arriba, tenía:

Les additamens mammillaires comme un bobelin⁵ [...] Les cartilages comme une tortue de guarigues⁶. Les adènes, comme une serpe. [...] Le membre comme une pantophle. (*QL*, 665–667).

El último de los esquemas constructivos que hemos discriminado entre las imágenes de semejanza no circumscripita es bastante curioso. Lo característico de este esquema es que la relación se establece entre varios elementos humanos, cuya alianza se relaciona con un elemento no humano, lo que hemos sintetizado en la fórmula **A₁ + A₂ es (parece) B**. En la obra de Rabelais, este tipo de imágenes no se apoyan en una relación icónica, sino que aparecen indisolublemente ligadas al juego de palabras, vinculadas de ese modo a la construcción de una especie de realidad exclusivamente verbal. Solo he encontrado este mecanismo constructivo en casos de cosificación y, específicamente en el capítulo IX del *Quart Livre*.

Escuchemos, por ejemplo, los saludos que se dirigen los habitantes de la isla Ennasin:

L'un appelloit une aultre: mon **verd**. Elle l'appelloit son **coquin**. «Il y a bien là (dist Eusthenes) du **verdcoquin**»⁷. (*QL*, 606)

«Hay, hay, hay! Tant y a que ne vous veidz, **Muse**! -Je vous voy (respondit-elle), **Corne**, volontiers! -Accouplez-les (dist Panurge) et leur soufflez au cul: **ce sera une cornemuse**». (*QL*, 607).

2.2. Imágenes de semejanza circumscripita.

Este grupo admite una primera subdivisión de acuerdo con la naturaleza del límite impuesto a la relación de semejanza entre A y B. De este modo, distinguiré, por un lado, las imágenes cuya validez está circumscripita por el desarrollo de una acción; por otro, aquellas cuya validez está circumscripita por una característica de A.

Para ilustrar esta distinción, consideremos los siguientes ejemplos:

Pantagruel advierte a Panurge que, si toma esposa, “d'elle vous serez battu comme tabour à nopces” (*TL*, 420)

[Lamie] oustoit de sa teste ses oeilz, exemptiles comme lunettes [...] (TL, 462)

La relación Panurge-tambor está limitada a la circunstancia en que el primero sufre una acción. La relación ojos de Lamie-anteojos se limita a una cualidad del primer término: la de ser removibles.

2.2.1. Imágenes de validez circumscripita por el desarrollo de una acción

El mecanismo interno de estas imágenes podría sintetizarse diciendo que, para que la relación entre A y B sea válida, es necesario que uno de los términos ejecute o sufra una cierta acción. La acción, y por lo tanto, la relación de semejanza que el sintagma verbal delimita, puede atribuirse a una parte corporal aislada, lo que también se vincula con la posibilidad de funcionamiento independiente de las partes corporales, rasgo que ya hemos señalado como propio del canon grotesco. Los ejemplos que siguen ilustran ese procedimiento:

[A los sifilíticos] le visaige leur reluysoit comme la claveure d'un charnier, et les dentz leur tressailloyent comme font les marchettes d'un clavier d'orgues ou d'espinette quand on joue dessus, et que le gosier leur escumoit comme à un verrat que les vaultres ont acculé entre les toilles! (P, 215)

No obstante, lo más frecuente es que la relación abarque el término humano en su conjunto, como podemos apreciar en este pasaje:

[Gargantua] gravoit ès arbres comme un chat, sautoit de l'une en l'autre comme un escurieux [...] montoit au hault d'une maison comme un rat. (G, 114)

Como observé más arriba, en este tipo de imágenes, el término humano puede ser activo o pasivo respecto de la acción que circumscribe la relación de semejanza. En el primer caso, la estructura interna de la imagen podría resumirse mediante la fórmula

A realiza una acción x como B, esquema al cual responden los siguientes ejemplos:

[Los dipsodas] s'endormirent comme porcs, sans ordre parmy le camp" (*P*, 325)

[Maître Janotus amenaza] nous ne cesserons de [...] braisler comme un asne sans crier et de bramer comme une vache sans cymbales. (*G*, 93)

Este esquema es el más frecuentemente empleado por Rabelais para las animalizaciones.

En otras imágenes de este grupo, el término humano es pasivo respecto de la acción que circunscribe la relación de semejanza. Esta circunstancia vuelve más denigrante la asociación para A, dado que no puede controlar siquiera el proceso que lo deshumaniza, determinado por los actos de otro, como podemos constatar en los siguientes pasajes:

[Frère Jean, luchando contra las tropas de Picrochole] chocqua si roidement sus eulx [...] qu'il les renversoyt comme porcs [...] (*G*, 126)

[Hippothadée, Rondibilis y Trouillogan han sido] esleuz, choisiz et triez chascun respectivement en son estat comme beaulx pois sus le volet. (*TL*, 478)

Las asociaciones de este tipo podrían esquematizarse mediante la fórmula **A sufre la acción x como si fuera B**. Dentro de este esquema he incluido imágenes en las cuales la relación entre A y B está dada por el hecho de que A cumple una función propia de B. Esta forma, bastante frecuente en las cosificaciones, implica que A es deshumanizado por el desarrollo de una acción frente a la cual A es pasivo. (Un tercero emplea a A en esa función). Por compartir estos dos rasgos, no me pareció pertinente separar estas imágenes en un nuevo subgrupo. Por ejemplo, al narrarse la situación de hombres afectados por la hinchazón de una parte de su cuerpo, Rabelais menciona a quienes han sufrido una elongación tal de su miembro viril "qu'ilz s'en servoyent de ceinture" (*P*, 218). La relación entre la

parte corporal y el objeto cinturón está limitada por una acción frente a la cual A es pasivo pues es empleado en esa función.

La complejidad y la riqueza de la asociación entre los términos humano y no humano se ve incrementada cuando no se atribuye el desarrollo de una acción a uno solo de ellos sino a ambos. En las imágenes de este tipo, que podría esquematizarse como **A haciendo una acción x parece B haciendo una acción y**, se establece una relación no solo entre A y B sino también entre las acciones que cada uno de ellos ejecuta. El grado de distanciamiento entre esas acciones produce situaciones más o menos ridiculizantes para el elemento humano de la asociación, como es fácil constatar en este ejemplo:

[Al ver a la Sibila de Panzoust, Panurge se pregunta]: A quelle fin fredonne-elle des babines comme un cinge démembrant escrevisses? (TL, 432).

Un caso especial de este tipo de imágenes es la parodia del símil épico. Lo que ocurre en ese caso es que se invierte el orden de los términos y se atribuye a B un conjunto de acciones, en general ampliamente detalladas por medio de sintagmas verbales. El esquema resultante es:

B haciendo las acciones x, y, z, etc. parece A haciendo la acción n. Este esquema no aparece discriminado en el cuadro general de imágenes que presentamos más arriba, porque lo consideramos una formulación particular del esquema **A haciendo una acción x parece B haciendo una acción y**.

La multiplicación de acciones atribuidas a B enriquece e intensifica la imagen, como se puede apreciar en el siguiente pasaje:

Et -comme vous voyez un asne, quand il a au cul un oestre Junonicque ou une mousche qui le poinct, courir çà et là sans voye ny chemin, gettant sa charge par terre, rompant son frain et rênes, sans aulcunement respirer ny prandre repos, et ne sçait-on qui le meut, car l'on ne veoît rien qui le touche, -ainsi fuyoient ces gens, de sens desproveuz, sans sçavoir cause de fuyr; tant seulement les poursuit une terreur panice laquelle avoient conceue en leurs âmes. (G, 171)

También puede presentarse el caso, escasísimo en el sistema de imágenes empleado por Rabelais, de que no se atribuya ninguna acción a A. El límite de la validez de la relación entre A y B está puesto en el desarrollo, por parte de B, de una acción, lo que puede sintetizarse en la fórmula **A parece B haciendo una acción x**. Podemos observar un ejemplo de este tipo en el pasaje en que Pantagruel dice a Panurge: “Vous me semblez à une souriz empégée: tant plus elle s’efforce soy dépestrer de la poix, tant plus elle s’embrene.” (TL, 504).

2.2.2. Imágenes de validez circumscripta por una característica de A.

Como señalamos más arriba, la relación de semejanza entre A y B puede circunscribirse también por el hecho de que la asociación entre ambos términos afecte solo a una característica determinada de A. En este grupo, podemos distinguir dos esquemas o formulaciones diferentes, que caracterizaremos a continuación.

En primer lugar, existen imágenes en las que lo que relaciona los términos humano y no humano es el hecho de que se atribuya al primero una cualidad propia del segundo. Este subgrupo podría esquematizarse mediante la fórmula **A posee x cualidad como B**, que ilustran los siguientes ejemplos:

[Pantagruel nació] tout velu comme un ours [...] (P, 225).

[Los hijos de Antiphyisis tenían] les pieds ronds comme pelottes (QL, 671).

Es evidente que lo que determina la relación entre los términos humanos de estas asociaciones (Pantagruel, los hijos de Antiphysys) y los no humanos (oso, pelotas), son características particulares de A (ser peludo, redondez).

En otras imágenes de este grupo, el vínculo entre A y B se sustenta en la afirmación de que el elemento humano posee una parte propia del no humano, lo que puede formularse como **A posee x parte propia de B**, mecanismo que podemos verificar en pasajes como los siguientes:

[Sócrates tenfa] le regard d'un taureau [...] (G,38).

[Los habitantes de la isla Ennasin son] ces mal plaisans Allianciers, avecques leur nez de as de treuffle [...] (QL, 609).

* * *

Las imágenes animalizantes o cosificantes referidas al cuerpo humano, a cuyo estudio nos hemos asomado, plasman, en el plano del lenguaje, la confusión del cuerpo y el mundo propia del realismo grotesco. Pero a su vez, inscriptas en una visión general del cuerpo humano y sus relaciones con el mundo, cuyas profundas raíces tradicionales analiza Bajtín, estas imágenes están impregnadas -por así decirlo- de las concepciones del realismo grotesco. En ellas se manifiestan con particular nitidez los rasgos constitutivos del canon grotesco (no individualización de la figura humana, predilección por las partes corporales que comunican cuerpo y mundo -orificios y protuberancias- rebajamiento ambivalente de lo serio o solemne, posibilidad de funcionamiento independiente de las partes del cuerpo).

Establecer una tipología de estas imágenes no constituye, desde mi punto de vista, un objetivo en sí mismo. El trabajo realizado apunta a poder estudiar la frecuencia con que estos esquemas constructivos aparecen en cada una de las obras estudiadas y en el conjunto del *corpus* seleccionado. El análisis de esos resultados permitirá sacar conclusiones acerca de la evolución estilística de uno de los recursos más importantes de que Rabelais se vale para articular la imagen de lo corporal en su discurso satírico.

Por otra parte, si al finalizar esa etapa del trabajo el modelo resulta adecuado para la descripción del conjunto del sistema de imágenes deshumanizantes en la prosa satírica de Rabelais, podría ensayarse también como instrumento crítico para el abordaje de otros discursos satíricos.

Notas

- 1) La palabra *plumail* significa: "bout d'aile d'une volaille encore garni de ses rémiges et jeté par le cuisinier" (G, cap. 35, n. 15). Todas las citas de textos de Rabelais en este artículo, corresponden a la edición de

Demerson incluida en la sección de Obras citadas. Se han empleado las siguientes abreviaturas: *P* = Pantagruel, *G* = Gargantua, *TL* = Tiers Livre, *QL* = Quart Livre.

- 2) *Corbin* significa cuervo.
- 3) Con respecto a los juegos de tamaños, el gigantismo y la hipérbole, es muy útil consultar el excelente trabajo de Marcel Tetel (1964: 19–23 y 59–66). He contribuido por mi parte con algunas observaciones acerca de este tema en dos artículos (1991 y 1995).
- 4) Acerca del retrato de Quaresmeprenant, véase el interesante artículo de Marie-Madeleine Fontaine (1984).
- 5) *Bobelin*: “chaussure rustique à fortes semelles [...] Le Double (*Rabelais anatomiste*) entend: peloton de fil” (*QL*, “Index verborum”, ed. de R. Marichal, 352).
- 6) “Tortue de guarigues: du languedoc, *garrigo*” (Sainéan, II, 187. “La tortue de guarigues = la tortue terrestre: les cartilages de Quaresmeprenant, au lieu d’être lisses, sont creusés de sillons comme sa carapace” (*QL*, “Index verborum”, ed. R. Marichal, 380).
- 7) “Verdcoquin: ver-coquin, vers qui se développe dans la tête du mouton et lui donne le vertige, puis vertige.” (Ibid., 412).

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Más allá de los Pirineos: sobre la dinámica de las literaturas española y catalana

JÜRI TALVET

Al parecer, la recepción literaria ocupa uno de los campos más estables en la moderna teoría de la literatura. Con toda evidencia, el salto (atrás) de la construcción estructuralista-semiótica a la deconstrucción intuitivista no ha provocado aquí estremecimientos más profundos. El “horizonte de las expectativas” (Jauss) y el “lector implícito” (Iser) son nociones suficientemente flexibles para satisfacer tanto el anhelo de la “apertura infinita del texto” del tardío Barthes como el trabajo secreto de socavación, de Derrida, entre los esquemas del estructuralismo.

Sin embargo, aun tal planteamiento parece agotarse, por lo menos hasta que no se amplíe el horizonte de la teoría de la recepción. Las interminables especulaciones sobre las relaciones entre el texto y el lector tienden a degenerar en una didáctica elemental.

Una de las posibilidades de modificación podría ser la ampliación de las nociones tradicionales de lector, texto y autor. ¿Por qué no tratar, en calidad de lector, toda una época, toda una cultura? ¿Serán acaso éstas más abstractas que el lector del texto o de la obra concretos? No lo creo, puesto que las posibilidades de cualquier lector no superan los límites de su experiencia histórica, y ésta, en cualquier caso, es relativa.

Del mismo modo se pueden interpretar, como un gran texto, la obra total de un autor, la literatura nacional, etc. La noción de autor, igual que la de lector, puede abarcar considerablemente más espacio de lo que cabe en una persona histórica concreta.

En tal perspectiva una de las nociones clave sería la **dinámica de la literatura**. ¿Por qué una época sí es capaz de leer a un autor o un fenómeno determinados, y otra época no? ¿Qué origina el movimiento de la literatura por encima de las fronteras de una nación y un tiempo, formando el paradigma que suele llamarse la **literatura universal**?

Evidentemente, la dinámica de la literatura engloba tanto el movimiento dentro de la literatura misma -renovaciones, modificaciones- como el movimiento en la cultura (época) y entre las culturas (épocas). En otras palabras, la dinámica de la literatura puede ser tanto **intraliteraria** e **intracultural** como **interliteraria** e **intercultural** (o, en otros términos, **transliteraria**, **transcultural**).

Todo esto se relaciona con la recepción de la literatura en diferentes niveles. El “gran lector” (en totalidad: la cultura universal) consta de lectores determinados: la época, la cultura nacional, el autor, el crítico, el teórico, el lector “corriente”, el censor, etc.

El lector determinado es un micromodelo del “gran lector”. Los mismos factores que influyen en aquél -la edad, la situación social e ideológica, la condición psicológica y económica, la base de conocimientos, la predisposición cultural, etc.- determinan la fecundidad de la lectura del “gran lector”. La lectura inadecuada en una época (cultura) puede estimular la lectura más profunda en otra época (cultura). La relación entre la Ilustración y el Romanticismo constituye aquí un ejemplo clásico.

Los diferentes niveles de la dinámica literaria pueden ser atravesados tanto por una variedad de analogías como de antinomias. La dinámica de la obra de un autor puede impulsar la dinámica de toda una cultura. Así, el reciente éxito de las novelas históricas del estonio Jaan Kross en los países occidentales ha creado un ambiente favorable a la ampliación de la recepción de toda la literatura estonia y báltica. Al contrario, en la dinámica de una gran área cultural pueden ausentarse -por ejemplo, por razones ideológicas- algunas regiones culturales particulares (como, hasta hace poco, las mismas literaturas bálticas en las letras europeas, puesto que los tres países bálticos, identificados políticamente con el espacio rusosoviético, se habían esfumado de la memoria occidental). O, para dar otro ejemplo elocuente del dictado

ideológico, entre 1940 y 1968 se tradujeron al estonio más de mil obras del ruso y sólo 170 del inglés, mientras que en 1994, ya en la Estonia nuevamente independiente, del total de 609 traducciones publicadas, casi la mitad fueron del inglés y sólo 18 del ruso.

Las grandes culturas encuentran siempre “palancas catapultadoras”, que aceleran la dinámica intercultural, pero también a menudo sólo crean la ilusión de ésta (así, la recepción comercial en los medios de comunicación, fenómenos de la “moda” en la cultura, etc.). Al mismo tiempo las pequeñas literaturas tropiezan en su recepción con las barreras elementales del idioma. El “factor de la casualidad” en la cultura, investigado fructíferamente por el semiólogo de Tartu Iuri Lotman (Lotman 1989), se adapta plenamente tanto a la dinámica como a la recepción de la literatura.

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La siguiente tentativa de describir la dinámica histórica de las literaturas española y catalana no aspira a ser un panorama detallado, más bien es un intento preliminar de iluminar alguna parte de sus contornos.

En el caso de la literatura española, una de las grandes literaturas europeas y mundiales, el fenómeno del **hispanismo** -según la definición tradicional, el estudio de la cultura e historia de España por los extranjeros- requiere un comentario aparte.

Por su naturaleza étnica, el hispanismo obviamente tendría que ver con el área intercultural. ¿Pero es así? De hecho, lo constituyen numerosos lectores extranjeros de textos españoles que, sin embargo, se han fundido con el cuerpo de los investigadores autóctonos de la literatura española. Suelen publicar sus trabajos en castellano, tanto en revistas de España como en revistas hispanistas extranjeras. A pesar de ser por su origen y por la predisposición de su actividad sujetos de la interculturalidad, en la mayoría de los casos los hispanistas se han apartado de su “propia” área cultural, convirtiéndose en sujetos de la “otra” cultura, es decir, de la cultura española.

Su papel en la dinámica interior de la literatura española ha sido extraordinario, casi sin paralelos en la cultura mundial (tal vez sólo pueda ser comparado con el del orientalismo internacional).

Al mismo tiempo sus intentos esporádicos de salir a la interculturalidad han tenido escasos resultados hasta hoy día.

Más posibilidades para influir directamente en la interculturalidad ha tenido aquella parte de hispanistas que ha mostrado los frutos de su lectura de la literatura hispánica (también) en su lengua autóctona. Entre ellos, habría que incluir a los traductores, puesto que, al igual que cualquier acto de la lectura, también la traducción -ya a partir de la selección de la obra traducida- es interpretación. Pertenecen a esta parte más modesta del hispanismo sobre todo algunos escritores, por ejemplo, entre los más conocidos, el británico Gerald Brenan o, en tiempos más remotos, los románticos alemanes Ludwig Tieck y August Wilhelm Schlegel, al lado del austriaco Franz Grillparzer. La suya es una lectura “desde la frontera”, capaz de crear un puente sobre el abismo que a menudo separa la visión “desde dentro” y “desde fuera”.

Suele considerarse como punto de partida de la literatura castellana el poema épico anónimo *Cantar de Mío Cid*, cuya redacción supuestamente data de mediados del siglo XII. A menudo se olvida, hablando de esta antigua epopeya, que la obra, en forma impresa, no apareció antes del año 1779, ni tampoco se hizo parte de la literatura universal mucho antes que la misma noción de ésta naciera en el Romanticismo alemán, con Herder, Goethe y Friedrich Schlegel. Hasta aquella fecha la obra ni siquiera se conocía en España misma. Análoga ha sido la suerte de las demás epopeyas medievales: sólo el Romanticismo descubrió para el mundo la *Chanson de Roland* de los franceses y la *Nibelungenlied* de los alemanes. Aunque Cervantes haya dedicado grandes elogios a la máxima obra narrativa del “siglo de oro” catalán, *Tirant lo Blanc*, de Martorell y Galba (segunda mitad del siglo XV), tuvieron que transcurrir cinco siglos enteros hasta que el novelista peruano Mario Vargas Llosa en su ensayo *García Márquez: historia de un deicidio* (1971) la “reconociera” entre la épica caballeresca antigua y la convirtiera en un *bestseller* “antiguo” y “nuevo” de la literatura mundial de los 80.

Como se sabe, la integración del gran cuerpo de la literatura medieval a la literatura universal se debe a la nueva manera histórico-filosófica de la lectura iniciada en el Romanticismo

europeo. Aun hoy día podemos considerarnos herederos de ésta, si bien la lectura histórica en las últimas décadas, hasta cierto punto, se haya menospreciado.

Aunque el paradigma es válido casi para toda la Europa occidental, España conserva su particularidad. Si en otras partes de Europa la recopilación del folklore comenzaba lo más temprano en la segunda mitad del siglo XVIII, alcanzando su ápice científico un siglo más tarde, en España, ya en la segunda mitad del siglo XV comenzaron a copiar canciones antiguas. Por lo tanto en el siglo XVI pudieron publicarse voluminosas colecciones de versos, los cancioneros. Amén de la poesía anónima, de entre 1380 y 1520 ha llegado a nosotros nada menos que la obra de casi 700 poetas.

Es posible, pues, que la potente dinámica de las literaturas medievales española y catalana se haya nutrido sobre todo de su "reconocibilidad", es decir, de su autenticidad histórica. Tanto más que ya a partir de las recopilaciones más antiguas la creación anónima se mezclaba con los textos de autores conocidos. Así, los equivalentes español y catalán a lo que, por ejemplo, en Estonia suele entenderse como poesía tradicional -la raíz más antigua de la poesía-, puede aparecer, en cambio, como un fenómeno poético bien refinado. No hay evidencias de que la poesía tradicional de aquellos tempos fuese más antigua que la obra de los poetas educados. Más bien las dos alas de la antigua poesía -popular y aristocrática- son sincrónicas, estimulando en su entrelazamiento la dinámica de la poesía.

El Romanticismo europeo se acercaba a la poesía medieval española mediante su **código exótico**, tan propio de la época. Pertenecían a éste los contrastes -por ejemplo, la fusión de lo aristocrático y lo democrático, en que el pueblo mismo encarnaba el elemento "exótico"-, el anhelo de lo "extranjero", de lo "distinto" y de lo "natural". La España mediterránea, con su rico trasfondo árabe de cultura, fue aquella Europa "distinta" y "más natural" por antonomasia. La edad auténticamente medieval de la literatura española, por añadidura, favorecía el empleo del código romántico.

La particularidad de España puede verse también en el hecho de que ni el Renacimiento ni el Barroco significaron un alejamiento radical de la poesía medieval. Aun al contrario, en el

Barroco refinado el cultivo de los romances incluso se convirtió en una moda, un estilo nuevo que, a su vez, comunicaba lo medieval con la literatura de los tiempos modernos, ofreciendo un código nuevo -a menudo irónico y lúdico- para la lectura de la literatura vetusta.

En la poesía medieval española y catalana se revela ejemplarmente lo que Herder definía como lengua primigenia del pueblo: los gérmenes colectivos e individuales se entrelazan mutuamente con una intensidad insólita.

A los códigos del siglo XX corresponden en la poesía de aquella época asonancias, repeticiones, metáforas, elipsis que, a través de los códigos barrocos, han llegado incluso a la poesía vanguardista de entreguerras (García Lorca, Alberti y otros).

Los códigos mediante los cuales se lee la literatura se transforman en el tiempo, dando origen a una multiplicidad de interpretaciones. En las clases de filosofía de las universidades soviéticas el catalán Ramon Llull figuraba como ejemplo típico de la escolástica medieval. También de su nombre se conocía sólo la forma latinizada -Raimundus Lullus-, lo que subrayaba su vinculación con la universalidad medieval, basada en gran medida en el latín.

Llull fue efectivamente un universalista, pero su universalidad -al igual que la de Dante, algo más tarde- no se manifestaba tanto en la lengua universal como en la vernácula. Es lo que otorga originalidad a su filosofía. La obra en catalán de Llull es el architexto, el punto de partida del que emana la dinámica de la literatura catalana. Recodifica para la Europa cristiana la mística árabe; es, con obras como *L'arbre de filosofia d'amor* y la novela *Blanquerna*, uno de los fundadores de la tradición europea de la literatura alegórica que mantiene su vitalidad a través de los cuatro siglos posteriores.

En la Edad Media tardía la alegoría predominaba tanto en literatura como en filosofía. Es interesante, por ejemplo, comparar la recepción de la obra de dos máximos representantes de la literatura española de la primera mitad del siglo XIV, Juan Manuel y Juan Ruiz.

El sobrino de Alfonso el Sabio, don Juan Manuel, es conocido como el primer cultivador importante de la prosa en castellano.

Que don Juan Manuel hubiera fundado el género del cuento español, sería una afirmación hartó más arriesgada. En la Europa coetánea le ensombrece Boccaccio, fundador reconocido del cuento de la Edad Moderna (a pesar de que *El conde Lucanor*, con toda probabilidad, fuese escrito aproximadamente diez años antes que el *Decameron*).

El nombre genérico del cuento de don Juan Manuel es "ejemplo". Presenta una serie de ejemplos morales, utilizando tanto la forma narrativa tradicional ("cuentos en cuento") como el material oriental (derivado, por ejemplo, de la famosa y antigua colección de cuentos y parábolas indios, *Panchatantra*). Si bien algunos "ejemplos" de don Juan Manuel avivan el material histórico-popular (el tema de los moros) y en la filosofía de la obra se vislumbra el temprano humanismo cristiano, sus cuentos en la mayoría de los casos, se funden en el inmenso cuerpo intercultural del folklore. Así, del conocido cuento de la "nueva ropa" del rey, que generalmente (y también en Estonia) se conoce según la versión postromántica del danés H. Chr. Andersen, figura en *El conde Lucanor* una de sus primeras y más originales versiones. En la cultura posterior la historia, sin embargo, se ha convertido en un intertexto no identificado, al igual que un gran número de otras tramas folklóricas.

El Libro de buen amor del Arcipreste de Hita (aprox. 1330) también tiene su base en una alegoría universalista. Pero el autor lo vincula con la materialidad histórico-nacional de modo tan robusto que la alegoría medieval pierde su equilibrio. Es precisamente esta violación del equilibrio en el texto, la transgresión de la norma establecida lo que crea la dinámica que, a su vez, explica el hecho de que el *Libro de buen amor* se haya convertido en uno de los textos más discutidos de la crítica moderna.

Del mismo modo violan el equilibrio estético-preceptivo los versos cargados de tensiones interiores del poeta catalán Ausiàs March (primera mitad del siglo XV). Por supuesto, el trasfondo es proporcionado ya por Dante y Petrarca, pero en su presentación de la complicada relación entre el amor y la muerte March incluso va unos pasos más lejos. La parte terrenal se hace más real, sin perder, al mismo tiempo, nada de su religiosidad.

La Celestina es la primera narración larga en la prosa europea que destaca poderosamente la concepción materialista y panteísta de la vida (en el género del cuento, por supuesto, el antecesor es Boccaccio). Por otro lado, *La Celestina* se convierte en el prototexto de la novela dialogada moderna y, al mismo tiempo, en el primer texto que transforma la realidad social “baja” en el objeto de la novela. Esta obra será más tarde el intertexto más importante tanto para la novela picaresca como para la formación del tipo realista de la novela.

La interculturalidad y la interliterariedad adquieren en el Renacimiento una calidad totalmente nueva. Con el humanismo empieza la actividad consciente de la traducción. Se intensifica la lectura interpretativa y crítica de los textos. Es verdad que en la España de la Contrarreforma no conocían a Shakespeare ni a Rabelais ni a Montaigne (o les conocían poco). Pero se conocía la misma base perceptiva mediante Erasmo. La intertextualidad, por lo tanto, no tiene que ser obligatoriamente una construcción consecutiva: por caminos diferentes se llega a las mismas fuentes.

En todo el Siglo de Oro abundan grandes escritores y obras grandes, de cuya pertenencia a la literatura universal -por lo menos, a partir del Romanticismo hasta nuestros días- nunca se ha dudado. En el siglo XVII toda Europa leía la literatura española. Otra cuestión es hasta qué punto llegaba la dinámica; dónde se detiene la interculturalidad activa.

Aun más temprano que en otras partes de Europa, se acepta en España el ideal estético y ético del Renacimiento italiano.

La obra de Garcilaso de la Vega (1501–1536) significaba un salto sumamente audaz de las formas tradicionales medievales al soneto y a la égloga maduros y flexibles. El libro poético de Garcilaso y de Boscán, en 1543, marca el comienzo de la modernidad en la lírica europea.

No obstante, hay que admitir que en el panorama europeo el brillo de la *Pléyade* francesa dejaba a los líricos españoles casi en una sombra total. Ronsard y Du Bellay leyeron las mismas fuentes que Garcilaso y Boscán, pero produjeron, a diferencia de éstos, un texto doble: además de su propio texto crearon, en su *Defensa y manifiesto de la lengua francesa* (1549), uno de los más sólidos metatextos de la literatura renacentista. Además, hay que tener en

cuenta que, a diferencia, por ejemplo, de Garcilaso, fue Ronsard quien en sus sonetos se atrevió a violar la norma neoplatónica petrarquista, introduciendo disonancias epicureístas.

La poesía mística de la segunda mitad del siglo XVI (Juan de la Cruz, Luis de León), sin duda, ha enriquecido el horizonte lírico europeo. Pero su interliterariedad más directa ha sido frenada por las dificultades propias de todo el cuerpo de la lírica mundial, que son las derivadas de la traducción. También la predisposición ideológica en el lector europeo gradualmente iba reduciéndose: el catolicismo y la Contrarreforma españoles provocaban, a partir del siglo XVIII, un extrañamiento cada vez mayor en Europa.

Evolucionando sobre todo en el código de la novela realista, la novela picaresca española, el más original entre los géneros novelescos de aquel tiempo, ha revelado una potente dinámica hasta el siglo XX. Su intraliterariedad, concentrada sobre todo en la primera mitad del siglo XVII, es continuada por una extensa interliterariedad en las letras occidentales (Grimmelshausen, Defoe, Smollett y muchos otros). En la recepción más moderna, sin embargo, sólo algunas novelas picarescas, escritas sobre todo en código filosófico (*Lazarillo de Tormes*, *Guzmán de Alfarache*, *La vida del Buscón*) parecen seguir atrayendo interés.

Las sátiras en prosa de Quevedo han sido leídas a lo largo de muchos siglos. Su poesía existencial, en cambio, sólo se actualiza después de la Segunda guerra mundial, cuando el Occidente mismo ya estaba preparada para una lectura existencialista.

Una gran parte de la literatura del Siglo de Oro, a partir de la segunda mitad de siglo XVII, fue eclipsada, sin embargo, por la hegemonía cada vez más poderosa de la cultura francesa. La literatura española se leía -si se leía- a través de los "filtros" de la cultura francesa, a menudo mediante traducciones francesas, en las que el espíritu español original se había marchitado. Así, a principios del siglo XVIII, el francés Lesage se encargó de "representar" la literatura española del Barroco. Su *Diablo cojuelo* (1707) se hizo mucho más conocido que el original español (1641) de Luis Vélez de Guevara, obra que había servido a Lesage de ejemplo. *Gil Blas* (1734) del mismo autor, escrito a imitación de varias novelas picarescas españolas, llegó a considerarse en Europa como la novela picaresca por excelencia. Los aconte-

cimientos de la vida del héroe nacional español, el Cid, no se conocían en Europa por los viejos romances, la epopeya castellana ni las crónicas, ni tampoco por la obra teatral de Guillén de Castro, sino a partir del famoso drama neoclásico del francés Pierre Corneille, *El Cid* (1636). Europa asimiló el mito de don Juan a partir de la comedia satírica de Molière (1665), tras haber olvidado del todo la indiscutible obra maestra del Barroco español, *El burlador de Sevilla y convidado de piedra* (1618–21), de Tirso de Molina.

Como casi única excepción, la Francia de la Ilustración dio una acogida cálida a la obra de Baltasar Gracián, aun cuando el vuelo de los juegos conceptuales de éste habían sido cercenados en las traducciones francesas. El mismo Cervantes fue leído en Europa durante mucho tiempo según un código puramente cómico.

De tal modo Europa, dominada por el espíritu de la Ilustración, bloqueaba casi durante un siglo y medio la dinámica de la literatura española.

En algunos casos, el género literario mismo no había sido “preparado”, y las obras novedosas cayeron en un “vacío” receptivo. Un ejemplo podría ser la recepción de la novela histórica sobre las guerras civiles de Granada, *Historia de los bandos de los zegríes y abencerrajes* (1595–1619), de Pérez de Hita. En Europa, como se sabe, la novela histórica como género parte de la obra del escocés Walter Scott. Una vez que el Romanticismo y las novelas de Scott habían “educado” al lector de la novela histórica, por supuesto, también la novela de Pérez de Hita fue traducida a otras lenguas europeas.

El contenido más profundo de la obra de los espíritus máximos del Siglo de Oro español, Cervantes, Calderón y Lope de Vega, fue descubierto sólo por los románticos alemanes de principios del siglo pasado. El mundo posterior nunca ha puesto en tela de juicio la correspondencia de la obra de Cervantes con el amplio diapasón de códigos provistos en el Romanticismo. Lo más importante de todo parece ser la revelación del código filosófico en el Romanticismo. Es en éste en el que el mundo continúa leyendo a Cervantes hasta nuestros días.

En resumidas cuentas, el código filosófico fue para los románticos aun más importante que el código popular y democrático.

Esto explica por qué en la Alemania romántica Calderón gozaba de una recepción mucho más intensa que Lope de Vega. En cambio, mientras Europa pasaba del código romántico al código positivista y naturalista, el interés por la obra de Calderón lógicamente iba disminuyendo. El más terrenal y laico Shakespeare conservaba su encanto, mientras que en Calderón, marcado por su religiosidad y su catolicismo, hallaban cada vez más matices de "extrañeza".

Este sabor de "extrañeza" ha seguido acosando la gran obra de Calderón hasta nuestros días, si bien ha habido esfuerzos de avivarla mediante el código existencialista y surrealista.

El siglo XVIII es el "tiempo de silencio" de la cultura española. Lo que ocurre en la literatura no sale del terreno vernáculo, salvo aquellos impulsos tardíos del Siglo de Oro que, llegando a América Latina, preparaban la dinámica cultural del Nuevo Continente.

Tras numerosas convulsiones sociales, la cultura pirenaica comienza a avivarse a partir del siglo XIX. El espíritu europeo de la Ilustración y del Romanticismo penetra en España, cuyo atraso, cuya tragedia interior y cuya complicada relación con los procesos europeos son reflejados, con máxima expresividad, por el genio grotesco y existencialista de Francisco de Goya.

No obstante, Goya, la individualidad más brillante del arte europea de la época, fue más bien una excepción en España. Durante mucho tiempo la literatura española no alcanzó la calidad que hubiera permitido unirse a la vanguardia de la literatura universal. El Romanticismo en España fue bastante más tardío que en Alemania e Inglaterra. Penetrante fue el pensamiento de Madame de Staël, según la cual el espíritu primigenio romántico partía de los pueblos germánicos. Mientras que para los germánicos lo "romántico" significaba un anhelo del "otro", de lo "distinto" (lo ajeno, lo natural) que constituía el ideal, los pueblos románicos, cuyo signo lingüístico mismo deriva de una raíz común a la del "romanticismo" (y que eran ellos mismos aquellos "otros", "distintos") no podían crear tan fácilmente un ideal semejante y la distancia que éste exigía.

Aun cuando en España en algunas ocasiones se explotaban los mitos de culturas lejanas (por ejemplo, las leyendas indias del postromántico Gustavo Adolfo Bécquer), esto más bien fue

excepcional. Los mitos de la España árabe y de España, formados en el Romanticismo, debían su origen a los pueblos germánicos, seguidos por los franceses (que, respecto a España, también eran "nórdicos").

Aunque el Romanticismo significaba un nuevo ascenso de la lírica, la dinámica de ésta casi no salía de los marcos de la literatura nacional. Bécquer y la gallega Rosalía de Castro introdujeron en la poesía española una nueva sensibilidad e intimidad líricas. Se restauró el lazo, casi perdido durante el siglo XVIII, con la poesía tradicional. Pero las dificultades de la lectura de la lírica fuera del área vernácula son evidentes. ¿Sabría la Europa posterior algo de Byron, Shelley y Goethe, si la obra de éstos se hubiera limitado exclusivamente a la poesía lírica?

La ola del despertar de los pueblos minoritarios europeos, desatada por el Romanticismo, llevaba adelante tanto a Cataluña como a Estonia. Así, la *Renaixença* catalana en muchos aspectos se asemeja al despertar nacional de los estonios. La identidad nacional fue confirmada por la poesía patriótica; se buscaba inspiración en el pasado nacional (que para los catalanes era su brillante Siglo de Oro en la tardía Edad Media). Esta época hizo fecundar epopeyas tanto en la cultura de los catalanes como en la de los estonios. En la primera época el desarrollo fue casi exclusivamente intraliterario, identificándose estéticamente con la búsqueda del lenguaje artístico elemental.

Pero también había "saltos" inesperados al plano europeo. El drama costumbrista y rústico *Terra baixa* (1896), de Angel Guimerà, uno de los escritores más destacados de la *Renaixença*, primero sirvió de base para la ópera del belga Fernand Leborne *La catalana*, y luego para otra ópera de gran éxito, del alemán Eugen d'Albert, la cual incluso llegó a estrenarse en Estonia a principios de este siglo. (A propósito, se pueden hallar curiosas analogías en la magna novela *La verdad y la justicia*, 1926-33, del escritor estonio Anton Hansen Tammsaare, sobre todo en el contraste simbólico entre las tierras "alta" y "baja").

La recepción del drama de Guimerà alude acertadamente a los frenos y casualidades que generalmente rigen la dinámica de las culturas minoritarias. Si *Terra baixa* no hubiera sido traducida al castellano ya en el mismo año 1896 por el dramaturgo español

José Echegaray, más tarde Premio Nobel de Literatura, la recepción intercultural podría aplazarse varias décadas más o no haber tenido lugar, del todo.

De la frontera entre el Romanticismo y el Realismo parte en la literatura española el amplio fenómeno del costumbrismo. Deja muchos matices en la prosa tanto del máximo novelista realista español del siglo XIX, Pérez Galdós, como de Clarín. Es sin embargo curioso notar que la tendencia costumbrista, en realidad, germina sobre todo en las novelas de Fernán Caballero, escritora de origen alemán, cuyo verdadero nombre fue Cecilia Böhl de Faber (*La gaviota*, en 1849).

En aquella época el tema de la pintoresca vida popular es fuertemente apoyado por el mito español "importado" del extranjero: acuérdesese que el superpopular relato *Carmen*, del francés Mérimée, se publicó en 1845.

Si a finales del siglo pasado y a principios de este un éxito extraordinario en Europa (incluida Europa Oriental) acampañaba las novelas del regionalista valenciano Vicente Blasco Ibáñez, habría que tener en cuenta, como trasfondo, el mito ya existente sobre España y también, cada vez más, factores "extraliterarios" que sobre todo han dirigido el proceso literario de este siglo. El gusto del público condiciona la literatura, el lector, por así decirlo, "crea" la literatura. Por otro lado, no habría que olvidar la predisposición anarquista de la Europa de aquella época revolucionaria: abonaba el terreno para la recepción de las culturas "apasionadas", como la española y la rusa.

Pérez Galdós ha sido apodado ya el Dickens, ya el Balzac, ya el Tolstoi o el Zola español. Trasciende el costumbrismo mediante el símbolo, o por la ironía y el humor (rasgos que coinciden con la prosa de Clarín). Pero preguntémosnos: ¿ha merecido acaso un gran novelista europeo fuera de España el apelativo del "Pérez Galdós de su país"? Si pensamos en Dickens, Tolstoi, Zola, Flaubert o Dostoievski, casi siempre imaginamos a alguno de sus grandes personajes. Pérez Galdós no posee tales personajes -del mismo modo que éstos no se encuentran en la gigantesca obra de Lope de Vega. Al igual que Lope, Pérez Galdós siempre parece inclinarse a preferir el "personaje colectivo" -el pueblo, la sociedad- al personaje individual.

De aquí las “dificultades” de su recepción universal. Además: Pérez Galdós sí impresiona con la “totalidad” de su mundo novelesco -sus personajes se mueven de una novela a otra, mudando de papel. Pero ya con anterioridad el mismo recurso había sido empleado con éxito por Balzac y Zola. En los *Episodios nacionales* reproducía con detalles asombrosos el pasado inmediato de España. Pero también esto, partiendo de la realidad de su país, había sido hecho bastante antes por Walter Scott. La literatura española del siglo XIX -pese a su gran variedad- no llega a crear modelos literarios nuevos. No obstante, el modo cómo y el material con que se llenan los modelos literarios ya existentes, ya importados, pueden tener su atractivo irresistible.

De hecho, así ha sido también en lo más temprano: la filosofía actúa como dinamita de la literatura. Estallando desata la dinámica de la literatura. La literatura francesa ascendió con Montaigne, Descartes, Gassendi, Pascal, Voltaire y Rousseau. La literatura alemana superó su provincialismo, alcanzando la dimensión universal, junto a Lessing, Kant, Schelling, Fichte, Hegel y Schopenhauer.

Los períodos cumbre de la cultura se caracterizan por un lazo estrecho entre la filosofía y la literatura. En el primer Siglo de Oro de la literatura catalana el código filosófico fue representado por Ramon Llull. En el Siglo de Oro clásico español no había ningún escritor mayor cuya obra no revelara la tendencia filosófica: Cervantes, Alemán, Góngora, Quevedo, Gracián, Calderón; y por qué no Lope de Vega. Todos destacaron como renovadores en el terreno estético, pero hay que dudar si alguno de ellos hubiera podido convertirse en sujeto de una amplia interculturalidad sin el mensaje filosófico de su obra.

Por lo tanto no nos falta la base histórica y empírica para afirmar: la nueva subida hacia la interculturalidad o -incluso se podría decir- hacia un nuevo “siglo de oro” literario español y catalán parte de su dimensión **filosófica**. Miguel de Unamuno y José Ortega y Gasset son los primeros pensadores españoles en el panorama moderno de la filosofía mundial. Con su ensayística filosófica, les apoyan Angel Ganivet, Maeztu, Azorín, Madariaga, el catalán d’Ors. En esencia, la obra de toda la generación del 98 tiene un acento subrayadamente filosófico (las novelas de Una-

munio, Baroja, Azorín y Pérez de Ayala; la poesía de Jiménez y Machado, el drama de Valle-Inclán).

Esta generación marca el fin del paradigma costumbrista.

Si bien sin filósofos propiamente dichos e incluso sin ningún prosista importante, la generación siguiente, la del 27, continúa la línea filosófica en las letras españolas.

Se puede discutir infinitamente quién es más típicamente “español” en su mensaje, o J. R. Jiménez o García Lorca, sin negar el hecho de que los dos han enriquecido la lírica mundial con su arte metafórico sin par. Pero apenas los dos hubieran sobresalido en el “álgebra de las metáforas” de la poesía europea de entreguerras sin el fuerte impulso filosófico que dirige su lírica. Sea García Lorca, Aleixandre o Guillén, cada uno posee su mensaje filosófico que, según la lógica interior, se transforma en una poética original.

Esta generación no sólo confirma su esencia filosófica mediante la poesía, sino también por su lectura crítica. Concede autonomía a la poética barroca (Góngora) y alude a los vínculos fundamentales entre el Barroco y la Vanguardia del siglo XX. Y al contrario, parece que sobre todo aquellos poetas de la generación cuyo mensaje filosófico individual no llegó a encarnarse, gradualmente van retrocediendo de la interculturalidad.

Por supuesto, todo esto tiene que ver mucho con el lector. En el siglo XX no sólo cabe hablar del lector masivo, sino también de la **crítica masiva**. Nunca antes la cantidad de lectores críticos de la literatura ha sido tan grande como en este siglo. Directa o indirectamente los criterios de la lectura crítica han influido en la creación literaria. También el criterio filosófico en la literatura del siglo XX parece haber recibido impulsos potentes del incremento radical de la lectura crítica. Es posible incluso que la presión de la crítica sobre la literatura haya sido exagerada, alentando la ilusión de que la literatura misma tuviera que encargarse de la función de la filosofía.

En el libro *La difícil universalidad española*, del poeta y teórico vanguardista español Guillermo de Torre (Torre 1965), la cuestión principal es hasta qué punto el mundo es capaz de asimilar lo específicamente español en la literatura y si esto no

podría constituir un obstáculo fundamental en la recepción (Torre observa y evalúa, en este contexto, la obra de Valle-Inclán, Pérez de Ayala, Unamuno, Machado y C. J. Cela).

Según me parece, la respuesta no puede residir en hallar ciertos criterios ideales sobre lo que el mundo es capaz de asimilar de la literatura española. (Aunque lo hayan intentado). Cambia el lector, cambian sus códigos, ya estrechándose, ya ampliándose. A principios de este siglo, por ejemplo, la literatura costumbrista española "se dejaba" leer perfectamente en Europa, y nunca puede descartarse otra subida del interés por ella.

Por otro lado, el lector moderno dispone de códigos totalmente nuevos. Mediante las claves de la literatura decimonónica -del realismo, del naturalismo y del costumbrismo- apenas se pueden leer satisfactoriamente los textos de la Generación del 98 y del 27. Y viceversa: los criterios poéticos de la Vanguardia occidental, cuya vigencia todavía se nota en la literatura universal (la reducción radical de la trama; el dominante de la escena y la imagen, abstraídas del tiempo, etc.), tendría que favorecer la recepción de autores españoles de principios de este siglo, como Azorín, Baroja, Valle-Inclán y Gómez de la Serna. Pero también es cierto que el mismo código vanguardista, poco a poco, parece "desgastarse".

Por lo general, la intervención excesivamente brusca de los acontecimientos vitales en la cultura forman un trasfondo para la debilitación del código intelectual (y, a menudo, filosófico). La Guerra Civil española y sus consecuencias impulsaron la dominación en la literatura española del plano de la "vida", el cual fue organizado según principios cercanos al código neorrealista. En los 60, la prosa eclipsaba a la poesía.

Demasiado breve ha sido el tiempo de la lectura del neorrealismo, para conclusiones más definitivas. Sin embargo, otra vez parecen mantener su postura interliteraria las obras en las que sus autores (Cela, García Hortelano; el dramaturgo Buero Vallejo; la prosista catalana Rodoreda, entre otros) han sabido integrar el subcódigo filosófico-simbolista. El vínculo de la condición concreta histórico-existencial con el mensaje filosófico podría ser uno de los factores que en la poesía catalana de la posguerra ha hecho destacar la obra de Salvador Espriu.

Aun más complicado sería evaluar la etapa novísima, pos-modernista de la literatura, la del último cuarto del siglo XX, en que los códigos existencialistas se han aflojado, mientras que más que nunca antes la literatura ha sido sometida a los códigos intelectuales de la lectura crítica. Por otro lado también la lectura crítica misma se ve dirigida por el mercado mundial que introduce en ella los esquemas de oferta y demanda de la cultura masiva.

El tiempo continúa su trabajosa tarea de lectura. De sus impresiones nos revela solamente una parte, dejando la otra parte escondida en sí mismo...

Notas

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The Reception of American Literature in Estonia

JAAK RÄHESOO

Every influential culture has always caused envy and suspicion outside its boundaries. Its spreading is seen as a form of aggression, and mechanisms of self-defense automatically start working. So it is no wonder that American culture has aroused so much antagonism in the twentieth century. In the case of Estonia, however, it is still a theoretical problem, though it may rapidly become a real one now. As representatives of a small and young culture, the Estonians are naturally wary of foreign influence, but so far their attention has been focused elsewhere. Since the subjugation of Estonia by German crusaders in the thirteenth century, German culture had been dominant in the country, and it was in opposition to that dominance that the Estonian national awakening of the middle of the nineteenth century created its own culture. Then in the 1880's the sudden and brutal Russification policy of the tsarist government brought a new influence and threat. In that early phase, covering the whole of the second half of the century, the Estonian culture was still undifferentiated and unsophisticated. There was a small group of intellectuals, mostly schoolmasters and journalists, who led the national movement, but there were no indigenous higher classes. So the new Estonian culture was largely a popular culture that grew up from among the masses of peasants and lower middle class townspeople, and the influences it absorbed usually came from the sphere of international popular culture. In literature it meant a mass of translations (or adaptations, rather) of sentimental romances and adventure stories. Among them were books dealing with life in America.

The image they established in the minds of Estonian readers was of a wild country, of unlimited opportunities and reckless adventures — a country inhabited mostly by cowboys and goldhunters and a few beautiful ladies to be rescued from the hands of unscrupulous villains. Most of these stories were written by Europeans who at best had had a limited experience of America, but the conventions of the genre made it of little importance. Works by *bona fide* Americans, however, also started to arrive. A portion of that most popular best-seller of the nineteenth century, Harriet Beecher Stowe's *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, appeared as early as 1870, and a fuller version was translated in 1901. Another great favorite, Lewis Wallace's *Ben-Hur*, was printed in 1888–89 and again in 1901. The first adaptations of Cooper's Leatherstocking Tales were made in 1880. Of the more creditable novels of the Wild West, Bret Harte's *Gabriel Conroy* came out in 1900. The only notable exception outside the circle of romance and adventure was the comic genius of Mark Twain, whose influence is clearly discernible in the humorous stories of the first important Estonian novelist, Eduard Vilde.

By the time of the abortive revolution of 1905 a new, more ambitious and discriminating generation made its way. Its nucleus was the group *Noor-Eesti* (Young Estonia). Though the Estonian literature had barely mastered the lessons of European Realism, they already ventured into the esoteric domains of the then fashionable Neo-Romanticism and Symbolism. Their other main aim was a conscious turning away from the hitherto dominant German and Russian influence toward French and Scandinavian inspirations. The English-speaking world was still a peripheral concern, and the only American author they seemed to be interested in was Edgar Allan Poe. That was a Poe seen through the eyes of Baudelaire and the French Symbolists, who had made him one of their fore-runners — a proto-Decadent, a *poète maudit*, a lonely figure not only on the American scene, but in the whole modern world. The prime champion of Poe in Estonia was the great language reformer Johannes Aavik. From 1917 till 1937 he published a number of Poe selections, and the influence of Poe can be guessed behind the phantastic stories of Friedebert Tuglas or August Gailit, though there is no question of direct imitation.

With World War I America came to Europe, and the US economic aid was an important factor in the establishment of an independent Republic of Estonia in 1918. In the field of culture, however, America was primarily seen as a source of low-quality mass entertainment. Hollywood films and early forms of jazz quickly became popular, but they were frowned upon by the high-brows, and so were the Tarzan stories or Martian phantasies of Edgar Rice Burroughs or the Westerns of Zane Grey. "Roughing it" was still regarded as the quintessential American experience, and though the image of the prairies was beginning to be replaced by that of industrial jungles, e. g. in the muck-raking novels of Upton Sinclair, a desperate struggle for survival remained their governing theme. Indeed it reached an apotheosis in the immense popularity of the novels and stories of Jack London. It was a phenomenon that almost bridged the gap between the high-brow and low-brow spheres of culture: the best of his Alaskan or South Sea or animal tales had a universal appeal, and it is surprising how many Estonian intellectuals who grew up in the inter-war period have mentioned his autobiographical novel *Martin Eden* (translated in 1928) as a formative influence. Mostly of humble origins, they could easily identify with its self-made-man hero in his upward struggle; and it is also significant that they all ignored or rejected the pessimistic end of the novel — Martin Eden's suicide.

Nowadays we speak of the inter-war period as the classic time of American literature. But the Estonian reception, with its interest in Jack London and Upton Sinclair, lagged a whole generation behind and an awareness of the more recent and extremely rapid developments had not yet penetrated. Had it done, it could even have influenced the course of the Estonian novel, as our writers would surely have found a number of common interests with their American contemporaries. After all, the appeal of Jack London, with the exception of *Martin Eden*, was still the romantic one of exoticism, of total otherness. His Alaska or South Sea islands were exciting because they were so different from one's own surroundings. The spiritual quests of the Lost Generation or the social concerns of the American thirties, on the contrary, had their Estonian equivalents. In the prevailing circumstances, however, a growing knowledge of English usually fostered a British cultural

orientation. The case of Ants Oras, a leading poetry translator, critic, anthologist, and professor of English at Tartu University, was typical. Though his early translations included a selection of Edgar Allan Poe's poetry (1931), he later ignored the American scene and concentrated on the British one. His articles on the latter in various literary magazines show an enviable understanding of the newest and most significant trends, which at the time were still a matter of controversy in England, and his competence is also evident in his selection of British books for the university library or in his contributions to the Estonian Encyclopedia (1932–1937). By comparison, both the American section of the library and the corresponding articles in the Encyclopedia were much more inadequate. Among Oras' constant enthusiasms was T. S. Eliot, and his English-language study *The Critical ideas of T. S. Eliot* (Tartu, 1932) was one of the first booklength academic treatments of the subject, but he always discussed Eliot in a British context.

It is not surprising, then, that the only serious attempt at a representative anthology of American literature came not from the ranks of the literary "establishment", but was undertaken in 1928 by an amateur, Andres Pranspill, who had lived for years in America and become a champion of its ideals and way of life. Unfortunately his amateur status was also reflected in the quality of his translations. As to contemporary authors, the only incentive that could arouse the interest of an Estonian publishing house in an American writer was the Nobel prize. And Sinclair Lewis' *Main Street* (translated in 1937), *Babbitt* (1935), and *Arrowsmith* (1938) seemed to confirm the entrenched view of the spiritual bleakness of America, while another Nobel laureate, Pearl Buck, was mainly valued for her depictions of Chinese life, and the third, Eugene O'Neill, was just starting to make his appearance on the Estonian stage. Of the other important writers not yet crowned with the Nobel prize, Hemingway's *A Farewell to Arms* is almost the only noteworthy translation (1937).

Had Estonia remained free and independent, a wave of what the French came to call *l'âge du roman américain* would surely have reached us after World War II, as it did other European countries. But the Soviet occupation in 1940 cut us off from those developments. And the Stalinist regime entered its most xenophobic and

intellectually arid phase after the war. Remembering well the historic lesson of the victorious Russian armies returning with subversive Western ideas from the Napoleonic battles, it did everything to avoid a repetition of that experience. Practically the whole modern Western literature was labeled "bourgeois decadence" and strictly excluded. There were one or two authors in each country, almost invariably members of the local Communist Party, who represented "progressive forces". In the United States it was Howard Fast, who was later completely unpersoned when he slammed the Party door during the Hungarian uprising of 1956. And the classics fared little better: they, too, had to be rigidly divided into "progressive" or "reactionary" camps. The number of those belonging to the former was quite limited. Besides, they usually had to be ideologically bowdlerized, the less palatable aspects of their work being passed over in silence. So the canon of American literature was reduced to such partial versions of Mark Twain, Jack London, and Theodore Dreiser, with good old Uncle Tom standing for the continuing plight of the blacks. These names share among themselves the dozen or so titles of American literature published in Estonia during the dark post-war decade. The classics were mostly re-issues of earlier translations. Dreiser's *An American Tragedy* was the only important new addition (1955), followed by a selection of his stories (1956) and *Sister Carrie* (1960) later.

After Stalin's death in 1953 things started to change for the better, but it was a slow process. And as publishing house plans still needed a stamp of approval from Moscow, only books translated into Russian had any hope of appearing in Estonian as well. So the decade from 1955 to 1965 continued to reflect on a reduced scale Russian preferences and enthusiasms. The first American author to achieve prominence in translations now was Hemingway. Indeed no other foreign writer became the kind of cult figure in the Soviet Union of the 1960's. Reproductions of his well-known old-age portrait, with beard and pullover, could be seen everywhere. And though the Hemingway mania never reached the same intensity in Estonia as it did in Russia, a number of his books were translated between 1957 and 1965, and traces of his idiosyncratic, laconic style can be detected in the short stories

of the younger Estonian writers of the period. The one important Hemingway book that still had to wait was his novel of the Spanish civil war, *For Whom the Bell Tolls*. A Russian translation had long been circulating in clandestine typescripts all over the Soviet Union until it was finally published in 1968, so an Estonian translation could follow in 1970. And while even Soviet censorship could not be overstaffed to the extent of checking regularly whether all the cuts and modifications made in Russian translations were also adhered to in Estonian ones, in the case of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* there were explicit orders from Moscow to do so. And the censors perfectly managed to prove the Russian saying *Tsensura — dura* (Censorship is idiocy), already popular in tsarist times, true again. When, for example, it was said in the novel about the Russian journalist Kashkin that he “smiled through his broken teeth”, the broken teeth were dropped in Russian and the honor of Soviet journalists (or dentists) had to be maintained in Estonian, as well.

The only other writer who became a more than casual presence on the Estonian bookshelves was John Steinbeck. A translation of *The Pearl* in 1957 was followed by *The Winter of Our Discontent*, *Travels with Charley*, and *The Grapes of Wrath* in 1963–64, doubtlessly helped again by the Nobel prize of 1962. It is probably symptomatic of the Estonian reception of the time that the social realism and rhetoric of *The Grapes of Wrath* found less response than the more retrospective *The Winter of Our Discontent*. Three Steinbeck novels, *Tortilla Flat*, *The Moon Is Down*, and *Cannery Row*, were put out by an Estonian publishing house in Canada in the 1960's. But the tragic separation of the home and exile branches of post-war Estonian culture allowed only a few copies to pass through Soviet customs checks. In the field of translations the exile contribution, so fruitful in some other artistic areas, has on the whole been negligible, being mostly restricted to re-issues of pre-war favorites. From the end of the 1960's the exile publishing houses have almost exclusively printed Estonian authors.

At home in Estonia the next decade, from 1965 to 1975, was actually the most favorable time for Western literature during the whole period of Soviet occupation. It may seem surprising in view of the slowly growing repression after the removal from power of

Nikita Khrushchev in 1964, and especially after the crushing of the Prague Spring in 1968. But the erosion of the Soviet system had already begun, and at first the authorities had enough trouble with direct political dissent. So in some domains of culture the liberal tendencies of the previous decade could still continue. Also, regional differences of approach were emerging. In Estonia the then leadership of the Party chose to ignore the less dangerous Western influences, and avant-garde trends in all arts, like abstract painting or even the latest fads of pop-art, were quietly tolerated. In translations, a way had been found around the Moscow control by founding a weekly magazine, *Loomingu Raamatukogu* (The Looming Library) at the monthly of the Estonian Writers' Union, the *Looming*. As periodical publications were censored locally and the local censors were happily ignorant of world literature, many authors still unaccepted in Moscow could now appear in Tallinn. All these factors contributed to a much greater awareness of and response to Western developments, which characterized the radical changes in Estonian arts. A new and more sophisticated generation had definitely arrived.

It was in this decade that the Estonian literary consciousness finally caught up, be it only partially, with contemporary American scene. And images of an earlier simplicity, which to a certain extent dominate even the work of Hemingway and Steinbeck, were replaced by an overall impression of enormous variety and complexity. Among the authors who helped to effect that alteration were Edward Albee, Isaac Asimov, James Baldwin, Donald Barthelme, Ray Bradbury, Truman Capote, John Cheever, Scott Fitzgerald, Joseph Heller, Bernard Malamud, Carson McCullers, Arthur Miller, Irwin Shaw, John Updike, Gore Vidal, Thornton Wilder. Most of them were represented by one or two titles only, so they were not so much individual forces as parts of a wider current. Four names ought to be mentioned as rising above the current. First, William Faulkner, who was at last introduced by translations of *As I Lay Dying*, *The Sound and the Fury*, and *The Bear* between 1971 and 1974, and a multivolume selection of whose work, started in 1980, is still in progress. His advanced narrative techniques certainly influenced the growing complication of the Estonian novel. Second, Saul Bellow, whose *Seize the Day*,

Herzog, and *Mr. Sammler's Planet*, translated between 1968 and 1973, long preceded his Moscow publications and this time came even before his Nobel prize of 1976. Bellow was one of the names most frequently mentioned as favorite authors of Estonian writers in the 1970's; obviously his intellectual stature had impressed them. Two other authors created smaller but constant and devoted audiences. One was J. D. Salinger, whose *Catcher in the Rye*, translated in 1961, came sufficiently early, when his cult was still alive in the West, and a larger volume of 1973, comprising most of his four published books, helped to consolidate his reputation. The other was Kurt Vonnegut, three of whose books were published in the 1970's.

By the middle of the 1970's ideological screws had been tightened. The proportion of Soviet literature in all translations, which around 1970 made up about one third of the titles, was again brought to nearly 60%. The rest of world literature of all ages and countries had to find room within the remaining 40%. The *Looming Library* was subjected to both stricter local control and Moscow supervision and ceased to play the role it had done. So the decade from 1975 till 1985 offers a much more desolate picture. Some new names continued to appear though, like Richard Brautigan, Joyce Carol Oates, Flannery O'Connor, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Joan Didion, E. L. Doctorow, Ursula Le Guin, each represented by a single book, in the case of Oates, O'Connor, and Singer small selections of short stories. Also, a more representative selection of Tennessee Williams' plays was published in 1976. But by that time a larger English-reading public had been created, and though American editions were hard to obtain, the ones that reached Estonia usually passed from hand to hand. So the underground reputations of, say, Henry Miller, Norman Mailer, or John Barth were growing.

The coming of the Gorbachev *perestroika* in 1985, an open resurgence of national aspirations in 1987, and the re-establishment of Estonian independence in 1991 have all brought about enormous changes. We have come through a turbulent period after long years of suppression and stagnation, or perhaps we are still within the turbulence, certainly within a period of transition. But in contrast to our cinemas or pop music market, which quickly

became inundated with (unfortunately second-, third- or nth-rate) American products, the same process took a longer time in book publishing. When censorship was lifted during the *perestroika*, the first reaction was to print as quickly as possible books hitherto banned for political reasons, because there was always the fear that repression might clamp down at any moment. And there was a wide choice between what had been banned: authors and titles from our own national heritage, almost the whole of the exile branch of our literature; and among books to be translated, titles like *Brave New World*, 1984, or *The Gulag Archipelago*. American literature had relatively little to offer to that first wave.

Later publishing interests widened to books previously excluded for so-called moral reasons. So Nabokov's *Lolita* came out in 1990, and Henry Miller's *Tropic of Cancer* in 1992. But otherwise the trickle of serious American literature has continued at almost its previous pace, adding single titles by such new names in fiction as John Gardener, Raymond Carver, Bobbie Ann Mason, or Alison Lurie, poetry selections of Emily Dickinson and Sylvia Plath, and reinforcements to the already established presence of Faulkner, Fitzgerald, Wilder, McCullers, Bellow, Brautigan, Asimov, Singer. Notable additions to earlier classics are Thoreau's *Walden* and Edith Wharton's *The Age of Innocence*.

The main problem at present is the economic one. The old system has collapsed and a new one is taking shape. There is poverty everywhere. Books were among the articles that used to be quite cheap in the Soviet Union. Now they are relatively more expensive (i. e. compared to incomes) than in the West, and a large section of former buyers has been lost. We used to boast of editions of serious literature running into 30,000 or 40,000 copies; now the figures have come down to a couple of thousand. The monopoly of practically a single big publishing house for fiction, *Eesti Raamat*, has been broken, but the small private companies that have rushed into the opening are usually making their money with light entertainment. Until recently they were enjoying the conditions of a piratic honeymoon, issuing even brand-new best-sellers, like Alexandra Ripley's *Scarlett*. The new copyright laws have put an end to that, but in themselves they are hardly promising for quality books. Rather, the new firms will stick even

more tenaciously to the proven successes of popular market. And with translators' royalties trailing behind the more regular incomes many able people have been forced into other jobs or have to prefer the easier renderings of mass literature.

It is in this context that the spectre of "Americanization" has started looming. We know that in the Scandinavian countries books from English make up around 80% of all translations. If so, then we seem to be rushing from the Soviet frying-pan into the Anglo-American fire. But the bulk of that 80% is mass literature, and I for one do not see much difference in where the trash comes from — it will be trash anyway. About a hundred years ago we imported it mainly from Germany, in the form of robber novels like *Rinaldo Rinaldini* by Goethe's father-in-law, Christian August Vulpius, or the ultra-sentimental romances of Marlitt and Courths-Mahler. Then in the inter-war period the market was mostly supplied by British who-done-its. In the Soviet publishing system there was very little room for "mere" entertainment; its role had to be fulfilled by such nineteenth-century authors as Scott, Hugo, Dumas, Cooper, Jules Verne, whose novels had a sufficient adventure element. And if they will be replaced now by American thrillers, the problem is not that those thrillers are American. The problem is how to keep the branch of serious literature alive and, if possible, growing. That includes a fair proportion of serious American literature. We are still learning to address that problem and will certainly need all international experience to handle it. And it is difficult to say when our book market will reach anything approaching "normality". Predictions for our overall economic recovery vary from five to fifty years, and I do not have a personal forecast. The task is to try the best we can.

The other main task, as I see it, is putting the already existing bulk of American translations to greater intellectual use. Though the title of my essay is "The Reception of American Literature in Estonia", I have written of translations only. The reason is that other forms of reception, at least in printed varieties, are at a rudimentary stage. Till the end of the 1960's most translations were supplemented with fore- or afterwords by Russian critics, and they were deadly dull and very one-sided, to put it mildly. Later, Estonian translators started to write the fore- or afterwords

themselves, but those were often very short. And there was little response to these translations by way of reviews or other critical reactions, as there were only a few cultural magazines and they could barely cover the domain of Estonian literature. Now a number of new periodicals have cropped up, and though they are all teetering on the brink of survival, additional outlets for critical evaluation have thus been provided. We need to integrate the translations already made and those to come into meaningful contexts — both a wider American or world context and our own specific Estonian context which they will enter. And I am quite sure there is a young and intellectually alert audience for that sort of discussion.

“Grenzland”. Ein estnisches Leitmotiv im Werk Edzard Schapers

LIINA LUKAS

Eines der Forschungsgebiete in den deutsch-estnischen Literaturbeziehungen ist die thematische Widerspiegelung Estlands in der deutschen Literatur. Eine wesentliche Forschungsquelle dabei ist natürlich die deutschbaltische Literatur, deren bekannteste Namen Theodor Hermann Pantenius, Eduard von Keyserling, Siegfried von Vegesack, Otto von Taube und Werner Bergengruen sind. Jedoch hat Estland nicht nur das Interesse der aus dem Baltikum stammenden Autoren erweckt. Es sind immer die sogenannten “Wahlesten” gewesen, die Anregungen für ihr Schaffen gerade aus Estland geschöpft haben. Neben der Finnin Aino Kallas sind die wichtigsten von ihnen der Deutsche Paul Fleming und der leider in Estland noch wenig bekannte Edzard Schaper.

Edzard Schaper ist ein bekannter deutscher Schriftsteller, in dessen Schaffen estnische Themen häufig auftreten, und zwar nicht nur in seinem belletristischen Werk. Die Esten verdanken ihm viele Artikel und Essays, in denen er die sowjetische Okupation und das Schweigen der westlichen Welt verurteilt¹. Im Jahre 1908 in Posen (jetzt Poznan) an der damaligen deutsch-russischen Grenze geboren, ist er im Jahre 1930 nach Estland gekommen, hat hier eine Deutsch-

¹ Essay's: *Aufstieg und Untergang der baltischen Staaten, Auch wir sind Europa!*; Vorträge: “Die baltische Länder in Geistigen Spektrum Europas (*Baltische Kulturtage in Zürich*, 9. V. 1964), “Osteuropa als geistige Landschaft” (*Baltische Kulturtage*, 22. II. 1961), “Baltische Lande und baltisches Volkstum im Bewusstsein der Deutschen” (*Baltische Kulturtage in Bremen*, 12. X. 1957).

baltin aus Reval, Alice Pergelbaum, geheiratet und hier sein ganzes Leben zu verbringen gehofft. Schaper sah Estland als seine geistige Heimat an. Estland ist für ihn vor allem ein Grenzland, sowohl im geographischen, kulturellen als auch religiösen Sinne, der Berührungspunkt zweier Kulturen, ewiges Spannungsfeld der lateinischen und griechischen Kirche, die Grenze zwischen West und Ost.

Schapers Grenzlandskonzept

Schapers Interesse fürs Estland ist kein Zufall. Er interessiert sich dafür, soweit Estland zu einem grösseren Gebiet gehört, das Schaper als Grenzzone bezeichnet. So nennt Schaper ganz Osteuropa, dessen Grenze sich praktisch unmöglich genau festzustellen lässt. Das ist laut Schaper “jene Zone, die hinter dem ostdeutschen Gebiet in dem Siedlungsgebiet der westslawischen und der baltischen Völker liegt. Es wäre also das Gebiet, das einmal die Staaten Estland, Lettland, Litauen, Polen, die Ukraine, nach Süden hin die Karpaten-Ukraine und dann weiterhin auch noch die Völker und Staatsgebilde im Donaubecken umfasst” (Schaper 1961: 3). “Leben könnte man eigentlich nur östlich der Weichsel und südlich der Sudeten”, hat Schaper einmal gesagt (Schaper 1961: 2). Das Geheimnis dieser “Durchdringungsgebiet der verschiedensten Völkerschaft” liegt laut Schaper darin, dass “in allen ihren Länder und vornehmlich in den baltischen Staaten, die auf der Schwelle zwischen Ost und West lagen, alles, was die Vielfältigkeit der ganzen Geschichte Osteuropas als einer Brücke zwischen Ost und West oder als einer Zone der Entscheidung seit Jahrhunderten geformt hatte, immer noch lebendig und gegenwärtig war” (Schaper 1961: 2). Erst dort beginnen auch die Wunder, wie sie Schaper in einer Novelle (*Weltuntergang auf Dagö*) darstellt.

Schaper ist selbst in diesem Gebiet geboren, zwischen den zwei Grossstaaten (Russland–Deutschland), den zwei Konfessionen (katholisch–protestantisch), im Schnittpunkt zweier Nationen (Polen–Deutschland). Entlang dieser Grenze ist er weitergewandert, immer nach Norden, bis er mit einem kleinen Ring durch Skandinavien Estland gelangte und hier am deutlichsten diesen Dualismus von Ost und West entdeckte. Eben darin besteht für Schaper die estnische

Besonderheit. Eben hier befindet sich die Grenze zwischen Ost und West, die der Fluss Narwa eindrucksvoll markiert: "Nirgends hat Europa sich so sinnfällig von Nichteuropa abgehoben wie in Estland an den Ufern der Narwe, wo Hermannsfeste und Iwangorod sich gegenüber lagen; /---/ nirgends auf der Welt ist Glanz, Grösse und Tragik Europas von so wenigen Menschen in der Menschheitsgeschichte auf so kleinem Raum vorgelebt und vorgelitten worden wie in den baltischen Landen", so Schaper in seinem Essay *Auch wir sind Europa* (Schaper 1956: 54). Eben hier fühlt er sich zu Hause: "...in Estland fand ich alles wieder: Norden und Osten, eine meiner "Heimat" im herkömmlichen Sinne täuschend ähnliche Welt, in der mir dann im Laufe eines Jahrzehnts alles nur täuschend Ähnliche mit dem stillen, unmerklichen Prozess eigenen Lebens /---/ zur Wahrheit und Gleichheit und zur vollen Identität zwischen Mensch und Welt werden sollte" (Schaper 1968b: 85). Also ein "Wahleste" — ist eine von der ersten Selbstbestimmungen Schapers.

Die Grenze, die Grenzsituation, das Grenzland — die sind zentrale Begriffe im Schapers Schaffen. Schon die Titel seiner Werke bezeichnen eine Grenzsituation, eine Paradoxalität (*Freiheit des Gefangenen, Untergang und Verwandlung, Stern über der Grenze, Die Macht der Ohnmächtigen*). Seine Grenzsymbolik kann man auf drei Ebenen verstehen — als irgendeine lokale Grenze (zwischen den Staaten oder Fronten) ist sie zugleich kulturelle, nationale oder Glaubensgrenze sowie auch eine moralische — die Grenze zwischen Schuld und Sühne, Recht und Unrecht. Die dritte und wichtigste Ebene ist die imaginäre Grenze zwischen der jenseitigen und diesseitigen, irrationalen und rationalen Welt, zwischen dem wahren und scheinbaren Wesen, zwischen der Maske und dem Ich. Dieses "Ausser-sich-geraten-sein" oder "der Zustand auf der Sehne des Abgeschnellt-Werdens", wie Schaper das nennt, ist unvermeidlich, ist wesentlich für den Menschen und zwingt ihn zur Suche nach dem Gleichgewicht, der Identität (kulturellen, nationalen und religiösen).

Estland bedeutet für Schaper also vor allem Grenzstaat. Doch dieses Grenzland ist nicht dasgleiche, wie etwa ein gegenwärtiger estnischer Schriftsteller, Emil Tode, es darstellt — "traumhaft und sinnlos", das "das Gotteswort immer nur als armseliges Gemurmel erreicht hat" und "wo die Strassenbahnen die einzige Träger der

Transzendenz sind” (Tode 1993: 12). Es ist kein irrealer Staat irgendwo hinter der Grenze, wie bei Tode, es ist auf der Grenze — und die bezeichnet kein Ende oder keinen Rand, sondern eine Zwischenzone, die auf das Zentrum und auf das wahren Wesen hinweist. Erst hier erklärt sich die Doppelheit von West und Ost — hinter der russischen Klosterfrömmigkeit verbirgt sich eine bolschevistische Ungeheuerlichkeit, hinter dem deutschen Humanismus ein strengrationales, sich vernichtendes System. Die beide Welten können einander nicht entbehren. “Ganz sicher bin ich in meinem Empfinden und in meiner Auffassung, dass der Westen, seitdem es keine Polarität im Osten mehr für ihn gibt, ein Gesicht ohne Spiegelbild, eine Figur ohne Schatten ist — und umgekehrt. /---/ Ich habe Osten und Westen immer nur als Eins zusammensehen können. Was wir heute erleben, ist ein verhängnisvoller Zerfall und Verfall” (Schaper 1968: 46).

Estnische Thematik in Schapers Schaffen

Schaper hat viele Romane und Erzählungen geschrieben, in denen die estnischen Motive vorkommen. Auch später, als der Schriftsteller schon in der Schweiz lebte, blieb er im Bann der estnischen Landschaften und Menschen, die ihm Anregungen für sein Schaffen gaben. Im Unterschied zu den deutschbaltischen Schriftsteller, die im Exil die Zeit vor dem Jahre 1918 behandeln, wie Erik Thomson in seinem Werk *Estnische Literatur* (1973) konstatiert, stehen bei Schaper oft gerade die Ereignisse in den Jahren 1939–1940 im Mittelpunkt. Wenn wir Schapers Werke mit estnischer Thematik lesen, fallen seine ausführliche Kenntnisse der estnischen Geschichte und Kultur ins Auge. Dass Schaper auch mit estnischer Literatur vertraut war, zeigen seine Meinungsäußerungen darüber. Zum Beispiel empfiehlt er in der Zeitung *Rahvaleht* vom Jahre 1936 statt Tammsaare August Mälk ins Deutsche zu übersetzen. Tammsaares Roman *Wahrheit und Recht* sei wohl auf einem hohen künstlerischen Niveau, er bleibe aber als ein Bauerroman einseitig. Mälk schliesse in sich mehr nationales Element (Voitk 1936: 12).

Schapers Schaffen mit estnischer Thematik könnte man in vier Perioden einteilen:

1. die expressionistisch-nationalromantischen Werke der 30er Jahre — der Roman *Die Insel Tütarsaar* (1924), die Erzählungen *Das Lied der Väter* (1938) und *Stern über der Grenze* (1937);
2. die historischen Romane — *Der Henker* (1940), *Der Gouverneur* (1954);
3. die Romane, die Fragen der Glaubensgrenze behandeln — *Die sterbende Kirche* (1935), *Der letzte Advent* (1953), *Der Aufruhr des Gerechten* (1963);
4. die späteren Novellen — *Weltuntergang auf Dagö*, *Epitaph für einen Patrioten* (1968).

In den Werken der ersten Periode fallen die Verherrlichung der Einfachheit und der Natürlichkeit, die Suche nach dem "eigenen Boden", das Thema der nationalen Identität auf, die bei Schaper nicht so sehr Zugeständnis an die amtliche "Heimatkunstabewegung" sind, sondern die zu seinem konservativ-traditionellen Wesen gehören.

Schapers erstes Werk mit estnischer Thematik war der Roman *Die Insel Tütarsaar*, das dem Autor erste Anerkennung brachte. Das ist ein Loblied der Landschaft einer kleinen estländischen Insel und an ihr naturnahes Leben. Das Symbol dieses Idyll-Lebens ist ein Schatz, den die einzigen Bewohner dieser Insel behüten. Allein der Glaube an den Schatz kann unserem so sinnlos scheinenden Dasein einen Sinn geben, "denn wo dein Schatz ist, da ist dein Herz" (Schaper 1938: 78); dies ist das Pathos seiner ersten Werke.

Dies von Hermann Hesse viel benutzte Idee der menschlichen Pflicht, der Dienstbereitschaft, die sich ganz klar schon im *Tütarsaar* zeigt, tritt in allen Schapers Werken hervor, sei es eine Pflicht für den Geliebten, das Volk, den Staat, den Nächsten oder Gott. Im weiteren nimmt sie immer deutlicher christliche Dimensionen an.

In der Geschichte *Das Lied der Väter* steht wieder ein Sinnbild des Schatzes im Vordergrund — hier ist es eine Harfe (auf Estnisch Kannel) als Symbol der nationalen Kontinuität. Diese Geschichte spielt in einem sonderbaren Grenzland — in einem rechtgläubigen Kloster in Kuremäe. Die Grenzsituation ist doppeldeutig — das Kloster selbst befindet sich wohl in Nordostestland, 28 km entfernt von der russischen Grenze, ist aber seinem Wesen nach schon die russische Kultur. Hinzu kommt noch die Identitätssuche des Haupthelden Pilgers Makarius, — als ein ursprünglicher Est hat er sich

zwischen den Klostermauern eingeschlossen und ist auf diese Weise fern von seinem Volk geblieben.

Das Bewahren der nationalen Kontinuität, die Notwendigkeit des “eigenen Bodens”, die Verpflichtung, sich national zu identifizieren, gehören zur Hauptidee dieser Geschichte. Im Gegensatz zu dem Roman *Die Insel Tütarsaar* kommt hier statt dem Glaube und Treue dem Schatz der Verrat, der Verfall der Ideale.

Der *Stern über der Grenze* ist das einzige Werk von Schaper, das auf Estnisch veröffentlicht ist (Übersetzung von Viktor Lepik). Sein Thema ist für Schaper charakteristisch — ein einziges Haus an der Grenze zwischen Estland und der Sowjetunion, das Semjon mit seinen vier Kindern bewohnt. Schaper beobachtet hier die persönliche Tragik der Grenzbewohner, deren Schicksal von zwei feindlichen Mächten bestimmt ist. Ein legendenartiger Ton gibt der Novelle eine sonderbare Heiligkeit und Inbrunst, die jede Offenbarung glaubhaft macht.

Künstlerisch ist von diesen Werken am interessantesten der Roman *Die Insel Tütarsaar*. Der Ausdrucksweise nach handelt es sich dabei um einen expressiven symbolistischen Roman mit einem ziemlich komplizierten Aufbau, in dem Traum und Realität, Ideale und Trivialauffassungen sich mischen. Es ist wie ein Versuch, die Regeln der gewohnheitsmässigen Welt zu verletzen und sich neue, reinere zu schaffen. Jedenfalls hätte *Die Insel Tütarsaar*, ins Estnisch übersetzt, einen Platz in der estnischen Literatur verdient.

2. Von Schapers Estland-thematischen historischen Romanen ist am interessantesten der Roman *Der Henker*, der das Wesen der Strafkompagnien in Estland im Jahre 1905 behandelt. In der estnischen Literatur ist dieses Thema nicht oft behandelt worden. Mir fallen nur der dritte Teil von Tammsaares Roman *Recht und Wahrheit*, die Novellen von Aino Kallas *Bernard Riives* und *Der Tod des alten Oru*, einige Novellen von Friedebert Tuglas, der Roman von Aadu Hint *Der Strand der Winde* und das Drama von Hella Wuolijoki *Das brennende Land* ein. Erwartungsgemäss betrachten die estnischen Schriftsteller diese Ereignisse meistens vom Standpunkt eines Bauers (wie bei Kallas und Hint) oder eines estnischen Literaten (wie bei Tammsaare). Den Standpunkt der Strafkompagnien bringt nur Kallas in der Novelle *Bernard Riives* einigermaßen ins Bild.

In der deutschbaltischen Literatur hat der Aufruhr von 1905 viel mehr Aufsehen erregt. Die Existenzfrage der Deutschbalten wurde ja gerade in dieser Zeit am schärfsten aktuell. Einen ziemlich umfangreichen Versuch, die Entwicklung der nationalen und sozialen Spannungen und ihren Höhepunkt im Aufstand von 1905 darzustellen, macht Siegfried von Vegesack in seiner Romantrilogie *Die baltische Tragödie*, wo hauptsächlich doch der Gesichtswinkel der hiesigen Deutschen vorherrscht.

Edzard Schaper entwirft hingegen ein breites Panorama. Er versucht alle Interessen zu beschreiben, die diese Ereignisse betreffen — sowohl die der Grundbesitzer (der Deutschbalten), der Machthaber-Richter (Strafkompanie) als auch die der Bauern. Der Roman beruht auf historischen Tatbeständen. Schaper sagte selbst in einem Interview für die estnische Zeitung *Rahvaleht* im Jahre 1940, dass er die Archivmaterialien eingehend erforscht und sich bei der Betrachtung dieser Ereignisse vor allem für solche national-psychologischen Gründe interessiert habe, die später zur Selbständigkeit führten. In dem Essay *Aufstieg und Untergang der baltischen Staaten* staunt Schaper: "wie konnte dieses von allen Seiten bedrohtes Volk ohne das zahlenmässigen starken Bürgertum seine eigene Republik zu schaffen, und das "ohne die Hilfsmittel einer internationalen Solidarität des Westens, ohne Marshallplan und Kreditbeihilfen zur Förderung zurückgebliebener Gebiete", einzig und allein aus der Vitalität eines ungebrochenen Volkstums heraus" (Schaper 1956: 22).

Im Roman kann man 10-seitige Rückblicke auf die estnische Geschichte finden, bis zur Herrschaft des Zaren Alexander I., bis zu den ersten Freiheitserhebungen der Esten. Schon seit dem Beginn der religiösen Sendung der Kreuzzritter hier im Marienland hat die Geschichte und das Selbstbefinden der Deutschbalten grosse Aufmerksamkeit auf sich gelenkt. Im Roman widerspiegeln sich die wichtigsten historischen Ereignisse dieser Zeit — die Wahlen, der Zusammentritt und das Fiasko der russischen Duma im Jahre 1906, die Wirkung der Stolypins Agrarpolitik auf das Baltikum, die Vorbereitung des neuen Grundgesetzes der Ostseeprovinzen, die Schlagworte von der liberalen Richtung, in deren Schatten eine reaktionärere und konservativere Politik als jemals zuvor gemacht

wurde. Schaper hat die Gesinnungen und Gegensätze in der damaligen baltischen Gesellschaft ziemlich gut wahrgenommen.

Im Werk stossen drei Interessen aufeinander:

1. Der Anspruch der Bauern, das jahrhundertslange Unrecht zu beseitigen. Dieser äusserte sich vor allem in dem Hass auf die Deutschen. Dabei darf man die Entwicklung der nationalen Bestrebungen unter den Esten und auch die Verbreitung von revolutionären Ideen nicht übersehen.

2. Die Sorge der Deutschbalten um den Verlust ihrer Sonderrechte in den Ostseeprovinzen. Daraus folgte eine Tendenz bei ihnen — sie wollten entweder ihre Herkunft und Nationalität im Namen der Karriere verleugnen und russifiziert sein, oder die Auseinandersetzungen zwischen Deutschen und Esten unterdrücken und den Russifizierungsversuchen gemeinsam Widerstand leisten. Das letztere war auch der Anspruch der Estländischen Ritterschaft.

3. Die Interessen des russischen Kaisers, der in beiden obenerwähnten Interessen ein störendes Hindernis für das einheitliche russische Imperium sah und eine völlige Russifizierung der Ostseeprovinzen beabsichtigte.

Schapers Aufmerksamkeit ist auf die Berührungspunkte zwischen den zwei ersten gerichtet. Die Ereignisse im Bauerhof Koiri und im Gutshof Drostenholm werden parallel behandelt. Als ein Deutscher und der Gatte einer Deutschbaltin versteht er auch die Ansprüche der Deutschbalten auf dieses Land gut. Die Deutschbalten sind mit Sympathie dargestellt, manchmal ist Schaper auch ein wenig ironisch: sie charakterisiert ein wesenseigener Konservatismus, dessen Devise war — “Es bleibe beim Alten”, die ritterlichen Normen, das Pflichtgefühl, die Ansässigkeit und das immer betonte Ehrgefühl. Sie hielten alles für richtig, was auf “gut baltische Art” war, und ihr Grundsatz war: “nicht ausserordentlich, sondern ordentlich”. Deswegen fielen sie auch nicht durch besonderen Verstand in die Augen (Schaper 1940: 653). Ihr Denken und Fühlen war von der Mission, Herr zu sein, bestimmt. Die Summe ihrer Politik war — ausharren, und die Rechtfertigung ihrer Existenz — die Liebe zu diesem Land. Natürlich machten sie sich Sorgen um ihre Sonderrechte, die einerseits von der russischen Kolonialpolitik, andererseits von den um ihre Rechte kämpfenden Esten bedroht

waren. Zugleich begannen sie zu verstehen, dass man mit den Esten in diesem Land immer mehr rechnen muss.

Neben den Beschreibungen der deutschbaltischen Sitten, Lebensweise und Gutshöfe beschreibt Schaper mit dergleichen Sachkenntnis auch die Verrichtungen und Lebensgewohnheiten im Bauerhof Koiri. Es handelt sich um Sitten und Bräuche des St.-Georg-Tages, des Johannis-Tages und um die Vorbereitungen für Weihnachten. Schaper hat die Esten nicht idealisiert. Der estnische Literatenstand war klein, und natürlich fiel es dem Landvolk schwer, sich in diesem politischen Kaleidoskop zu orientieren. Aber der Meinung des Autors nach gab es schon damals solche, die imstande waren, eine Idee der Selbständigkeit in sich zu tragen.

Kurz zusammenfassend die Fabula des Romans:

Der Roman spielt an der Grenze zwischen Livland und Estland, im Gutshof Drostenholm, wo, wie in vielen baltischen Gutshöfen des Jahres 1905, die Gutsherren von den sich erhebenden Bauern getötet wurden. Um das Unrecht zu rächen, wird eine Strafkompagnie aus Sankt-Petersburg unter der Leitung eines Deutschbalten, des Grafen von Ovelacker entsandt. Dieser verurteilt zwei Söhne des Bauers Koiri zum Tode, die eigentlich unschuldig sind. Das Ereignis wird ihn sein ganzes Leben lang begleiten und zwingt ihn, über die Grenze zwischen Recht und Unrecht, über Schuld und Sühne nachzudenken.

In der Mitte des Romans ist ein gedankliches Duell zwischen Ovelacker und dem Koiri-Bauern dargestellt, zwischen dem Richter und dem Verurteilten, das zuletzt zur Versöhnung, zur Erlösung führt. Hinzu kommen noch die Identitätsprobleme von Ovelacker — einerseits als ein Deutschbalte, andererseits als ein zarentreuer Offizier des russischen Reiches steht er im Spannungsfeld beider Pflichten und entscheidet sich zuletzt für seine Herkunft. Deshalb ist *Der Henker* doch ein deutschbaltischer Roman. Ungeachtet des mächtigen Parallelhauptideen stehen das Denken und Fühlen von Ovelacker dem Autor näher. Es handelt sich um einen Versuch, Deutschbaltentum (das wieder eine sonderbare Zwischenzone ist und immer um seine Identität, um "seinen Platz unter der Sonne" kämpfen muss), das während der estnischen Republik in Ungunst stand, zu rehabilitieren. Das wohl mit einer Reservation — man

muss das Selbstbestimmungsrecht der Esten in ihrem Land akzeptieren.

Zusammenfassend kann man sagen, dass es keine andere so umfangreiche literarische Darstellung des Aufruhrs vom Jahre 1905 in Estland gibt. Hier sind sehr exakt die Bewegung der Strafkompagnien, der Charakter des Aufruhrs und die Niederbrennungen der Gutshöfe geschildert. Die positivistische Darstellung der historischen Ereignisse dient bei Schaper jedoch einem höheren Ziel. Schaper versucht eine Möglichkeit zur sozialen und nationalen Aussöhnung zu finden, und die ist laut Schaper nur dann möglich, wenn sie auf der christlichen Auffassung von der Nächstenliebe beruht. Schapers Ziel ist eine christliche Lösung zu finden, die über die historische Analyse hinausgeht.

Ein weiterer umfangreicher Versuch, einen schicksalhaften Abschnitt der estnischen Geschichte, wieder am Untergangs-Vorabend einer Welt — in der Zeit des Nordkrieges —, darzustellen, ist der Roman *Der Gouverneur*. Im Roman wird wieder ein exaktes Bild von den Umständen in den Jahren 1709–1710 gegeben. Die Hauptfigur ist hier ein Mann, der in diesen Ereignissen eine wichtige Rolle spielte — der Gouverneur von Estland, Patkul. Schapers Interesse hat wieder das Schicksal dieses Landes im Spannungsfeld von Ost und West erweckt.

Auch die Romane *Am Abend der Zeit* und *Der vierte König* haben einige Berührungspunkte mit Estland (*Der vierte König* spielt stellenweise im Kloster Petschur), aber eine bemerkenswerte Entfaltung der estnischen Thematik findet man hier nicht.

Die Absicht von Schapers historischen Romanen ist nicht die Darstellung der Ereignisse um dieser Ereignisse selbst willen. Die historische Thematik bleibt im Schatten der religiösen Sinngebung. Oder wie Hubertus Neuschäffer über Schapers Romanen geschrieben hat:

“Schapers historisches Verständnis geht aus von einer christlich-mythischen, sich ewig gleichbleibenden Struktur. /---/ Geschichtliches wird dabei nicht in die Ferne des Historischen und Legendären, sondern in das Immer-Gegenwärtige transponiert. Das Strukturelle, das Parabelhafte tritt in den Vordergrund und damit allerdings auch der von der Zeit unabhängige Charakter des Buches.” (Neuschäffer 1982: 245–256).

3. Auch in Schapers Romanen mit religiöser Thematik findet sich estnische Thematik auf. In der Literaturgeschichte ist er in erster Linie als ein religiöser Schriftsteller bekannt. Schon früh interessiert er sich für Glaubensprobleme und versucht sich religiös zu identifizieren (1936 erschien sein *Das Leben Jesu*). Für das religiöse Ich Schapers ist die Ökumene charakteristisch. Auch im Glauben kann er sich nicht anders als ein "Strebender nach Grenzen" identifizieren. Sein Glaube ist ein Glaube jenseits der Konfessionen und Institutionen. Seine Religiosität ist immer mit dem Ethischen, mit dem Gesamtmenschlichen verbunden. Wenn er von der sterbenden Kirche spricht, spricht er zugleich vom Untergang aller menschlichen Werte, von dem Verfall des irdisch Verlässlichen. Der Roman *Die sterbende Kirche* enthielt den Gedanken: "Die Unterschiede zwischen den Konfessionen sind nichts anders als von Menschenhänden errichtete Mauern" (Schaper 1953b: 23, 38). Oder in der Geschichte *Die Geisterbahn*: "Nach der Kirchturmuhr allein kommt keiner in den Himmel. Aber die Gnade und die Barmherzigkeit — die haben wir" (1959a: 76). Deshalb sehen wir seine Helden oft gegen die starre Dogmatik der Kirche kämpfen.

Schaper hat einmal gesagt: "Als Katholik will ich nichts anderes sein als der letzte orthodoxe Lutheraner." (Alker 1977: 146). Er ist wohl in einer lutherischen Familie geboren, strebt aber bald immer mehr nach dem universellen Christentum; deswegen konvertiert er zur katholischen Kirche. In Estland hat er die Orthodoksie tiefer kennengelernt. Für ihn sind russische Art und Orthodoxie Synonyme:

"Ganz russische Art? Es hiess doch nur: ganz Kind einer Kirche sein, die wie keine andere auf Erden erfüllt war von dem gedanken allmenschlicher Schuld, allmenschlicher Sünde vor Gott, /---/ im Herzen ihrer Glaubenswelt war nur von dem Bewusstsein erfüllt, dass alle Menschen Gottes sündige Knechte sind" (Schaper 1953b: 145).

Schaper bewundert bei den Russen, dass ihnen Heil und Unheil noch viel näher sind als den Menschen irgendwo sonst.

Hermann Pongs hat Schapers Schaffen mit Hilfe des Strichwortes "Betroffenheit" charakterisiert, die er der modernistischen Verfremdung gegenüberstellt. Diese Betroffenheit, "wo die Seele vom Religiösen berührt wird" (Pongs 1964: 160), hat Schaper

gerade bei den Russen, aber auch bei den Esten und Litauern gefunden, denn “sie brachten eine kreatürliche Liebe zu den Menschen als Geschöpfen Gottes mit, die es im Westen nicht mehr gibt” (Pongs: 164).

Im Roman *Die sterbende Kirche* tauchten vor allem die Problemen der Orthodoxie in Estland auf. Der Roman spielt vermutlich in Paldiski. Im Hinblick auf die estnische Thematik ist hier die Beschreibung der Geschichte der Stadt Paldiski und des Zustandes der russisch-rechtgläubigen Kirche in den Anfangsjahren der Estnischen Republik zu erwähnen. Im Jahre 1928 hat man mit den Russen von der Ostgrenze Estlands ein Experiment gemacht. Zehn russische Familien wurden aus dem Grenzbezirk Petschur (Petseri) in die Umgebung der Stadt Paldiski (nahe Tallinn) unter die Esten umgesiedelt. Das Schicksal und das Bewahren ihres Glauben hat Schapers Feder inspiriert. Die Stadt Paldiski spielt im Schapers Leben und Werk eine wichtige Rolle. Er lebte in Paldiski und hat viel über ihre Geschichte und Schicksal geschrieben (z.B. in der Geschichte *Epitaph für einen Patrioten*). Der Roman enthält noch einige historische Tatsachen, wie z.B. das Töten der lutherischen und rechtgläubigen Geistlichen in einem Keller in Tartu durch die Sowjets, oder die Probleme der russisch-rechtgläubigen Kirche neben dem gottlosen Russland.

Der Roman *Der letzte Advent* ist die Fortsetzung des Romans *Die sterbende Kirche*. Die Handlung dieses Romans beginnt in Estland, im Kloster Petseri, zu dem der aus dem vorigen Roman bekannte Diakon Sabbas gekommen ist, um zu sich selbst zu gelangen. Er beschliesst nach Russland zu gehen, um die dortigen Menschen zu missionieren. In den russischen Dörfern findet er so viel echten Glauben, weil “die Ströme des Glaubens in diesem Volk sind so tief, dass sie auch in fünfzehn Jahren nicht bis auf den Grund gefrieren und erstarren können” (Schaper 1953a: 54). Sabbas' Mission musste misslingen. Das einzige, was in Hinsicht auf die Nächstenliebe noch zu tun war: — “mit dem Effekt zu sterben, den die politische Führung jeweils vorschreibt...” (Schaper 1953a: 59), auch wenn es Lüge sein sollte. Das Martyrium der Lüge scheint die einzige Weise des Martyriums in einer glaubenslosen Welt zu sein — das ist auch eine der wiederkehrenden Motive von Schaper. Dieses Martyrium ergibt sich aus der Liebe, und aus Nächstenliebe wählt er auch eine

Lüge — um auszuharren und nicht das zu eropfern, was einen Weg in eine bessere Zukunft schaffen kann.

Man kann bei diesen Romanen nur bewundern, wie gut Schaper den Wortschatz des NKVD und die sowjetische Mentalität kennt. Wahrscheinlich dank an seine Tätigkeit als UP-Korrespondent in Estland in den 30er Jahren.

Estland ist der Schauplatz auch im Roman *Der Aufruhr des Gerechten*, eigentlich ruft man das in die Erinnerung zurück, weil es sich um eine Chronik handelt. In einer kleinen Abendgesellschaft kommt das Gespräch auf das Schicksal der katholischen Priester aus Frankreich — Gaston und Pierre-Marie de Cyran — und auf ihre Missionsarbeit in Estland. Der Roman ist interessant vor allem wegen der Darstellung der politischen Ereignisse in den Jahren 1939–1940, die im Werk eine entscheidende Rolle spielen, aber auch wegen der Widerspiegelung des komplizierten religiösen Lebens in Estland, das nie die Feder des estnischen Dichters inspiriert hat.

Da es sich um eine Chronik handelt, könnte man hier auch nach der historischen Wahrheit suchen. Auf den möglichen Prototyp wusste Vello Salo hinzuweisen. Der könnte ein in den 1930er Jahren in Estland missionierender Priester Vassily (mit dem bürgerlichen Namen Charles Bourgeois) sein. Er hat im Jahre 1953 seine Lebenserinnerungen publiziert, unter dem Titel *Ma rencontre avec la Russie. Relation du Hieromoine Vassily. Narva-Esna-Tartu-Moskau, 1932–1946*, wo er einen exakten und überzeugenden Überblick über das religiösen Leben in Estland — sowohl über den Zustand der katholischen, lutherianischen als auch russisch-rechtgläubigen Kirche — gibt. Wenn man dieses Werk mit Schapers Roman zu vergleicht, kann man wohl vermuten, dass Schaper aus diesen Erinnerungen eine Inspiration geschöpft hat. Oder sind beide gleichermassen gute Realisten — in dem Verhalten und in den Beschreibungen kann man viel Ähnliches finden.

Der Zeitgeist ist vom Schaper sarkastisch eingeschätzt worden. Dort herrschte laut Schaper ein "Geschmack französisch-existentialistischer Spender-Küche", "die liberal intellektuelle akademische Jugend nährte sich aus den Giftschränken Gides, der sich potentiell giftiger gab als er war" und "Neuman und Eliot und die neuen französischen katholischen Intellektuellen waren dort noch so gut

wie unbekannt” (Schaper 1956: 56). (Hier übertreibt Schaper wohl ein wenig — Eliot war in den 30er Jahren in Estland bekannt — unser Literaturwissenschaftler Ants Oras hat über ihn viel geschrieben.) Doch eine Gleichgültigkeit im geistigen, besonders im religiösen Leben hat auch Priester Vassily erwähnt. Die Spannungen und Auseinandersetzungen beherrschten auch das religiöse Leben — zwischen der römisch-katholischen und russischen Kirche, aber auch unter den Rechtgläubigen. Besonders sind hier die nationalen Spannungen zwischen den estnischen und russischen Rechtgläubigen zu erwähnen. Die katholische Kirche in Estland in den 30er Jahren war noch in der Entstehungsphase. Das Verhalten der Esten dazu war laut Vassily abschätzig — es war eine Religion der Polen. Jedoch arbeiteten hier einige katholische Missionare. Pater Vassily war nach Estland gekommen, um für den unierten slawischen Ritus der römisch-katholischen Kirche zu missionieren. Sein wahrer Anspruch war die Union der katholischen Kirche, einheitliches Christentum unter einem universalen Dach.

Eine solche Idee hatte auch Pierre-Marie de Cyran in Schapers Roman. Das Hauptproblem des Romans ist die Kluft zwischen der kirchlichen Dogmatik, der sogenannten “Weisheit der Kirche”, und dem echten tiefen Glauben.

Eine wichtige historische Person in diesem Roman ist auch der Erzbischof von Estland Eduard Profittlich, der auch Vassiliy's Tätigkeit unterstützte. In dem Roman wird er zu einem Verbündeten des Haupthelden. Er überzeugt sich von dem Martyrium seiner Tat — Pierre-Marie weigert sich, nach der sowjetischen Besetzung das Land zu verlassen, weil er seine Aufgabe darin sieht, gerade jetzt weiter für den Glauben zu kämpfen. Schaper lässt den Bischof seinen aufrührerischen Priester in Sibirien in einem Straflager zu begegnen. Das ist schon Schapers Fiktion.

Einen wesentlichen Hintergrund dabei bilden die politischen Spannungen, die mit dem sowjetischen Ultimatum im Jahre 1940 explodierten. Plötzlich war das ganze Grenzland in die Grenzsituation geraten, das Gleichgewicht war zerstört und das Geschehene war ein Untergang, ein “ausser-sich-geraten-sein” für ganzes Europa. “Die Grenze war nun etwas anderes geworden als früher: wie das Ende einer Welt. /---/ Jetzt gab es kein Hinüber mehr, /---/ von dem man sicher zurückkehren konnte und würde. /---/ Wir

waren so wie die Salatpflanzen in Garten, denen die Maulwurfsgrille die Wurzeln abgefressen hatte und die welken und eingehen mussten. Denn unsere Wurzeln gingen ja über die Grenze hinüber..." (Schaper 1962: 12). So beschreibt Schaper den Zustand des litauischen Jungen Oskar in dem Roman *Die Geschichte eines Bären, der Oskar hiess*, aber es bezeichnet auch die Situation ganz Europas. Er selbst konnte lange Zeit nicht mehr schreiben. Nach vielen Jahren in der Schweiz erlangte der Dichter wieder einen für das Dichten notwendige Seelenzustand.

4. Auch in vielen späteren Kurzgeschichten kann man estnische Thematik finden. In seinem Erzählungsband *Schichsale und Abenteuer* (1968) finden wir vier Erzählungen, in denen estnische Motive vorkommen: *Weltuntergang auf Dagö*, *Epitaph für einen Patrioten*, *Das feindselige Glück* und *Brief eines hauptstädtischen jungen Herrn an seine alte Mutter im Gouvernement Estland*. In den beiden letzteren sind nur die Allusionen bzw. indirekten Beziehungen in dieser Hinsicht zu erwähnen.

In den Kurzgeschichten erscheint ein bis jetzt noch ein wenig auf dem Hintergrund gebliebenes Merkmal in Schapers Schaffen — freundlicher Humor, dem ein wenig Ironie und das Lächeln nicht fehlt, aber sie sind nie sarkastisch oder überspannt. Hier ist schon die schweizerische Kurzgeschichtentradition zu erkennen — Schaper hat doch vom Jahre 1949 bis 1984, also bis seinem Tod in der Schweiz gelebt..

Eine solche humorige Erzählhaltung und der archaisierende, ein wenig chronikähnlicher Erzählstil charakterisieren die Geschichte *Weltuntergang auf Dagö*.

Ein Motiv dieser Geschichte hat Schaper aus einer ostelbischen Sage genommen, wonach die Wunder erst hinter der Weichsel beginnen. Damit ist auch das Gerücht verbunden, wonach der Weltuntergang nur im Estnischen Staatsanzeiger angezeigt werde. Der Mann, der dieses Gerücht verbreitete, war ein Petroleumhändler von der Insel Dagö, Gottlieb Adalbert Hinrichson. Er hat mitgeteilt, dass das einzige Rettungsmittel in der ankommenden undurchdringlichen Finsternis das Licht — das heisst Petroleum — ist. Dass der Grund der Voraussage von Hinrichson kein Stand des Barometers war, sondern eine in der Zeitung erschienene neue Zollverordnung, die den Detailpreis dieses Lichtspenders senkte, hat er

natürlich für sich behalten. Der danach aufkommenden Panik und Furcht auf der Insel sekundiert ein Harmoniumklang von Hinsichsons Frau Rosalinde: Harre meine Seele, harre des Herrn, hilf er doch so gern...

Wie in einen Vexierspiegel geraten plötzlich die Frömmigkeit, die Treuherzigkeit, der Aberglaube. Schapers Ironie ist sehr raffiniert und verborgen.

Die Geschichte *Epitaph für einen Patrioten* hat dagegen ein ganz anderer, tragischer Grundton. Schaper war über die Tragik seiner Heimatstadt Paldiski erschüttert, die durch die sowjetrussische Besatzung in den Oktoberwochen des Jahres 1939 im Laufe von 24 Stunden von ihren vierhundertachtzig angestammten Bewohnern entvölkert und ein militärischer Stützpunkt der Roten Flotte wurde. So wurde aus der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche das Kino für die Garnison, aus den baptistischen und herrnhutischen Bethäusern Läden, aus der orthodoxen Kirche ein Mehllager und aus dem Hotel ein Offizierskasino und Quartier für 20 Offiziere. Es geht hier um einen sehr gastfreundlichen und geehrten Hotelbesitzer dieser Stadt, der sich geweigert hat, die Stadt zu verlassen. Und als in der Stadt schon alles, was alt war, ausgerottet worden war, wurde auch der ehemalige Hotelbesitzer als der letzte von dem lebendigen Inventar von früher getötet. Es geht auch um die Geschichte der Stadt Paldiski und um die interessanten Aspekte, die damit verbunden sind.

Schapers Kurzgeschichten gehören zur Spitze seiner Erzählkunst. Gerade in den Kurzgeschichten stellt sich das Erzähltalent des Autors am deutlichsten heraus: Konzentriertheit, Spannung, Intensität der Dialoge, gleichzeitig eine ruhige Erzählweise und Geläufigkeit — sie sind hier im Gleichgewicht und bilden ein harmonisches Ganzes.

Und noch eine Bemerkung zu diesem Thema: Wenn man auch estnischen Stoff in vielen Werken von Schaper findet, kommen estnische Helden nicht häufig vor. Obwohl ihre Rolle beim Ausdruck der tragenden Idee des Werkes wichtig sein kann, treten sie nicht als Haupthelden auf. Sucht man nach der Funktion, die Schapers estnische Helden tragen, ist es meistens romantisch oder nationalromantisch bestimmt, mit Wurzeln, Traditionen, Natürlichkeit, mit dem Heimat-Begriff verbunden, zum Beispiel Pedder und

Wilhelm im Roman *Die Insel Tütarsaar*, Makari in der Erzählung *Das Lied der Väter* oder Olli im Roman *Der Henker*. Der grösste estnische Held bei Schaper ist der Bauer Koiri im Roman *Der Henker*, seinerweise ein estnischer König Lear — ein durch den Kinderverlust verirrter Bauer, der sowohl im Volksmund als auch in den Verwaltungssphären legendär geworden ist.

Aus dem Vorliegenden ergibt sich, dass Schapers Interesse für Estland nicht dadurch bedingt ist, was wir als das finnougri sche Wesen oder die bäuerische Lebenshaltung bezeichnen und das häufig in der estnischen Literatur auftaucht, sondern Schaper hat in Estland jene Momente entdeckt, die der Este als ein ewiger Wanderer nach Europa nicht bemerkt hat oder denen er keine Bedeutung beigemessen hat — der Berührungspunkt der Konfessionen, ein Grenzland zwischen den Kulturen, wo man gleichzeitig einen Überblick und den Blick ins Zentrum hat und wo sich erklärt, dass keine Kultur sich nur mit sich selbst befriedigen kann, sondern allein im Spannungsfeld mit anderen denkbar ist. Schaper ist ein Wahleste, nämlich durch seine Darstellungen unserer Glaubenswelt und des Spannungsfeldes der politischen Ereignisse.

Schapers Schaffen könnte für die Esten nicht nur wegen der estnischen Thematik interessant sein. In seine Werke könnten sich auch die Existentialismus-Apologeten und andere Befürworter der human engagierten Literatur vertiefen, diejenigen, die der modernistischen Verfremdung, Zerstörtheit, Verzweiflung, des glaubenlosen, weltlosen Daseins müde sind und im Leben etwas Sicheres, Bleibendes, Werte und Stützpunkte, den Sinn des Seins suchen.

Schapers Schaffen gehört zur existentialistischen Literatur, genauer könnte man es als einen christlichen Existentialismus in der Nachfolge Kierkegaards bezeichnen. Er definiert sich als einen Autor, dessen Werk die Beziehung zur Transzendenz und die Verantwortung vor der Transzendenz nicht verliert (Besch 1968: 30). Er fragt nach dem Sinn der menschlichen Existenz in der feindlichen irrationalen gottlosen Welt, wo der Modus des menschlichen Seins Angst und Unwirklichkeit sind, die vor seinem eigenen Ich zu flüchten zwingen. Die einzige Möglichkeit scheint das Leben hinter einer Maske zu sein. Das beste Beispiel dafür ist Oskar aus dem Roman *Die Geschichte eines Bären*, der Oskar hiess, der meiner Meinung nach das beste Werk von Schaper ist. Vor den Identitäts-

problemen stehen auch Ilja aus dem Roman *Der letzte Advent*, Ovelacker aus dem Roman *Der Henker*, oder der Hauptheld aus der Geschichte *Die Heimat der Verbannten* und viele andere.

Schaper sucht die Lösungen. “Wir müssen uns selbst wagen”, klingt das Kierkegaard'sche Verlangen von Schaper. Die wahre Freiheit des Menschen ist “sein Leben so glaubenswert zu machen, damit es niemand leugnen traut” (Schaper 1940). Das Letzte bei Schaper ist nie Verzweiflung. In der Erfahrung des eschatologischen Nichts scheint immer ein Lichtstrahl der Gnade, eine Hoffnung auf Erlösung. Durch die Paradoxialität des als Mensch geborenen Gottessohnes ist das Göttliche im Mensch anwesend. Die höchste Pflicht des Menschens ist, das Göttliche in sich zu entdecken. Das ist auch laut Schaper die höchste Aufgabe der Kunst. Schapers Werk ist ein engagiertes Werk. Sein ästhetisches und ethisches Programm ist immer erkennbar. Meiner Meinung nach bekommt er die besten Resultaten dort, wo sein Engagement sich in wenig sichtbarer Gestalt äussert.

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On a Way Towards Harmony: Ivar Ivask and Odysseus Elytis

KERTTU VELDI

The spring issue of *World Literature Today* 1985 which is dedicated to the poetry of the 20th century and carries an intriguing title: *Poetry in the Twentieth Century: The Most Enduring Genre?* begins as usual with an introduction by Ivar Ivask, editor-in-chief:

"Most modern poetry appears to navigate between two extreme approaches to reality: on the one hand, the *Waste Land* or *Zero* (Pedro Salinas, *Cero*, 1944) poets of protest and lament; on the other, the much rarer poets of praise and reconciliation in line with Guillén's *Cántico* (*Canticle*). (...) We start from the premise that our century is nothing but tragic and grim, and as a consequence we easily find the poets and poems — they are abundant — to illustrate our belief. We more easily allow *painters* such as Matisse to transform and sublimate the horrors of war into liberating color and soaring line than we do poets, whom we suspect of being amoral, escapist, facile if they do anything similar. Still, there may be more people around who were consoled by Matisse's Mozartian harmonies than by Picasso's convulsive reflections of the disasters of war." (Ivask 1985: 179–180).

Whereas "the poets of praise and reconciliation" are often according to Ivask left without the attention of critics he introduces some names and titles: Saint-John Perse, *Eloges* (*Praises*; 1911); Boris Pasternak, *Sestra moia Zhizn* (*My Sister, Life*, 1922); Marie Under, *Rõõm ühest ilusast päevast* (*Delight in a Lovely Day*) (1928); Aleksandrs Čaks, *Mana paradize* (*My Paradise*) (1932); Odysseus Elytis *To Axion Esti* (*Worthy It Is*; 1959).

In addition to the aforementioned authors Ivask names also Rainer Maria Rilke among the greatest poets who embody in their work the whole spectrum of human existence. Rilke's work inspired him to start writing poetry himself in German (Ivask 1985: 180). The poets who originate in the Mediterranean region, who 'praise the world in our century', who affirm 'instead of disaffirming, blaming, neglecting — together with the majority' include also Federico García Lorca in Spanish literature, the Sicilian Salvatore Quasimodo in Italian literature and Paul Valéry in French literature (Ivask 1963: 91). The only missing poet from the complete list of the 'positive' poets whom Ivask is fond of quoting as a confirmation to his own views is René Char. The two most often mentioned ones among them are Jorge Guillén and Odysseus Elytis.

Ivask and Elytis met for the first time personally in March 1975 in connection with the interview for the special issue of Elytis in *Books Abroad*. The attachment of Ivask to the work of Elytis dates back according to Ivask himself, as far as 1953. The autumn issue of *Books Abroad* 1975, entitled as *Analogies of Light: the Greek Poet Odysseus Elytis* (published as a book in 1980), is dedicated wholly to the work of Odysseus Elytis, at that time a not so wellknown author. It certainly contributed to the international recognition of Elytis and helped him to achieve the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1979. Elytis himself has admitted his indebtedness to Ivask (for a more detailed discussion see Veldi 1994). In 1979 Ivask notes in his literary diary that Elytis' mentality has been important for him for quite some time already (Ivask 1987: 10).

Generally speaking Ivask is not fond of talking about himself, especially about his work. (For the first detailed treatment of the poetry of Ivask abroad see Aspel 1973, in Estonia see Talvet 1989.) When he does, though, he just gives hints, mostly by quoting his favourite poets. Ivask observes the continuity and common sets in the work of different authors and stresses the links between different national literatures (see e.g. Ivask 1959a, 1959b). Ivask admits that his mission is to be a historian of literature, consequently the interpreter of the work of others (Ivask 1986: 132). Through the selected author he exposes also himself, his own convictions and principles. In the beginning Odysseus Elytis is one

of the introduced authors, he will remain a mentally important personality for the rest of Ivask's life.

Elytis likes to talk about himself and his work. His essays, collected in the *Open Book* (*Anoihta Hartia*; first printed in 1974) constitutes an essential part of his work in which "the poetic element was fused with autobiographical reflections and objective evaluations-interpretations" (Ivask 1975a: 629). In this collection Elytis gives a thorough account of his life and work, convictions, creative impulses and favourite figures. The book contains also art and literary criticism since the end of the 1930s.

Ivask chooses Elytis for his 'rejoicing existentialism'. He uses this expression of Eugenio Frutos about Guillén to characterize Elytis who seems to him as Guillén's 'younger brother' because they both praise the world and nature. The work of Elytis and Guillén is characterized by 'physical and metaphysical joy, exulted belief in the reality of this world' (Ivask 1993: 1611–1612). The sensual perception of Elytis leads to 'the enlightenment of spirit' (Ivask 1963: 93). The interest of Ivask in Elytis is evoked in an extract from a letter of Elytis to Kimon Friar, a translator and longstanding introducer of Modern Greek Poetry in *Books Abroad / World Literature Today*. He is the first person to introduce Elytis in the 1971 issue of *Books Abroad*. Elytis writes: "My metaphysics is physics: this is the way the transcendence is presented." (Quoted according to Ivask 1993: 1611). Ivask quotes this sentence by Elytis several times. It can be found, for example, in the first article that discusses Elytis in Estonian *Vahemerest, Kreekast ja luulest* (*About the Mediterranean, Greece and Poetry*) published in *Mana* (1963), an Estonian literary magazine in exile, that contains and includes also a few Ivask's translations of Elytis' poems based upon the German and English translations. Probably the most popular and bestknown writing about Elytis is his interview with Ivask in 1975 where Elytis defines poetry as follows:

"I consider poetry a source of innocence full of revolutionary forces. It is my mission to direct these forces against a world my conscience cannot accept, precisely so as to bring that world through continual metamorphoses more in the harmony with my dreams. I am referring here to a contemporary kind of magic whose mechanism leads to the discovery of our true reality. It is

for this reason that I believe, to the point of idealism, that I am moving in a direction which has never been attempted until now. In the hope of obtaining a freedom from all constraints and the justice which could be identified with absolute light, I am an idolater who, without wanting to do so, arrives at Christian sainthood." (Ivask 1975b: 643).

Although, generally speaking, Ivask is not as optimistic as Elytis, their convictions and aims are remarkably similar. They both feel the need to change the 20th century reality.

In the opinion of Ivask the work of Elytis is full of glorification of being, belief in the reality of this world and admiration for it. Elytis glorifies Greece, its nature and language, regarding them as symbols of the suprasensuous world in the sensuous one. Greece, Greeks and the Greek language have a permanent tie with the suprasensuous world — a just and beautiful world through light, to be more precise, through the sun. A special way of perceiving light that is characteristic only of Greece unites the country, its nature and language. It is the perception of light that enables this place to be a guide from the physical world to the suprasensuous one.

Elytis formulates his credo of fighting and creation as light metaphysics. Because, for Elytis creation is a means of fighting. When talking about light metaphysics Elytis means solar metaphysics, and as the sun always has a central place in his poetry, he calls it solar metaphysics (Ivask 1975b: 639–640; see also Elytis 1987: 448–449).

The modern contemporary world could be changed through suprasensuous light as presented in Greece and intermediated to people by a poet. This is his mission as Elytis understands it — a Greek as well as a poet. It is a kind of prophesy — to announce the message of unity and harmony to the whole world. Because for Elytis solar metaphysics is first and foremost the mystery of light (Ivask 1975b: 642).

The ideas of Elytis and Ivask coincide as far as the mission and aims of poetry and the poet are concerned. The differences in their temperament appear in the choice of means and tactics to achieve their goals, e.g. while talking about poetry as a phenomenon that has to face reality in order to reform it. Both Ivask and Elytis regard the work of Matisse as an example to be followed. Matisse

refused to surrender himself to the depressive reality and preferred to surrender himself to his reaction caused by this reality in his mind. As a result he painted most beautiful and cheerful pictures of fruits and flowers that tell us today in the opinion of Elytis more than the gloomiest descriptions of that period (Elytis 1975: 655). However, Elytis and Ivask have different attitudes to the work of Picasso that, in fact, serves the same goal. Ivask thinks that Picasso depicts the horrors of war, Elytis appreciates his resistance to the morbid and hopeless time. Although Picasso maintained a close contact with his time, one cannot say that he was illustrating his epoch — his work offered a diametrically opposite mentality as well as physical and moral health (Elytis 1987: 593). Elytis himself behaved the same way by publishing his second collection of poems *Sun, the First* (1945) when Greece was suffering from the fascist occupation. The poems of this collection are full of light and sun, the sunny summer of Greece — there are no tragic tones in this collection. In the opinion of Elytis our epoch has made a mistake trying to compete with reality and depicting fear and horror instead of counterbalancing them (Elytis 1987: 593).

For Elytis Mediterranean countries, in the narrower sense Greece, are places that enable human beings to become mentally perfect. Both the Mediterranean countries and Justice are for Elytis an optimal moment that is a precondition for harmony. The exact copy of Justice is art. Elytis does not mean here either the justice of the courts or human justice but another kind of justice that is done as slowly as painfully in the lessons of the great courts of human society, in the political struggle for social liberation and in the best poetic achievements. From this great effort the drops of light fall slowly and continuously into the vast night of the soul like lemon juice drops into polluted water (ibid.: 452–453). Elytis believes in the reestablishment of justice by equalizing justice with light (Ivask 1975b: 643). (Elytis' tendency to see the suprasensuous world beyond the sensuous one is reflected in his habit to capitalize the abstract concepts that are important for him. This peculiarity of the writings of Elytis has been preserved in this article.)

In the centre of Elytis' world is the sun that has the same task in the moral world as in the substance of things. What we have to do

is to keep an optimal distance from the sun that is allowed by an optimal moment to preserve human life on Earth. For Elytis life on Earth is possible only thanks to the harmony that rules the universe. The poet is the intersection point of the ethical (suprasensuous — K. V.) and material worlds. This part of darkness that he neutralizes in his consciousness is added to the light that returns repeatedly to himself to improve the idol of a poet, man (Elytis 1987: 452). According to Elytis 'light with his mystical influence', 'sun with his despotic presence and working mechanism' is what preserves tradition and is the basis of ancient as well as contemporary art (ibid.: 559; 602). Elytis as a poet surrenders himself to the sun as God, taking himself the role of an intermediary of God's will. Because of intermediating the divine to other people the poet has to meet high demands and bear great responsibility.

In Greece light supports the hand of a poet and an artist, so that they would never abuse life, never lie and aspire to anything but "good and beautiful". Light changes deeply the substance of things (ibid.: 38).

The Mediterranean countries are for Elytis the residence of Virtue, Arete. The only weapons of Virtue are purity and chastity, the same things that give strength also to a poet. Arete is a symbol of everything superior, high — that are Greece, Virgin Mary. She is the apotheosis of all the girls' figures in the poetry of Elytis (Friar 1971: 228). In the poetry of Elytis Virtue is depicted as a small girl with a boyish figure, who is a "drop of pure water bravely above the abyss" (Elytis 1968: 16). In addition to the fact that Greece is for Elytis the country of the origin of Justice, it is also the homeland of the sun (Elytis 1990: 9) (taking into account that Elytis equates justice with light, it is not surprising). The synonym of Greece is primeval light (Elytis 1980b: 42). Greece is the place where 'the first time Democracy got his meaning' that was 'a worthy place for the teachings of Socrates and Jesus' (Elytis 1987: 452).

The understanding of Mediterranean countries as countries of origin and residence of everything positive, good and prosperous is very similar to the conviction of Ivask in the importance of the Mediterranean countries (resp. Greece). The Mediterranean countries embody for Ivask important ethical qualities. Ivask's favourite

epithets 'genuine / authentic' (tõeline), 'original' (algupärane), 'significant / meaningful' (oluline) often become more important than the substantives they are supposed to characterize) and the definition of time as the 'present' appears in his writings usually in connection with the Mediterranean countries and especially Greece.

Ivask talks about the right substance of Greece, in Greece one can find the 'real immortality, really eternal present' (Ivask 1963: 85). Ivask opposes Nordic countries with 'dead' histories and lost pasts to Greece where the 'painfully-cheerfully important present' predominates. A person looking for a meaningful life is able to find it in Greece (Ivask 1963: 83). According to Ivask, there is no 'new mental balance' that comes either from Paris, New York, London, Berlin or Moscow but only from the cradle of European culture — the Mediterranean countries, where 'in Eleysis the secrets of reincarnation were taught', where 'once Measure was born and where it finally remained in its original exactness'. "Here the significance is still ruling not the last struggle of death. A balanced harmony, not a grin." (ibid.: 83).

It is remarkable that Ivask denies the past of Greece and stresses the present because, according to a widespread opinion the whole European culture is based upon the past of Greece. Apparently for Ivask the past of the Mediterranean countries is included in a natural harmonious way in their present. The present and past are not temporal concepts but rather substantial categories. Ivask distinguishes two kinds of the past. The lost 'dead' past is likely to designate the burden of history, the depressive past of mankind that is not easy to get rid of (Ivask himself certainly reminds hereby his forced exile). The past of the Mediterranean countries carries the tradition of significant real qualities, the tradition of aspiring for originality and wholeness, the qualities carried by **this** past are eternal, vitally significant for mankind. Inherence of the ethical past in the present that is for Ivask the simile of unethic and anxiety — the 20th century where 'the last struggle of death' is ruling, creates in the Mediterranean countries 'reality', 'cheerful present'.

The work of Elytis is according to Ivask "at the same time contemporary and timeless, national and universal, personal and

objective.” (ibid.: 94). One of the favourite subjects of both Ivask and Elytis is the meaning, position and substance of poetry. Elytis defines poetry relating it to the sun and light, the arguments of Ivask proceed rather from the position of literature in society. According to Elytis, real poetry is always born in language — every language forces the poet to express certain things. Elytis stresses that he is a poet who is working in his language without distancing himself from it (Ivask 1975b: 637). The Greek language as a magic instrument has close relations with the sun as a physical celestial body and as a symbol. The sun does not insist only a certain way of life but is also the main content of a poem’s meaning. It penetrates into the poem’s composition, into its structure and, using contemporary terminology, into its nucleus forming what we call a poem (Elytis 1980a: 215–216). The poem and the sun are for Elytis inseparable. The poem, encircled by the elements centered around its centre of gravity becomes a little sun. The highest ideal of a poet is perfect harmony achieved this way together with an adequate content. To hold in one’s hands the sun without burning oneself and to give it as a torch to one’s descendants is a painful but praiseworthy act. One day the dogmas enchaining people will break in front of the completely luminous consciousness because the consciousness has become one with the sun and lands at the shores of human dignity and freedom (ibid.: 216).

In the opinion of Elytis an ideal poem should be a minicopy of the solar system — the same total tranquillity and eternity, the same perpetual movement in its different components. Elytis perceives the structure of a poem as a closed unit. Its final self-powered centrifugation is continuously localized, isolated and illuminated by inspiration. To replace effectively the sun and its functions in images and meanings, it is imperative that meaning develops uninterruptedly and in a parallel way together with a transcription of rhythmic and strophic structure. The symbolic rhythmic and strophic structure is analogical to the structures that enable man to understand time (Elytis 1987: 30).

For Ivask poetry is man’s heritage — this is a recognition that everyone realizes sooner or later in different ways (Ivask 1985: 177). For Ivask the 20th century is one of the greatest eras of

poetry (Ivask 1993: 1607). Is it so because the 20th century is, accordingly, an era of 'conflicts and anxiety' (ibid.: 1606), a 'turbulently destructive age' (Ivask 1985: 178), but poetry opens for us the 'deeper layers of the mythical truth', in poetry the 'poetical originality' is revealed in a much clearer way than in drama or prose (Ivask 1993: 1606–1607).

In Ivask's opinion, one could argue about what constitutes a poem or what is to be understood by 'poetic', "yet *poetry* persists in regular meters and free verse, closed and open forms, high-, low- and middlebrow, in all kinds of mutations and permutations." At the time when the theatre has an evident need to declare that it is still alive and the novel has to declare that the rumours about its death are premature, "poetry just is, from Sappho to Elytis (hidden quotation from Elytis — K. V.). It is one of the great literary paradoxes in this paradoxical century." (Ivask 1985: 179). For Ivask and Elytis poetry has a special mission in guiding the humanity towards transcendence although Elytis does not stress the specific character of the genre as Ivask does, his attitude is more general.

Ivask opposes the 20th century ugliness, fragmentarism (the sensuous world) to the beauty and the wholeness of poetry (the representative of suprasensuous world on earth). The attitude of Ivask is expressed already in the title of his article: *Terviklik luule lagunemisajastul* (*Integral Poetry in the Era of Destruction*) (1993). Ivask's ideal has been preserved in the 20th century mainly in the Mediterranean countries and intermediated to the contemporary man through poetry. Although Ivask claims referring to Guillén that he does not believe in the antagonism between the scientific and poetical worlds (Ivask 1993: 1607) it is one of the basic principles in his conceptions of life and literature.

Elytis opposes continuously the poetic world to the scientific-technological one, but these oppositions are always carried by the conviction in the possibility to reunite them at a new higher level. Man has created by using his spirit 'terrible cyclotrons' and 'electronic brains' to which Elytis opposes the blossoming of Poetry in the form of a flower (Elytis 1987: 36). At the same time a human being can create using the same spirit, also such poetry that guides humanity out of this world of destruction and chaos. Ivask looks

for harmony in the past, Elytis in the future. Elytis does not oppose places and times (as Ivask does), technology and art to each other as absolute values, but regards them as different attitudes that are at the same time present in every human being. It is up to everyone which one to choose. The ideal is the harmonious coexistence of the two. In comparison with Elytis the attitude of Ivask is more fatalist and passive. For Ivask poetry/art is first of all a way to escape from the terrible contemporary reality, from the contemporary technical life into the beautiful harmonious spiritual world. For Elytis (luminous) poetry is first and foremost a means of struggle, a means how he can interfere in the contemporary world and improve it.

For Ivask and Elytis the sensuous experience of light is always magical and mystical. According to Elytis mysticism means for a Greek, as a rule, light that is for him an absolute value (Ivask 1975b: 642). The nature of Greece that is full of light is for Elytis full of mystical signs, it intermediates a mystical message (Elytis 1987: 327). The material body of a poem, where the meaning of a word stands in correspondence with its written expression, emanates mysticism. Elytis feels the same flow of mysticism while reading a well written literary work (*ibid.*: 27). Ivask appreciates mysticism 'in the light of day, it is a sensuous embodiment in a perceptible form!' (Ivask 1987: 3-4). According to Elytis the mystery in full light attracts by radiance that we call Beauty. Beauty saves eternal principal ideas in their purity (Elytis 1993: 321) and directs us towards this unknown part in ourselves that can transcend us (*ibid.*: 319).

Elytis dreams about Beauty but he does it differently from the beauty that people usually appreciate. It should be 'fighting beauty' (Elytis 1987: 532) the influence of which purifies the world. The tool of Beauty is poetry the role of which is to guide us towards a transcending Beauty (Elytis 1993: 319).

When concentrating upon 'SIGNIFICANT BEAUTY' Ivar Ivask would like to observe the landscape, architecture, applied art, poetry of Finland, Greece, Castilia (Guillén is a Castilian — K. V.) and Japan (Ivask 1987: 4).

In the opinion of Elytis the poetry that has achieved certain perfection is neither optimistic nor pessimistic. It does not allow

for everyday definitions. This poetry expresses the third state of mind where oppositions do not exist. This kind of poetry simply is (Elytis 1987: 11; Ivask 1975b: 632). Poetry teaches us to give up the world we found — the world of destruction and chaos that is the only way to Resurrection (Elytis 1987: 42–43). Poetry de-mechanizes man and his relations with things (ibid.: 327). Elytis creates poetry because Poetry begins from “*where the last word does not belong to death*”. The first truth is death. To get to know which is the last one, one has to write poetry. “Poetry is the end of one and the beginning of another life”, the second one is identical with the first one but goes to the extreme point of human psyche, to the boundaries of the opposites where the Sun and Hell come across each other. This is an endless course towards the physical light that is the Word and towards the Uncreated Light that is God.” (ibid.: 41–42). The duty of Poetry is to intermediate the breath of immortality, leaving dogmas aside (Elytis 1993: 323). For Ivask light is the symbol of God and truth, a symbol of God as ‘the last truth’ through which he disciplines himself in life and work (Variatsioone 1987).

Elytis and Ivask use similar images to describe poetry and poets, and their mission.

Elytis writes, “Poet must be generous. (---) Poetry is not a bank but its opposite. Poetry is the other face of Pride.”. Poetry has to oppose itself continuously, uninterruptedly and regularly to servitude, stand for irreconciliation and independence (Elytis 1987: 459). For Elytis poetry is not only a written text but a certain way of life that helps to keep alive the values that are important for Elytis. Pride and Justice are often connected in the images used by Elytis with light and luminosity (see e.g. Elytis 1990: 35; Elytis 1971a: 14, 27; Elytis 1971b: 28).

Ivask thinks that “A great artist should be the centre of human friendships, warmth and inspiration. A contemporary author must become ‘more expansive, share himself more generously with others, open his windows and doors completely to the world! (---) A human being is not a savings bank but a fountain.” (Ivask 1987: 4).

High poetry has to interfere with reality and must not limit itself to what is 'at the moment', but has to aspire for what 'can become possible' (Elytis 1993: 317).

The role of artists in life has always been a special one. All the artists: poets, musicians and others have always shared despite their differences and occasionally thanks to them one common feature: they have preserved another dimension of the world that is open to everybody (Elytis 1987: 172). The eye of a poet sanctions the existence of another world (*ibid.*: 178). A real poet never descends to exaggerated descriptions or memories. He makes the invisible visible, the reasonable perceptible, the pragmatic un-pragmatic. He replaces a boring line with a new suitable one and does not repeat what is known already but evokes unknown visions (*ibid.*: 176). 'To see' means for an artist 'to make visible for the others' (*ibid.*: 599).

While working with associations of words and connecting them one with another the poet enlightens and alivens things. The substance of this activity is not expressed by 'understanding' but more likely by 'lyrical energy' (*ibid.*: 486).

It looks as if for Ivask art/poetry is first of all a form of self-expression, something extremely personal that he shares with others but which would rather still remain a personal expression of emotions. Ivask does not intend to change the world and people by poetry, but eases his tensions of living. But he is fond of the idea that the world can be changed by depicting beautiful things and that is what he appreciates and admires in the work of Elytis.

In his Nobel Prize acceptance speech Elytis speaks in the name of 'clarity and luminosity' because these are the qualities that determine the space where he is meant to grow and live. He also felt inside a need to equalize these qualities with the necessity of self-expression (Elytis 1993: 317). Luminosity has always been Elytis' ideal in poetry. (Elytis 1987: 4). An important factor in determining the place and meaning of light in the work of Elytis is his conception of clarity. Elytis admits that he does not aspire for clarity of reason but for luminosity that enables us to see beyond the given things something else, beyond that again something else etc. It means that the luminosity of nature is transferred into poetry (Ivask 1975b: 642). Elytis brings up two main points in the

analysis of light. First, light as clarity, (light) of reason the source of which is a human being. This attitude opposes a human being to being itself, it splits the unity. Second, light as a light of nature, luminosity of nature, sunlight which unites a human being as part of nature in the united wholeness of being. Elytis claims that he belongs together with the second concept.

Ivask talks about the *mystery of the light of reason* in his first collection of poetry *The Meaning of Stars / Letters* (*Tähtede tähendus*; an ambivalent title where the word *täht* means at the same time star in the sky as well as a written character (see Ivask 1964b: 11)). The light of reason, especially in the meaning of clarity, is for Ivask a luminous intellect that is able to perceive beauty / brightness / goodness of the world including also feelings.

A common feature of the work of Elytis and Ivask is their search for simplicity. For Elytis simplicity is mostly connected with the problems of form and does not become a philosophical problem summarizing his life and art as is the case of Ivask.

The ideal of Ivask in life and art is the principle of 'essential simplicity' that he defines it as the "utmost concentration upon that which really matters, a classical vision of reality" (Ivask 1988: 349). In the art of 'leaving out' Ivask has learned a lot from Japanese culture, in Estonian literature Juhan Liiv is a revelation of essential simplicity (see Ivask 1964a). In the poetry of Ivask the motive of emptiness that appears so often carries mostly a supportive and positive meaning, the meaning of ultimate peace and safety (see Ivask 1981: 17) or the meaning of expectance as complete openness (ibid.: 16). Calming down to simplicity is a dream of Ivask in his poem *About simplicity* (Ivask 1964b: 57) which leads to transcendence. Simplicity as integrity, originality belongs together with his wish to sanctify workdays by uniting the religious motives with daily ones (see Ivask 1970: 82, 96; Ivask 1973: 89). Ivask's concept of simplicity is almost identical to Elytis' concept of luminosity.

Elytis finds that it is extremely difficult to achieve significant simplicity — 'never have so many efforts been made to bring things from the level of ideal simplicity to the level of simplified realization'. (Elytis 1987: 7–8).

Simplicity as getting rid of everything excessive leads to the problem of freedom. For Elytis freedom means freedom of the spirit that will always be there under any conditions if the person himself wants it, and so it can influence reality (Elytis 1987: 10). The spirit of man can create poetry that 'de-mechanizes man and his relations with things' (Elytis 1987: 327) and it is in a way 'a constructively destructive' force. Elytis writes poetry because he wants to feel free (ibid.: 5). Poet enjoys a freedom to create for himself his own state, his own spiritual homeland that for Elytis would be Greece, as he has stressed several times (see ibid.: 41). Freedom is a central problem for Ivask. In the life and work of Ivask different aspects of freedom meet each other — social freedom, i. e. freedom to live in his homeland that he lost due to historical changes. Ivask had a freedom to choose between three languages and two nationalities as his father was Estonian, his mother Latvian and much of the communication at home took place in German. By freedom of creation a poet can overcome the aforementioned restrictions of freedom and create new ones. Freedom as utmost simplicity is the most important characteristic of the poetry of Ivask. Is Greece the spiritual homeland of Ivask as one might think when reading his writings that praise Greece (and Mediterranean countries in a wider sense)? While praising the scorching sun of the Mediterranean, light and clarity Ivask, nevertheless, feels that he belongs together with 'mental cool' autumnlight (Ivask 1987: 16). In the work of Elytis Ivask admires 'noble pure concordance' between his scale of colours in his collages and his poems, the wholeness of his world that can be characterized by an expression ("...il est chez soi"). Similar glorification of light, 'Luminous Reality' brings also Guillén next to Elytis and Char. "But Guillén differs from both of them in that most of his life has passed by under the sign of EXILE." (ibid.: 9–10)

Exile is the most painful subject that has considerably influenced Ivask as a person and as an artist and explains some aspects in his value system; it determines the relations between his favourite authors and their importance for Ivask.

Elytis is like the personification of an ideal state: the identity of Elytis with himself, belonging together with his language, people

and country the culture of which is the basis of contemporary European culture. In addition to appreciating the poetry of Guillén Ivask certainly feels some closeness with Guillén as an emigrant. Ivask notices certain common features in the poetry of the Castilian poet Jorge Guillén and the Estonian poet Juhan Liiv (see Ivask 1964a; 1952) but these two favourite poets of Ivask may be connected in his mind also because of the similarity of their destinies — Liiv — as a 'crazy' person (to use an expression by Ivask) stood also somewhat aside and was rejected.

Probably Guillén's poetry may show Ivask how to create harmony in everyday life through creative work which is otherwise lacking. Homesickness, nostalgia for something real, expresses his genuine longing for safety and harmony. And also, is not the case of Ivask a more substantial rootlessness, rather a choice of liberty given to Ivask by his origin and childhood already, maybe even his unwillingness (incapability ?) to identify or connect himself totally with one country / place / language? Elytis achieved harmony through identity with his country, language and people, Ivask is continuously accompanied by hesitations and searches.

It looks as if Ivask's mentality is characterized by 'eternal spiritual exile' which critics have noted as a characteristic feature of his poetry (see e.g. Lepik 1979; 1983). Ivask's attitude towards life seems to be eternal yearning for harmony, aspiring for concordance, whereby arrival is not important for him?

The different relations of Elytis and Ivask with harmony and the ways of achieving it are confirmed in their life summaries in the words of poets themselves. Elytis regards as his achievement "decodification of the Laws of his imaginable state and revelation that it is the residence of innocence" (through his poetry — a source of innocence full of revolutionary forces — K. V.). This statement is not a manifestation of arrogance but Elytis is ready to talk in the name of everyone who feels in the same way but who does not have enough naivety to admit it (Elytis 1987: 40–41). Ivask thinks that his whole work and activity, as a poet in three languages, artist, critic, editor, is a search for connection, mediation between languages and nations, between his different understandings of himself — a deep urge to maintain balance and mental health inevitable for life (Ivask 1986: 3).

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Poetry and the World in One Poem

MART MÄGER

Jaan Kaplinski's poem "Tüütus tüütus" ('Tedium, Tedium') (from the collection *Tolmust ja värvidest* ('About Ashes and Colours'), 1967: 21) gives the impression of improvisation. Given the alternatives "prepared in detail" and "free improvisation", the majority of readers have hitherto selected the latter. The almost even texture on different levels of the poem becomes clear only during analysis. In my opinion this is a good textbook example.

Kaplinski is a philosophical poet, whose world view is not just reflected in this single poem, but to a certain degree has formed the poem. For this reason it is effectual, at each stage of the analysis, to take into account all the author's poems and essays. The structural analysis of the poem, according to the various levels and substructures, does not necessarily require, as a precondition, the consideration of relationships outside the poem.

1. TÜÜTUS TÜÜTUS sügistalviste
TEDIUM TEDIUM autumn-winter-
2. kärbeste pirin kirjanike majas ilu
flies' buzzing in the writers' house beauty
3. ülevus tüüpilisus novaatorlus realistlikkus masin
elation typicality innovation reality machine
4. ladumas kategooriate kaardimaja ars magna ah ei
building a house of cards of categories ars magna oh no
5. masin ainult ja a ghost in the machine kirjanduse
machine only and a ghost in the machine literature
6. ja kirjanikud te mõtlesite välja
and writers you invented

7. luule draama romaani romantika nagu tõesti
poetry drama novels romance as if really
8. võiks allikat hoida tünnis või tuult lipuriidesse
a fountain could be kept in a barrel or the wind folded in the
fabric of a flag
9. keeratult keldris kartulite kõrval elu ja elutõe
in the cellar next to the potatoes life and the meaning of life
10. mõtlesite välja kui need mõtted
which you invented if these thoughts
11. elustaksid ainsa kärbseni riulil kirjanike majas nagu tõesti
would bring back to life just one fly on the shelf in the
writers' house as if there really
12. oleks olemas elu ja luule nagu oleks olemas
did exist life and poetry as if there did exist
13. kirjanikud midagi tõelist kui trükimusta
writers something real when the smell of printing ink
14. lõhn hääbub ja tuul on siin ja on ära nagu oleks tõesti
fades and the wind is here and is not here as if it was really
15. vaja ohverdada mõni hetk mõni tund kärbeste pirinale ja olla
necessary to sacrifice a moment an hour to the buzzing of
flies and to be
16. keegi mõne kreeka kategooria katuse all ei
someone under the roof of some Greek category no
17. mina ei saa seal käia südametunnistus
I cannot go there my conscience
18. ehmuks ärkvele ja koduigatsus
would awake with a shock and my home sickness
19. on Võhandu püha arusaadav sulin mustade murede taga
is the familiar sacred murmur of the Võhandu (river) behind
black worries
20. lähme siit ära varsti on ikkagi kevad
let us leave this place it will soon be spring anyway
21. tule ja ole kes sa oled Tathagata kärnkonna pulmalaul
come and be who you are the wedding song of a Tathagata
toad
22. meteoori sähvatus Andromeda taustal ole öö
the flash of a meteor with Andromeda in the background be
night

23. ole armastus ole botaanika botaanika
be love be botany botany

1. **On the phonetic level**, we notice harmonies which cannot be accidental (lines 1, 3, 4, 9, 16 and others).

The beginning, which is characterized by repetition, is also obvious as an element of orchestration: "TÜÜTUS TÜÜTUS sügistalviste . . . ülevus tüüpilisus". The sound 'ü' appears in the words "tünnis" . . . trükimusta . . . // südametunnistus . . . püha". The words also form a contrast according to the emotional content.

In another instance a system is created by the repetition of 'a' in the first syllable: "ladumas kategooriate kaardimaja ars magna ah ei".

In addition to assonance (keeratult keldris . . . elu ja elutõe) in line 9, there are corresponding consonants: 'k', 'r', 'l': "keldris kartulite kõrval".

In addition to the 'k' alliteration in line 16 there is a correspondence in the vowels ("keegi . . . kreeka; kategooria katuse all" — the first three sounds of the words are synchronized).

The common sound characteristic in line 7 is the length of the vowel (grammatical second duration): "luule draama romaani".

The end of lines 4 and 6 forms a contrast to the previous system. In this latter case it indicates a break in the content. In the overall structure of the poem it is important to note that after the content-break, noticeable orchestrational developments are missing (except for the stereotypical "mustade mürede" in line 19). The orchestration, not very important in this section, is in harmony with the two-part structure of the poem. In relation to the values under discussion, orchestrational systems are often described as "unrealistic, unsubstantial, formal, artificial".

2.1 On the morphological level the following system is clear:

TÜÜTUS TÜÜTUS ülevus tüüpilisus novaatorlus realistlikkus (kirjandus) // südametunnistus koduigatsus (sähvatus) armastus.

The common component in this system is the morpheme consisting of the abstract nouns "-us"; homonymous "-us" indicates the result of an action. The system is begun by repetition at the start of the poem and in line 3 it continues with four com-

ponents. In the second half of the poem and in line 3 it continues with four components. In the second half of the poem, the words “südametunnistus” (conscience) and “koduigatsus” (home-sickness) are in the lines immediately following the break and are emphasized by being at the end of the line. The beginning TÜÜTUS TÜÜTUS provides the tone to the first part of the system, which is followed by a list of literary-aesthetic categories. We can evaluate the function of the system on a semantic level: in contrast to the abstract, reflective categories and negative emotive states (“tüütus” — tedium), there are real life experiences and an understanding of nature — a meteor flash. A contrast is made through use of similarities: the common meaning is sharply contrasted. This system is obviously important in the poem’s structure.

2.2 On the basis of morphological characteristics,

(kärbeste) pirin // (Võhandu) sulin

are simultaneously associated and contrasted.

Although the buzzing of flies (“pirin”) is a sound of nature, it is associated with the tedium of an artificial environment which is remote from real life — this is contrasted with “sulin” (murmur, gurgle) which is the sound of genuine nature and is a basic element. The system contains the contrast: ephemeral — eternal.

3. Observing the following verb forms:

ladumas mõtlesite välja võiks hoida mõtlesite välja
elustaksid oleks olemas oleks olemas hääbub on on
oleks vaja ohverdada olla // ei saa käia ehmub on lähme
on tule ole oled ole ole ole

In the first part of the poem the use of the **subjunctive** is prevalent and it expresses the illusion of phenomena and situations: could be able, could be. Finite forms are particularly obvious (“ladumas”, “hoida”, “olemas”, “ohverdada”).

The use of the subjunctive is missing in the second half, as well as the imperfect; the only infinitive exists just after the break in the negative (“ei saa käia” — cannot go). In the second part there is a use of the definite and the imperative in the present tense. In contrast to the “if only” and invention, are “the being” (“on, ole, oled”) as well as elementary movements (“lähme, tule”). The

world is not static, but motion — a process, which is expressed by contrasting forms and verbs indicating movement. In the first part of the poem the word “on” (is) is only used in conjunction with the wind, a part of nature: “ja tuul on siin ja on ära”.

4.1 **Personal pronouns** are associated with verb forms:

te // mina (meie) (sina)

“Meie” (we) and “sina” (you) are derived from the corresponding verb forms “lähme” (let’s go), “ole” (be).

“Teie” (you, plural) belongs to the “kategooriate kaardimaja” (the house of cards of categories) — “mina ei saa seal käia” (I cannot go there). “Teie” represents the inventive people of the illusory and theorizing world; cf. Kaplinski’s foreword to his collection of essays: “It is vital that we do not replace the real world . . . with something, which we ourselves have created and built. Because we are not able to create something genuine on our own, but only illusions, with which it is very miserable to live” (Kaplinski 1982: 13); “Poetry and all other human artistic activity, as well as research, is specifically a human communication, which inanimate nature just does not require”. (Kaplinski 1975: 2078)

The lack of punctuation does not allow the one interpretation of the relationship between “mina” (I) and “sina” (you). “Sina” could simultaneously indicate the self (“lyrical me”) as well as anyone else: come and be, whoever you actually are, the wedding song of the toad, the flash of the meteor, etc. The surpassed “mina” is “meie” (we), is “sina” (you), which is not in contrast to unconscious nature: cf. “and I see that some of the ant tracks are mine and that I am one of them” (Kaplinski, *Ma vaatasin päikese aknasse*, Tallinn 1976: 110), “I am a fish who can fly and speak” (ibid. 105), “I believe in the resurrection of the stones and the eternal life of the waves” (Kaplinski, *Uute kivide kasvamine*, Tallinn 1977: 17), “you the wonderous little bee” (Kaplinski *Valge joon Võrumaa kohale*, Tallinn 1972: 23). Beyond the bounds of “I”, “you” also ceases (Kaplinski 1980). The inability to differentiate between “mina” and “sina” is deliberate and important to the context.

4.2 Indefinite pronouns occur only in the first half of the poem:

midagi mõni mõni keegi mõni

These pronouns are grouped in the lines before the break (13, 15, 16) and emphasize the foreignness of the world of illusion. Indefinite pronouns do not exist in the second part of the poem.

5. The poem is relatively poor in declensions, and therefore the few **place declensions** and constructions designating place are particularly apparent:

kirjanike majas tünnis lipuriidesse keeratult
kartulite kõrval riulil kirjanike majas katuse all //
Andromeda taustal

Internal place declensions are in predominance, since they are “more closed”. In the first half of the poem the action is, without exception, limited, closed, in meagre space; this is in contrast to the cosmic openness, limitlessness in the second half.

6.1 **Place names** have an important function in the whole poem:

Võhandu Andromeda

The order of place names designates the opening up of space: the river in the homeland which is honored as sacred, opening up to the cosmic body. In the first half of the poem there are no place names.

In Kaplinski's poetry the use of place names is “natural, specific, truthful”: cf. “under friendly clouds — VALGEMETSA KIID LAKE TAEVASKOJA” (Kaplinski, *Tolmust ja värvidest*, 40), “Glowworms were — on Ahi Lake — in Tähtvere — but here it's November” (Kaplinski, *Valge joon Võrumaa kohale*, 10)

6.2 The **proper name** Tathagata is one of Buddha's names and hints at a Buddhist way of thinking.

7. The use of **place adverbs** in the poem is in concert with the poet's general use of time and space:

tuul on siin ja on ära (seal — there)
mina ei saa seal käia
lähme siit ära

The “siin ja on ära” (is here and is away - there) of the wind - the conflict of being simultaneously in different places - is solved due to the wind's natural “flow”. According to Taoist principles “here” and “there” are not mutually exclusive in the “flowing”

world: the apparent conflict in the poem is intentional and conscious.

8.1 **Time determinants** are in contrast:

(sügistalv) // kevad

To Kaplinski, the autumn months denote gloominess, an oppressive time — e.g. “December is the most gloomy month” (*Valge joon Võrumaa kohale*, 6). Spring, on the other hand: “THIS SPRING FILLS ME WITH JOY...” (*Tolmust ja värvidest*, 40). Negative and positive emotions are contrasted.

8.2 The limited, measureable time units are in contrast to cosmic time, measureable in millions of light years:

mõni hetk mõni tund — Andromeda

Although the scale is cosmic, detached theorizing does not deserve even a moment to be wasted on it.

8.3 The following is semantically time determined:

kärbeste pirin kaardimaja trükimusta lõhn // Võhandu sulin
Andromeda

The system is formed on the basis of a feeling of continuity: short-term and ephemeral is contrasted to eternal occurrences according the human scale.

Andromeda is an important word in this poem — as a fixed point in the scale — which is a part of many semantic systems. Kaplinski's use of time and space could be termed metaphysical, in the sense that its scale is eternal: its durability is not limited to a lifetime, existence continues after the end of consciousness, after death: “In living his own life man is remote from Nature, by dying, he returns there.” (Kaplinski 1977: 1195) Eternal durability begins in the circular movement of Nature: “but after death you are born as a poppy” (1967: 41),

new life, which became real in us,
which gnawed the meat from bones, —
in the veins of trees and in the hearts
we will really wake one day

(*Tolmust ja värvidest*, 39)

Even the experience of reality is a metaphysical event for Kaplinski: “Experience is man's contact with reality, with something

which is remote from him in time and space". This is not an ordinary repetitive every day experience, but something unique, for the expression of which the language of poetry has developed. (Kaplinski 1975: 2072)

"Öö" (night) which enables the sighting of astral bodies and Andromeda is a time of experiences: "the limitless light of night — which for the one time — all the way through — the whole flowing world can be seen". (*Raske on kergeks saada* Tallinn, 1982: 19)

9. The poem is poor in **epithets**, which therefore means that those that exist are particularly obvious:

sügistalviste / kärbeste pirin

elustaksid ainsa kärbsegi riitulil

on Võhandu püha arusaadav sulin mustade murede taga

"Sügistalviste" (winter-autumn) in the first part of the poem is more a time descriptor than an attribute. Line 19, after the break, is different due to the three adjectives, of which "püha" (sacred) is especially vivid. The words "püha" and "arusaadav" (clear, understandable) are not just characteristic of the waters of Võhandu, but also of the life feeling contrasting with the "peegelduse peegelduse" (reflection of the reflection) black worries. If the "writers' house" is characterized by tedium, then the contrasting relationship with the surroundings is sacred. Lack of understanding is contrasted with understanding.

10. On the level of **lexical semantics**, an expressive system is formed, with its core in line 7:

kirjandus luule draama romaan romantika luule // (kärnkonna)
pulmalaul

The system is formed by literary aesthetic terms. General categories, as well as the genre description "romaan" (novel), are much more general than the narrow "pulmalaul" (wedding song), which in this case expresses something even excessively natural and specific. The wedding song of the toad is a pure reality in comparison to "peegelduste peegelduse": cf. "man has reality in comparison to "peegelduse peegelduse": cf. "man has withdrawn within himself and has invented himself — reflection, and the

reflection of the reflection, into the culture of literature — architecture, but there is still hopelessly little of it” (*Ma vaatasin päikese aknasse*, 91). The contrast in this case has a wider scope.

11. Foreign language expressions and names are strongly evident in the poem:

ars magna a ghost in the machine — (arusaadav sulin)

The use of expressions amplify the impression of alienation, the lack of understanding; the well-characterized sounds of nature could be considered as semantic opposition.

12. The repetition of the similar, and placement at the extremes of the poem (beginning and end) are placed in a contrasting relationship with each other

TEDIUM TEDIUM — botany botany

Despite the fact that botany as an area of science is not direct reality, but also a reflection, the poet distinguishes his favourite hobby as being an asset, and this because nature is the object of botany.

13.1 **Lexical repetitions** amplify the idealist message of the poem:

nagu tõesti võiks

nagu tõesti oleks olemas

nagu oleks olemas . . . midagi tõelist

nagu oleks tõesti vaja //

on Võhandu püha arusaadav sulin

varsti on ikkagi kevad

The four-fold repetition emphasizes the illusion of “peegelduse peegeldus”. Instead of the human “nagu oleks” (as if), nature simply “on” (is).

13.2 “Elu” (life), which, in poetry, is generally elated in content, is treated differently here:

elu ja elutõe — mõtlesite välja

kui need mõtted — elustaksid ainsa kärbsengi

nagu tõesti — oleks olemas elu ja luule

In this usage, “elu” is actually the insubstantial reflection of a substantial reality, the “eba-elu” (non-life).

The reflection of being in consciousness has no meaning: “no matter if — you say that life — is sleep — or joy — or suffer-

ing — what will change because of it — perhaps only the colour — but onto both hands — will stay the snowy forest — like ten years ago”. (*Raske on kergeks saada*, 29)

13.3 The valuation of rational cognition becomes negative, when thought is limited to invention — to the creation of illusory values, which actually are inanimate and ineffective:

kirjanduse — ja kirjanikud te mõtlesite välja
 elu ja elutõe — mõtlesite välja
 kui need mõtted — elustaksid ainsa kärbsengi

“The fact that man can never create anything which can even remotely compete with reality is an immutable law of nature.” (Kaplinski 1975: 2077–2078)

13.4 Wind is Kaplinski’ symbol of nature’s continuity:

nagu tõesti — võiks allikat hoida tünis või tuult
 lipuriidesse — keeratult keldris
 trükimusta — lõhn häabub ja tuul on siin ja on ära

The keeping of the fountain in a barrel and the folding of the wind into the fabric of the flag expresses the powerlessness and abnormality of the conceptual world, attempts are made to enclose live objects in lifeless words and categories. Analogous images are used by Kaplinski in his essay: “In the attempt to fit the new into the old we act as if we wanted to trap light in a bag, or a fountain in a washbasin.” (Kaplinski 1975: 2075) Wind could be seen as a symbol of a world view: “wind which turns everything — from the west to the east the seagulls voices smoke trees”. (*Tolmust ja värvidest*, 24)

In the second example, wind is the contrast to the fading smell, the embodiment of the “flowing world”.

Wind, water, fire, air, forest, birds, insects, frogs, lizards, fish — all represent pure nature; cf. “THIS SPRING FILLS ME WITH JOY — on the side of the road ditches at the graveyard songthrushes — ware frogs and wind . . .”. (*Tolmust ja värvidest*, 40) The toad also belongs to the same field of semantics.

The consecrated existence of basic elements of nature is not disturbed by cognition: “simply being and winning — my wood sorrel is flowering” (Ibid., 54)

13.5 Example of repetitive pairings:

kärbeste pirin kirjanike majas
 elustaksid ainsa kärbsegi riulil kirjanike majas
 masin — ladumas kategooriate kaardimaja
 keegi mõne kreeka kategooriate katuse all
 ars magna ah ei — masin ainult

In the “kirjanike majas” (writers’ house) unreal activity is concentrated — on both occasions tedious flies are mentioned. The writers’ house is associated in a structural and lexical sense with the cardhouse of categories. The characteristics of the “kaardimaja” (house of cards) are ephemerality, uselessness, and in this case, mechanistic (built by machine). Category means a notional-logical framework, into which a live reality is forced: often these frameworks are from the distant past (Greek: *kategoria*) and have no relationships with reality which never ceases to change; cf. “words, thoughts — curtains in front — what could — they mean” (*Raske on kergets saada*, 34); “Forcing the progression of life into categories, into limits, is the death of life.” (Kaplinski 1980) The negation of Greek categories and card houses reflects the controversy with an occidental world view.

13.6 The negations place at the end of the lines express opinion on the fruitless sophistry of the world of categories and “writers’ houses”:

ah ei
 ei
 mina ei saa seal käia

The repeated negation in the next line indicates a break in the poem.

14. The absence of punctuation blurs somewhat the poem’s **syntax structure**. The poem begins with a bare subject — there is no predicate. The analysis and limits of sentences are not unambiguous. the sentences following the break are whole, containing both sentence parts.

15. The syntactical imbalance of the first part of the poem is accentuated by the **structure of the lines**. In the beginning of the poem, the lines are almost all (except for lines 4 and 6) “en

jambementé" (the syntax transfers to the next line). Line 16 which contains the break, and the next line, are still "en jambementé". The following lines are complete and syntactically with clear limits.

The two-part content-composition of the poem is clear in the line and sentence construction as well. There is development from the restless, "broken" lines to evenness and balance. The repetition of the construction (ole . . . ole . . . ole) at the end of the poem indicates a rise of emotions, to an emphatic point.

16. The lack of **stanzaic analysis** is conceptual: wholeness emphasizes the unity of the world.

In Conclusion.

Jaan Kaplinski has asserted: "There, where Paul-Eerik Rummo paused, Jaan Kaplinski, as the consistent caster of spells, appeared with his second collection *About Ashes and Colours*." The writer does admit that the whole collection is his spell to break barriers. "Casting spells, putting yourself into a shamanistic trance gives only temporary exaltation." (Kaplinski 1983: 234)

Putting oneself into a shamanistic trance should undoubtedly exclude rational creation. It is more likely that there would be vague subconscious improvisation.

To which extent does the analysis affirm the poet's own myth.

Seemingly free improvisation turns out to be a detailed lack of structure. Behind the "unnoticeable form" we have a system of connections and relationships, which embrace all levels of the poem. Many elements are used in various subsystems, adding to the interconnectivity of the poem (e.g. TÜÜTUS TÜÜTUS appears simultaneously in the phonetic, morphological, lexical-semantic subsystems, as well as in structural opposites at the beginning and the end of the poem; Andromeda belongs to the coordinates of time and space).

Single words are united according to characteristics of form and meaning into subsystems, which in the poem divide into two contrasting halves. The content-compositional contrast is apparent in the systems and forms in only one of the contrasting halves of the poem (sound orchestration, foreign expressions, indefinite

pronouns in the first half; place names, imperative forms etc. only in the second half of the poem).

The contextual contrasts of the poem can be characterized with a number of opposites: artificial — natural (cultura — natura), secondary — primary, reflective — immediate, static — “flowing”, notional — perceptual, apparent — real, abstract — concrete, rational — emotional, ephemeral — eternal, limited — open, incomprehensible — comprehensible, alien — native, “tedious” — “sacred”, occidental — oriental. Axiomatically, the pairs of opposites tend to the scheme of plus-minus.

“TÜÜTUS TÜÜTUS” is not a programmed poem. The poet’s world-view, influenced by Zen, is still reflected in it. This is shown in the detail of the specific cases of the world cognition, time and space, relationship between subject and object and the axiological system. The key words and symbols of the poem are repeated in the poet’s other works, and are part of a wider scheme.

The paradoxes in Kaplinski’s interpretation of the world and art are graphically demonstrated in this poem. The opposites of two different perceptions of the world — as “TÜÜTUS TÜÜTUS” presents it — is an occidental model, where the struggle between good and evil creates the balance of being. The poem “THIS SPRING FILLS ME WITH JOY”, from the same collection, is also built up on analogical contrasts. Kaplinski actually creates a picture of a semanticized world, which he rejects in the same poem. One part of his building is the “card house of categories”, which he wishes to leave in order to enter the real world. Transcending limits and stepping out into openness is shown to be an illusion. “It is difficult to become light.” Zen poetry does not declare its perception of the world or contrast it to others. In haiku and tanka, the existential experience is trapped in the words. Even the poem just IS.

Kaplinski’s aspirations to openness, to transcend the limits and for pure experiences provides an intense synthesis in the collection *About Ashes and Colors* — without concern about discord. Or, perhaps, even thanks to discord.

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Amor de palabras, amor por las palabras, palabras en amor: la idea del amor en un cuento de Tommaso Landolfi

ALESSANDRO BALDI

Tommaso Landolfi nace en 1908 en Pico, un pueblo no lejos de Roma, en una familia de la pequeña nobleza rural, y ya de niño encuentra en la versificación lírica el medio ideal para expresar sus sentimientos y sus emociones, este medio será después reservado a la contemplación de inquietudes más profundas. Estudia las lenguas europeas de cultura y las asiáticas, para disfrutar directamente con sus literaturas; se licencia en ruso y empieza un trabajo de traducción, desde aquel idioma, que nunca abandonará. Todo esto acontece en la tercera década de este siglo, cuando la política cultural fascista iba encerrándose cada vez más en una oscura autarquía, retórica y nacionalista.

El “plurilingüismo” landolfiano comprende también los lenguajes sectoriales de las artes y de las profesiones e incluye el patrimonio histórico de la lengua italiana y de sus dialectos. Pero, a pesar de su total dominio formal sobre la lengua, él siempre afirmará que la escritura es un instrumento privilegiado para observar el devenir del ser por el cual se siente vivido: escribir para hablar de sí mismo a sí mismo, para buscar un orden, un equilibrio y un sentido existencial que le parece tanto más escapársele cuanto más son los nuevos elementos culturales que adquiere. Esta actitud, que ponía en cuestión la poética del “neorrealismo”, fue muy estimada por los especialistas más críticos cuyo reconocimiento obtuvo en los años 60 y que le valió los premios literarios más prestigiosos. Sin embargo, sus obras no tuvieron una gran difusión editorial. Landolfi publicó ininterrumpidamente

desde 1937 hasta 1978, sobre todo relatos cortos, cuyas temáticas siempre tienden a alejarse de la realidad aparente de las cosas, para alcanzar una dimensión hiperrealista, cuando no fantástica e imaginativa. Colaboró en las más importantes revistas de cultura y en periódicos como crítico literario, teatral y como narrador; escribió guiones para teatro y reunió sus poemas en dos volúmenes (Bernabò Secchi 1978).

“Lluvia” es el título del relato que aparece en *Del Meno*, la última colección publicada por Landolfi en 1978. A través de éste relato intentaremos analizar su concepción del amor. El comienzo del cuento ve al narrador y marido comentarnos los difíciles primeros contactos de su mujer con el nuevo día. Esta situación es habitual, pero ahora se convierte en algo significativo por conllevar el rechazo de que sea legítimo entre enamorados tener una vida onírica autónoma. La mujer pregunta al marido por un detalle que ha olvidado del sueño que acaba de tener. Él no se entera y se siente provocado; inmediatamente surge la polémica. Él intenta pedir a la mujer que le explique los razonamientos expuestos. Ella responde con un argumento: dentro de una pareja los sentidos y las verdades dependen de una “colaboración semántica” que trascienda la referencialidad convencional y que recurra a la empatía. La estrategia pragmática decidida por la mujer es impecable. Su recurrir al sentimiento de los celos es un poco cínico, pero eficaz. El acuerdo parece casi alcanzado: se deja la polemica; el hombre acepta complimentar el “texto” del sueño de la mujer, pero es suficiente que suelte una palabra no pertinente con el campo semántico onírico para romper una efímera empatía entre los dos. El cuento termina con la formulación por parte del narrador de una pregunta que plantea una trágica duda sobre la capacidad de las palabras para facilitar la comunicación íntima entre las personas.

En una primera aproximación, aparece el amor como producto de una larga filtración y reformulación de uno de los más inquietantes interrogantes que atraviesan la búsqueda de conciencia: ¿es posible amar? Para entender mejor la especificidad de la última, pero no definitiva, concepción del amor de Landolfi, intentaremos definir algunas constantes que nos parece poder encontrar en toda su obra con respecto a ese tema, y que también en

este relato pueden ser utilizadas como claves interpretativas: el amor cocebido como producto de palabra y entonces hecho de palabras; el amor hacia las palabras; las palabras en la relación de amor.

Amor de palabras. El amor está hecho de palabras: las que utilizan los amantes para hablar de la experiencia emocional por la que "son vividos" y cuyo sentido a veces se les escapa; aquéllas que utiliza el autor para crear el mundo perceptivo en el cual actuarán sus personajes enamorados. Pero en la realidad ficcional de la narración, como en la verdadera vida, lo cotidiano no favorece el amor: el ideal perseguido se presenta inalcanzable; la fuerza irresistible del enamoramiento, no controlable racionalmente, provoca una exagerada reacción de defensa de la propia identidad amenazada, al darse cuenta, en momentos ocasionales de lucidez, de la pérdida del propio YO, confundido en el otro. Una medida de defensa sería, en este caso, rechazar el amor propio en el momento en el que sería más necesario, para evitar el daño de la desilusión o de la conciencia de la redención imposible (David 1966).

Amor por las palabras. Si alguna forma de amor fuera posible, ésta sería la que un hombre mantuviese con las palabras: éstas serían para Landolfi el objeto más material que un hombre pueda engendrar y, por tanto, el único capaz de conllevar los sentimientos más entrañables: el amor y el odio. Pero hay que liberarse del fruto de este alumbramiento cerebral, antes de que una descontrolada proyección narcisista del propio YO sobre ello conlleve la ensimismación con esta efímera creación y determine que se produzca la forma morbosa y posesiva de amor que existiría entre madre y hijo. Hay que defenderse de esta forma de amor, porque las palabras no admiten propiedad y exclusiones: todos pueden hablar con las palabras de un individuo determinado y el puede hablar con las de todos (Macrí 1990).

Palabras en amor. Las palabras son el medio para ponerse en contacto con el otro, el medio que le sorprende indefenso, que le penetra a pesar suyo; a través de las palabras se ofrecen mundos posibles dentro de los cuales la existencia es perfecta y el cautiverio ineludible; con las palabras se puede dar la vida y se puede quitar. Pues, ciertas palabras, por su íntima fuerza, no pueden ser

dichas, así como ciertas cosas, por vivir en sociedad, no se deben hacer. Así las palabras, engañosas por su naturaleza, no consiguen superar el filtro lógico que, puesto conscientemente por el autor para encauzar su desbordamiento, desenmascara su falsedad, su insostenibilidad y su metafisicidad (Fontanella 1983).

Definidas las constantes interpretativas que nos parece se puedan aislar en la manera landolfiana de enfrentarse con el del tema del amor, intentaremos señalar algunas de sus manifestaciones en el texto elegido. El arranque parece autobiográfico como en muchos otros textos suyos: aquí es su esposa quien está bajo observación, en otras páginas será un hijo, un conocido o un sirviente que dialogan con el YO-narrador. De todas formas es suficiente leer las líneas siguientes del relato, para entender que cuanto más cercano al narrador parece el personaje, menos cerca estamos del mundo relatado del que se parte, que es individual y concreto, para llegar a problemáticas universales y abstractas, literalizadas y culturalizadas que Landolfi desvela a través de los instrumentos de la transfiguración fantástica e imaginaria (Ceni 1976).

La oportunidad para que se produzca el deslizamiento desde un escenario real a uno imaginario consiste en este caso en el rechazo del personaje femenino a reconocer el límite entre la vigilia y el sueño, y su búsqueda de solidaridad con su compañero a través de palabras que evocan significados coherentes sólo en los sueños, con tal de compartir íntima y totalmente las percepciones, puesto que todo eso es, para ella, presupuesto imprescindible del amor. Al YO-narrador no le queda sino defenderse con los ineficaces instrumentos racionales que él ha desarrollado, pero su mujer no, en un contexto discursivo constituido por dos personas encerradas en dos posiciones opuestas que van a colisionar. Las condiciones puestas por la mujer para que no haya choque es que su compañero construya un sistema de palabras que pueda darle la certeza de que las percepciones que ella tiene correspondan a una realidad objetiva: poco le importa si ese juego no es socializable. Para nada sirven las quejas del hombre al darse cuenta de que se trata de un juego insostenible: se le pide entrar, con palabras, en el sueño del otro para describirlo -y no para interpretarlo como el psicoanálisis enseña-, para que active un universo inalcanzable a las posibili-

dades cognitivas humanas. El resultado, que inútilmente él intentó evitar, fatalmente se produce: el dolor de la mujer obligada a renunciar a la totalidad a la que aspiraba, inalcanzable, debido a la imposibilidad de fundirse de dos individuos que comparten sólo sus propias soledades; el dolor del hombre que, después de haber reconocido legitimidad a las aspiraciones de su mujer, vive su incapacidad de compartir las vibraciones de los demás, como un caso específico de la enfermedad que afectaría al género humano. La pregunta que cierra el cuento -¿de dónde viene el perenne desacuerdo entre nuestros humores y hasta entre nuestros sentimientos?- es retórica, puesto que "perenne" indica la insolubilidad del "desacuerdo" que hace a una persona impermeable respecto al proyecto existencial de la otra. Esta confirmación paraliza al hombre en el estado en el que es condenado desde cuando fue abandonado en el mundo: tanto más incapacitado a pedir y a aceptar amor, cuanto más va descubriendo que la falta de sentido existencial y de amor son las dos caras de la misma moneda (Caretti 1976).

Pero si la insuficiencia de las palabras no favorece el amor entre las personas, sí puede el hombre amar las palabras, y las páginas de Landolfi son un ejemplo perfecto de ese amor, que conlleva la estricta interacción entre los lenguajes hablados por los distintos personajes y determina su peculiar lengua. Unos personajes hablan como intelectuales, otros, en cambio, se expresan de forma humilde. El resultado es un controlado enredo de distintas lenguas que rompen el opaco fluir de la estructura "monolingüística", que no consigue entregarnos los tonos expresivos de la lengua viva entretejida con arcaismos y neologismos, con culteranismos e idiotismos, con tecnicismos y palabras inventadas. A veces, un término de uso común es repentinamente desautomatizado a través de una rigurosa investigación sobre la legitimidad de su uso, y después desposeído de significado; otras veces el mismo destino toca a un término rebuscado o a uno dialectal. De todas formas, nunca se tiene la sensación de asistir a la docta disquisición de un académico, sino siempre la de estar frente a una competente, pero pudorosa, contemplación, de la celebración en las palabras, de la existencia de un ser autónomo a cuya existencia se ha contribuido, pero que ya no nos pertenece. En sus escritos, Landolfi consigue

que revivan las muchas lenguas que determinaron su mundo perceptivo: la de los autores clásicos, de los románticos, de los rusos; pero también la de los campesinos del Lazio, la de las artes practicadas por sus personajes, hasta la que se habla en los casinos. La lengua multiforme que brota no se cristaliza en un estilo rígido y sigue evolucionando, sometida al mismo método de "cariñosa" observación y manipulación (Ghetti Abruzzi 1979)

Hasta ahora consideramos las palabras como material utilizado por nuestro autor, para construir el contexto en el cual ambientar una relación de amor, y su estudio de las palabras, bajo el punto de vista lingüístico y estilístico, como si su exigencia fuera la de alejarse de ellas para ganar distancia emotiva; ahora consideraremos las palabras en su entrelazamiento dialógico.

Nos gustaría observar el refinado juego autoirónico del autor que, en este cuento, atribuye al personaje femenino un comportamiento que se abandona a la proliferación fantástica y al misticismo, mientras que normalmente estos son atributos de lo masculino, que constantemente intenta abrir pasos en su propio YO de manera que el inconsciente pueda aflorar. Aquí hay una proyección desautomatizante sobre el personaje femenino que permitiría al masculino tomar distancia de su propia actitud típica y, así, reconocer su propia neurosis en la del otro. La araña que en el sueño tira la berlina -a pesar de sus múltiples evocaciones simbólicas- es sólo uno más de los insectos y animales que pueblan los cuentos de Landolfi: a menudo simbolizan las obsesiones, las fobias, las aspiraciones del personaje que mantiene relaciones con ellos; pero a menudo están en la narración y desarrollan el papel de personajes con su propia vida, a veces de calidad y coherencia superiores a los humanos, por ser inmune a los vicios conectados al uso sofisticado del lenguaje. El personaje humano, aunque se sienta fatalmente atraído por la más pura animalidad, no consigue participar de aquella vida, impedido en el fondo por una forma de conocer vinculada al determinismo e incapaz de practicar la red de relaciones en que es articulada la realidad fenoménica.

Desde el punto de vista estilístico, es interesante notar, en la primera parte del cuento, el registro culto y formal utilizado por el narrador y su abandono en los diálogos a través de la utilización de registros informales cotidianos: frases hechas y elípticas, formas

populares directas y agresivas son utilizadas para alcanzar efectos enfáticos y expresivos. La presencia simultánea y contradictoria de estilemas expresivos y de análisis lógicos interrumpe la continuidad semántica del diálogo conllevando la imposición del signifiicante a la atención del autor, del personaje y del lector: todos los elementos de la interacción literaria están obligados a interrumpir la fruición superficial del texto para pararse y considerar la fragilidad y la aleatoriedad del medio lingüístico en la comunicación y en el proceso cognitivo en acto (Bernabò Secchi 1978).

Landolfi cierra su cuento como filósofo, después de haberlo empezado como refinado estilista. Su filosofía consiste en la valiosa admisión de la complejidad de la realidad fenoménica y en el rechazo del modelo cognitivo determinístico y, estilísticamente, del mimetismo realista. Su método consiste en el incesante planteamiento de preguntas para establecer la red de relaciones de las múltiples causas y efectos que interaccionan vertiginosamente e impiden la construcción de modelos estables para la descripción del objeto complejo observado. Su pensamiento filosófico se expresa en forma literaria para disfrutar así de la posibilidad que esta forma ofrece: mantener abierto un sistema, por otro lado muy riguroso. Esta forma le permite rellenar los vacíos cognitivos que el método sistemático de la filosofía, frenado por las suspensiones cautelares de juicio, deja frente al sujeto cognitivo; es capaz de acoger en sí el material asistemático, no controlable rigurosamente que procede directamente de la vida vivida y que la filosofía no puede utilizar directamente. La tarea del autor es la de intentar someter las palabras que componen la literatura bajo un código que lleve un principio de orden en su caótica proliferación. Al final de este proceso se produce una forma parcial de conocimiento que asegura un equilibrio provisional e impide buscar respuestas metafísicas y consoladoras (Macrí 1980).

Finalmente, según Landolfi el amor formaría parte de aquellos fenómenos sobre los que ya no se puede tener certezas racionales: en sus líneas nunca encontraremos un juicio explícito sobre la relación amorosa, pero sí podríamos deducir de su manera de tratar el tema del amor un trágico y simple concepto existencial: la vida es vivible sólo como acto de amor, pero es imposible vivir indefinidamente, siendo imposible amar indefinidamente.

Salinger Revisited: *The Catcher in the Rye* and "Generation X"

REET SOOL

The present paper was originally designed for and presented at a conference workshop devoted to echoes and reverberations from the past in contemporary American novel. This 'look back in anger' — stance accounts for the combination of the supposedly too-well-known (Salinger) with the relatively unknown (Coupland, at least for the Estonian reader) in this article, creating a slightly 'revisiting revisited' John Barthian atmosphere who, as we know, chose to entitle his latest novel *Once Upon a Time*.

"Once upon a time and a very good time it was" (Joyce 1981: 7), to quote James Joyce's famous opening of *A Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man*, there was *The Catcher in the Rye* with its equally well-known metafictional opening. The narrator starts his story in the subjunctive mood: "If you really want to hear about it /..." (Salinger 1986: 1), thus offering the reader an ostensible choice. The narrator of "Generation X" begins in the indicative: "Back in the late 1970s, when I was fifteen years old, I spent every penny I then had in the bank to fly across the continent in a 747 jet to Brandon, Manitoba, deep in the Canadian prairies to witness a total eclipse of the sun." (Coupland 1991: 3) Neither narrator bothers to go into "all that David Copperfield kind of crap" (1), yet both are very much narration- or story-telling-conscious. The story of Holden has been placed within the frames of directly addressing the reader and, very cleverly, incorporating the question of D. B., a fiction-writing brother of Holden, into the text: "D. B. asked me what I thought about all this stuff I just finished telling you about. I didn't know what the hell to say." (Salinger 1986: 213) "All this

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stuff" has been told and it is finished now, although it has been implied there is more to tell. "THAT'S ALL I'm going to tell about. I could probably tell you what I did after I went home, and how I got sick and all, and what school I'm supposed to go to next fall, after I get out of here, but I don't feel like it. I really don't. Thet stuff doesn't interest me too much right now." (213) The very ending, the "right now" could imply a sequel sometime in the future, a revisiting of its own turn.

"Generation X", however, is quite explicit on this point. The three characters, including the narrator, have come to Californian desert, leaving behind their middle-class lives they hate as much as Holden does his, "to tell stories and to make our lives worthwhile tales in the process." (Coupland 1991: 8) The novel is, basically, a series of stories told by the characters that have instigated their own policy of story-telling: "The only rule is that we're not allowed to interrupt, just like in AA and at the end we're not allowed to criticize." (Coupland, 1991: 14) Note the subtle reference to criticism: in *The Catcher in the Rye* the narrator is asked by a writer what he "thought about all this stuff" (Salinger, 1986: 213) but in "Generation X" all critique is ruled out by previous agreement. Describing his earlier life, a character says: "My life had become a series of scary incidents that simply weren't stringing together to make for an interesting book /.../ (Coupland 1991: 31) The implication here could be: my new life in the desert has acquired a new meaning, its incidents now string together to make for at least a readable book. Once again, "Either our lives become stories, or there's just no way to get through them." (Coupland 1991: 8) Or else, very dexterously, "Here the three of us merely eat a box lunch on a land that is barren — the equivalent of blank space at the end of the chapter — and a land so empty that all the objects placed on its breathing, hot skin become objects of irony. And here, under the big white sun, I get to watch Dag and Claire pretend they inhabit that other, more welcoming universe." (Coupland, 1991: 16) "That other, more welcoming universe" could be viewed, flatly, as that of the stories, the imaginary, the metafictional. This is what adds to the John Barthian flavour of the book.

Curiously, *The Catcher in the Rye* has been translated into Estonian and Russian as "The Ravine in the Rye" and "Over the Ravine in the Rye", respectively. The important noun 'catcher' has been omitted altogether. In Salinger nothing is said about the ravine, only the world 'cliff' figures. Holden says: "And I'm standing on the edge of some crazy cliff. What I have to do, I have to catch everybody if they start to go over the cliff /.../ (Salinger 1986: 173) The active, protective aspect has been replaced in these translations by the impending threatening one. As is well known, *The Catcher in the Rye* became a kind of cult novel in the 1950s and early 1960s in the US with many young people identifying themselves with its disaffected protagonist. One could, in a way, speak about the Catcher in the Rye Generation. By today, one certainly has heard about the Generation X, not necessarily in association with the novel, however, since the term (or title) has become part of the vernacular.

Writes a reviewer: "Coupland has come out of nowhere with Generation X, a book enveloped in clouds of hype optimistically proclaiming it as that publishing Holy Grail, 'the new Catcher in the Rye'. Here, at last, so the hype has it, is the book that defines twenty-something generation, Generation X: a term publishers seem inordinately pleased with, considering it has had two previous outings. First it was the title of an early 1960s piece of youthcult sociology, and then the name for Billy Idol's vaguely seminal punk combo." (Williams 1992: 40)

Besides being enveloped in "clouds of hype", the novel is quite literally wrapped up in clouds on both covers and a small square of clouds on the first page of each new chapter. The square format of the book has been described as 'fetching' (Ibid.), the wide margins 'peppered' (Ibid.) with neologisms, cartoons, definitions and slogans. The latter have been characterized as 'vapid' (Ibid.), i. e. tasteless and uninteresting. This could be argued, of course, these slogans and messages are meant to be vapid, absurd, irksome, provocative — ultimately, 'épater le bourgeois = non-young' — type, and in this sense they are pathetic. In fact, many just fall flat, not being 'cool' enough as, for example, "Stop history" (Coupland, 1991: 40), "Reinvent the middle class" (Coupland, 1991: 112), "Less is a possibility" (Coupland, 1991: 144),

"Eroticize intelligence" (Coupland, 1991: 81), "You are your own sex" (Coupland, 1991: 102); or too enigmatic but tame at the same time: "The love of meat prevents any real change" (Coupland, 1991: 10), "Soil isn't a document" (Coupland, 1991: 14), etc. There are, however, funny or witty ones among the rest: "Bench press your IQ" (Coupland, 1991: 90), but no Jenny Holzer-style absurd messages of the "Why is office?", "When is marriage?" (Featherstone 1994: 41) kind.

In short, the means by which this text makes a book of itself and proposes itself to the reader, the "undecided zone" or "paratext", to quote Gérard Genette (Genette 1991: 41), are quite conspicuous. Cartoon art, lists and indexes, text blocks, overall fragmentation and structural looseness create the desired effect, not unlike the computer-generated virtual reality.

This novel, however, was neither created by the computer, nor, to follow the Salinger pattern, is it the kind of book, Holden might have written about himself 40 years later. Incidentally, while writing on Sylvia Plath's novel "The Bell Jar", Robert Scholes says: "'The Bell Jar' is a novel about the events of Sylvia Plath's twentieth year; about how she tried to die, and how they stuck her together with glue. It is a fine novel, as bitter and remorseless as her last poems — the kind of book Salinger's Franny might have written about herself ten years later, if she had spent those years in Hell." (Scholes, cited in Plath 1979) Comparisons like these sound somewhat naive, being, of course, quite common. For example, a critic observes that "This first novel by Douglas Coupland is what Sartre might have penned had he hung out in a shopping mall instead of Café Deux Magots. An existential *cri de coeur* brayed by the members of a middle-class, *fin de siècle* society (the new lost generation), this engagingly written book bursts with imagination and insight." (Kelly 1991: 46) There is a sprinkling of French throughout the novel and the name Camus is dropped casually, as well as the phrase "a *fin de siècle* existentialist poseur" (Coupland, 1991: 85). In library catalogues, one is invariably directed to look for 'alienation', 'existentialism', 'youth'.

The world 'generation' has appealed to many reviewers and critics, in addition to 'the new lost generation', terms like 'slacker

generation' (after a film by Richard Linklater, "Slacker"), 'the MTV generation', 'the jilted generation' have been hawked about. By choosing this ambitious title, Coupland has certainly undertaken to speak for his generation, thus eliciting sarcastic remarks about his work speaking more of its desire to speak for a generation than anything else. (Shone 1993: 23) However, in a letter of 1922, T. S. Eliot complains: "I dislike the word 'generation', which has been a talisman for the last ten years; when I wrote a poem called *The Waste Land* some of the more approving critics said I had expressed the "disillusionment of a generation", which is nonsense. I may have expressed for them their own illusion of being disillusioned, but that did not form part of my intention." (Eliot, quoted in Lyndall 1988: 118)

It seems to have formed part of Coupland's intention, though. He gives the definition of the title obliquely, in the text, but not blatantly on the margin — as "the shin jin rui that's what the Japanese newspapers call people like those kids in their twenties as the office — new human beings. It's hard to explain. We have the same group over here and it's just as large, but it doesn't have a name — an X generation — purposefully hiding itself. There's more space over here to hide in — to get lost in — to use as camouflage. You're not allowed to disappeared in Japan." (56)

In the US you are allowed to get lost and disappear, it seems, especially in the West. Of the three characters, all in their late twenties, one is from Toronto, Canada, one from Los Angeles, California, and one from Portland, Oregon — but where you're from feels sort of irrelevant these days ("Since everyone has the same stores in their mini-malls." (Coupland 1991: 4) Actually, places matter a lot in this novel, and they have been characterized vividly, to say the least. The narrator says of Toronto: "a city that when I once visited gave the efficient, ordered feel of the Yellow Pages sprung to life in three dimensions, peppered with trees and veined with cold water." (Coupland 1991: 18) Speaking of Palm Springs, or Hell-with Palm-Trees, put deridingly, he says: "There is no weather in Palm Springs — just like TV. There is also no middle class, and in that same sense the place is medieval ..." (Coupland 1991: 10) In their hatred of things and middle class, from which they come themselves, the three are almost pathetic,

and it is there that the author slips into journalese frequently: "the three of us chose to live here, for the town is undoubtedly a quiet sanctuary from the bulk of middle-class life" (10) or, worse still, style-wise: "We live small lives on the periphery; we are marginalized and there's a great deal which we choose not to participate. We wanted silence and we have that silence now." (Coupland, 1991: 11)

The contempt for things is most conspicuous, it has been stressed throughout the book, too obviously, mostly: "You wouldn't want to worry yourself with so many things." /.../ "Because all of those objects would only mutiny and slap you in the face. They'd only remind you that all you're doing with your life is collecting objects. And nothing else." (Coupland, 1991: 11) "I don't want any presents for Christmas. I don't want any things in my life." (Coupland, 1991: 143) To undercut this straightforwardness, the glossary on the margin gives the following definition: Conspicuous minimalism: A life-style tactic similar to Status Substitution. The nonownership of material goods flaunted as a token of moral and intellectual superiority. (Coupland, 1991: 107) Or, more wittily, The Emperor's New Mall: The popular notion that shopping malls exist on the insides only and have no exterior. The suspension of visual belief engendered by this notion allows shoppers to pretend that the large, cement blocks thrust into their environment do not, in fact, exist. (Coupland, 1991: 71) In this context, the title of one of the chapters is meaningful: Our parents had more (9). Could it imply a case of sour grapes, the rejection of what one could not get even, and especially, if one tried, or tried hard?

Holden is much less concerned with things, those do not as yet suffocate him. Rather, he feels uneasy about having better suitcases than his roommate. The very idea of a conventional career in the future repels him, though: "And I'd be working in some office, making a lot of dough, and riding to work in cabs and Madison Avenue buses, and going to the movies and seeing a lot of stupid shorts and coming attractions and newsreels. Newsreels. Christ almighty /.../" (Salinger, 1989: 133) At present he gets 'dough' from his parents and grandmother and, eventually kid sister Phoebe, so he does not have to take money seriously, even though

he drops the casual remark of "Goddam money. It always ends up making you blue as hell." (133) Generation Xers' attitudes are much more complex in this respect, based on bitter experience. They react philosophically, giving up as undesirable what they cannot get anyway.

The portrayal of New York in *The Catcher in the Rye* is not as rich and imaginative as in "Generation X", though more sustained, perhaps. "I hate living in New York and all. Taxicabs, and Madison Avenue buses with the drivers and all always yelling at you to get out at the rear door /.../" (130) Or else, "New York's terrible when somebody laughs on the street very late at night. You can hear it for miles. It makes you feel so lonesome and depressed." (81) Compare Coupland: "A shimmering, endless New York, shaped of lipsticks, artillery shells, wedding cakes, and folded shirt cardboards, a city built of iron, papier-maché and playing cards; an ugly/lovely world surfaced with carbon and icicles and bougainvillea vines." (Coupland, 1991: 51)

Holden dreams of going out West "where it was very pretty and sunny, and where nobody'd know me and I'd get a job. I figured I could get a job at a filling station somewhere, putting gas and oil in people's cars. I didn't care what kind of job it was, though. Just so people didn't know me and I didn't know anybody. I thought what I'd do was, I'd pretend I was some of those death-mutes." (Salinger 1989: 198) In short, Holden plans to have a Mcjob — "low-pay, low-prestige, low-dignity, low-benefit, no-future job in the service sector, frequently considered a satisfying career choice by people who have never held one." (Coupland 1991: 5), to quote form "Generation X". The Xers are out in the West "where the weather is hot and dry and where the cigarettes are cheap" (31) and where one could " /.../ breathe dust, and walk with the dogs — to look at a rock or a cactus and know that I am the first person to see that cactus and that rock" (59) (Cf. Eliot: Here is no water but only rock/ Rock and no water and the sandy road ... (Eliot 1990: 64)) Of all "Generation X" landscapes, desert is the most significant, the most real and honest — "lunar, granular, parched, and desperate" (172) — pared down to the essential, the core, uncluttered with the past. Places mean more to people than they generally recognize. Says Holden: "I've left schools and places I

didn't even know I was leaving them. I hate that. I don't care if it's a sad good-bye or a bad good-bye, but when I leave a place I like to know I'm leaving it. If you don't feel even worse." (4) Moving on, leaving people and places, selling homes, buying new ones, making new acquaintances (not friends in the true sense of the word), leaving those again to move on seems all too American. The Norwegian narrator in Knut Hamsun's *On the Grassgrown Paths* (*Paa gjengrodde stier*) cannot understand how people can sell their childhood homes in America without any regret or pain: "To think that young Bridget didn't throw herself down and groan out loud when her childhood home was being sold. Yet there was a narrow path leading to the wood and there were small birds nesting on the trees that she now left behind.

/.../ Oh God, the brook had been sold!" (Hamsun 1994: 102) "We don't understand those people here", says Pat", an Irishman. "That's what makes our being here so unpleasant." (Ibid.) (My translation.) The ease of moving on and leaving everything behind could be perhaps described as a kind of homelessness for which one starts practicing early in the US. New schools, new teachers, new friends and enemies, new 'phonies', 'bastards', 'jerks', 'perverts', 'morons', to use Holden's politically incorrect vocabulary. John Updike, whom Vladimir Nabokov singled out in his *Strong Opinions*, together with Salinger, as "By far the finest artists in recent years in America" (Nabokov, 1973: 58) says of Russia in *Bech: A Book*: "This must be the only country in the world you can be homesick for while you're still in it. Russia is one big case of homesickness." (Updike, 1971: 29) Venturing to paraphrase, the US might easily be viewed as one big case of homelessness that strikes you while you are still here (think of the work of Thomas Wolfe).

This feeling of inner homelessness has much to do in both novels, as do 'angst' and the pain of being young in this technological world of ours. Both have circular structure, too. "Generation X" opens with a memorable episode in a corn (not rye) field where the then fifteen-year-old narrator witnesses a total eclipse of the sun (an apocalyptic experience for him). It ends with the "catcher in the rye" episode reversed — in a charred field where farmers have been burning off the stubble, so the smoke forms a

thermonuclear mushroom-shaped cloud on the horizon, which scares the narrator almost to death. A vanload of mentally retarded teenagers have been watching the sight — a white egret circling above the black field and grazing the narrator's scalp — now rushing to comfort the grown-up, the ill-adjusted, socially retarded one. The first child to touch him cannot even articulate the word 'bird', she is speechless the way Holden thought he would pretend to be out West. The children do not catch, they clutch. "Then, from behind me I felt another pair of hands /.../ Than another pair. Suddenly I was dog-piled by an instant family, in their adoring, healing, uncritical embrace, each member wanting to show their affection more than the other. They began to hug me — too hard — as though I were a doll, unaware of the strength they exerted. I was being winded — crushed — pinched and trampled. /.../ this crush of love was unlike anything I had ever known." /.../ I can't remember whether I said thank you." (179)

At this note of tenderness, the novel ends, to be revisited perhaps in years to come.

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O □ Δ: trois formèmes en anamorphose sémiotique

KIM YOUNG-HAE

Que ce soit en sémiotique visuelle ou textuelle, les modèles iconiques ou conceptuels sous-jacents peuvent souvent être matérialisés par trois unités de forme: le cercle, le carré et le triangle — soit en deux dimensions, soit en trois dimensions. Notre démarche consiste non seulement à relever la présence des trois formèmes dans les systèmes culturels complexes — dans la matrice de la géométrie, l'origine du calcul mathématique, l'unité architecturale, la proportion esthétique, la structure cosmogonique, le symbole religieux, etc. —, mais aussi à prendre en compte le fait que notre manière de concevoir un monde sémiotique actuel n'échappe pas facilement à ces formèmes.

Dans notre approche, trois questions seront abordées: comment ces signes opèrent-ils dans le domaine sémiotique ce qui suppose que nous n'en restions pas à un banal décodage de symboles? comment les trois formèmes reflètent-ils des images anamorphiques dans les divers contextes culturels? enfin est-ce que les trois formèmes sont les images des concepts ou bien ces modèles ont-ils une influence sur les structures des concepts?

Les trois unités de forme

Le cercle, le carré et le triangle sont des unités de formes graphiques qui produisent sans cesse l'ordre des signes et des symboles. Au moment où s'établit une relation entre le signifiant et le signifié, elles deviennent des signes et dès que nous avons la

possibilité de percevoir et d'ajouter un autre sens commun, elles deviennent des symboles émotifs non figurables ou des symboles mentaux abstraits, et chacun représente des éléments de divers systèmes. Sans exagération, on peut dire que ces trois formes constituent les unités absolues de toutes formes existantes. Les formes rectangulaire, ovale, spirale, ou plus complexes des formes peuvent être divisées par les trois formèmes. En tant que symbole numérique, le cercle, le carré et le triangle peuvent être remplacés par les nombres 0-1, 2-4, et 3. L'idée de lier les trois formes aux chiffres remonte assez loin. Dans un texte ancien coréen qui se présente sous forme de chanson, il est dit: "...Le fils du soleil et de la lune répand la «sincérité» du dieu du Ciel par le trait du cercle, descend au monde et ainsi existent dix mille êtres. *Le cercle est l'un et Ce qui est sans pôle, le carré est le deux et Pôle Opposé et le (tri)angle est le trois et Pôle Suprême*¹. Le devoir de l'empereur Hanoung est le «bien-être de tous les hommes»..."². Les systèmes 0-1, 2-4, et 3 forment la base du système zéro, du système binaire du *Yi-Jing*³, de l'alphabet télégraphique de Morse, ou de l'ordinateur, du système duel ou double duel, et du système ternaire tel qu'on le retrouve dans les cultures indo-européennes, aussi bien que dans la civilisation coréenne, ainsi que du système du signe peircien ou de la théorie de la mimesis de Ricœur, etc.

Si on considère ces unités en trois dimensions, elles deviennent des formèmes architecturaux ou astraux. Au-delà des dimensions cosmiques, elles deviendront les formes de l'expérience mystique.

¹ Le «Pôle Suprême» est une traduction littérale de *taiguk*. Dans la tradition coréenne, il est représenté par un cercle divisé en trois lignes spirales divergées du centre.

² *In Sodo kyungjun* (Le Canon du Sodo — espace sacré du culte voué au Ciel) chapitre V. Attribué à Bal Gui-Ri, grand maître ermite, qui aurait vécu autour de trois mille ans av. J.-C. Le texte est repris dans un texte de compilation du XVI^{ème} siècle, puis à nouveau en 1911, ensuite in *Handankoki*, traduit et commenté en coréen par YIM Seung-Kuk, Jungsun Sekyesa, 1994, p. 229. Traduit en français par KIM Young-Hae.

³ *Livre des Mutations*, livre divinatoire ancien composé de soixante-quatre hexagrammes qui sont fondés sur les huit trigrammes obtenus par des combinaisons de deux traits: un trait continu et un trait discontinu.

Sommes-nous condamnés à tout penser à l'intérieur de ces trois formèmes?

Ce jeu de renvoi entre le concret et l'abstrait et entre l'univoque et le plurivoque nous permettra d'appréhender la sémiosis qui est à l'œuvre dans l'engendrement des différents systèmes.

De la géométrie au symbolique

Au commencement, il y a le point. Pour dessiner un cercle, un point central est indispensable comme point d'appui. Un pieu sera planté au centre pour tracer le cercle. Le point est l'origine du cercle. Parallèlement à cette règle géométrique, on donnera une interprétation symbolique du point: il représente l'Un, Dieu, et le cercle est l'émanation divine. Dans l'antiquité, les Coréens représentent «Dieu» comme un point, unité primordiale (*al*) On trouve sur une brique datant de la fin du III^{ème} siècle av. J.-C. un cercle contenant un point parmi les écritures, qui a le sens de «Dieu Un». (fig. 1⁴) Le mot *al* a aussi le sens d'un «œuf». Cette allusion nous rappelle le mythe d'origine du monde védique: au début il y avait un œuf d'or (*hiraṣṭyagarbha*, exactement «embryon d'or») qui flottait dans l'eau primitive⁵. Le *al* est l'origine de tout.



Fig. 1.

Chez les néo-platoniciens, une évidence géométrique se transforme en métaphore spirituelle. Selon Plotin, le centre est le père du cercle et il est comparé à Dieu. Lao-tseu a comparé aussi le Dao au moyeu de la roue: il est le centre du cercle, il accomplit toutes choses en étant immobile. Le cercle a émané du point, il est parfait. Ainsi il représente l'état divin. Dans

⁴ *Le secret du Tchun Bou Kyung et la culture du peuple Baik Dou*, d'après le maître KWUN Tai-Hun, compilé par JUNG Jai-Seung, p.48, Jungsin Sekyesa, Séoul, 1989. Cette forme qui se trouve aussi en Europe dans des peintures préhistoriques ou sur des poteries est souvent interprétée comme une représentation du soleil. Est-ce un pictogramme ou un idéogramme?

⁵ Rig Veda. 10, 129.

le bouddhisme zen, il symbolise l'état de l'illumination. Ce passage du graphisme concret à la métaphore abstraite est le commencement de la sémiotique.

Le cercle contient encore beaucoup de symboles. Il est la figure du mouvement cyclique des astres et il symbolise le ciel. Pour construire une cathédrale, les bâtisseurs font d'abord un plan circulaire, qui représente l'univers. Le cercle est coupé en deux, l'hémicycle du haut représente le ciel, celui du bas la terre. La cathédrale sera construite dans la zone de la terre, de telle façon que le centre de l'abside se situe au centre du grand cercle⁶ (fig. 2), là où l'on place le plus souvent l'image divine. Dans la pratique du mandala indien ou tibétain (*maṣāla* en sanskrit



Fig. 2.

signifie cercle), on cherche d'abord le centre en traçant deux lignes perpendiculaires, puis on trace le cercle. Dans le mandala, la dimension spatiale est verticale, puisque c'est une forme architecturale constituée de plusieurs étages vus de haut. Le cercle symbolise la voûte céleste, le carré symbolise la terre. Au milieu du carré se trouve un petit cercle où siège la conscience primordiale⁷. Le mouvement cyclique dans le cercle est sans commencement ni fin comme le temps qui s'écoule sans fin. De cette manière, le cercle symbolise le temps⁸, comme la forme du cadran d'une montre. La civilisation aztèque avait un calendrier fait d'un monolithe circulaire. Le planisphère égyptien est composé de douze zodiaques et il est aussi représenté sous la forme d'un cercle.

Le carré est dessiné au moyen d'une équerre. La plus ancienne représentation d'une équerre en Asie se trouve certainement dans la main de Fuxi, qui aurait vécu trois mille cinq cents ans av. J.-C. selon la tradition coréenne, accompagné d'une femme (sa sœur) Nuga, qui tient un compas dans la main. Par rapport au cercle, le carré symbolise un monde fini, créé, et notamment la terre. C'est

⁶ *L'Art des bâtisseurs romans*. Cahier de Boscodon, n° 4 1985.

⁷ *Tibet, la Roue du temps, pratique du mandala*, Actes Sud, 1995.

⁸ Cf. KIM Young-Hae, "Prolégomènes à une sémiotique de l'image de la temporalité en Extrême-Orient", *Sémiotiques*, n° 5, décembre, 1993, Didier-Erudition, Paris. pp. 69-89.

une stabilisation du mouvement cyclique et la matérialisation des quatre éléments en Occident, des cinq éléments en Extrême-Orient. Avec les quatre points cardinaux, le carré implique une idée d'équilibre dans la perfection. En Chine, le temple du Ciel est construit en forme de cercle, tandis que la ville et le palais sont construits sur la base d'un carré. Le plafond d'un tombeau coréen ou d'un temple indien est composé de divers carrés (fig. 3). Dans le mandala, le carré à l'intérieur d'un cercle symbolise le cosmos, le ciel et la terre (fig. 4), le carré à l'extérieur d'un cercle symbolise la divinité à l'intérieur de l'homme (fig. 5)



Fig. 3.



Fig. 4.

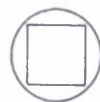


Fig. 5.

Le tracé des diagonales du carré divise celui-ci en quatre triangles. Le triangle équilatéral s'obtient à partir du cercle. L'application architecturale est la construction d'une pyramide dont la base est un carré. L'application graphique du triangle peut être le suivant: lorsque sa pointe est dirigée vers le haut, il représente l'élément du feu, lorsque la pointe dirigée vers le bas symbolisant l'eau. Le triangle symbolise l'harmonie par la symétrie, ce qui l'a fait choisir comme symbole par la franc-maçonnerie. Enfin, il est aussi, bien sûr, celui de la Trinité.

Dès que les signes sont surchargés de sens qui nécessitent des interprétations ésotériques, et accessibles aux seuls initiés, la connaissance herméneutique des vérités n'est possible qu'à travers des symboles, puisque les symboles rendent sensibles ce qui est inexprimable. Ce procédé ouvre un accès par lequel la symbolique glisse vers la sémiotique.

De la symbolique à la sémiotique

Depuis le trait sans signification jusqu'aux représentations de systèmes chargés de lourds symbolismes imbriqués, le cercle, le carré et le triangle offrent un inépuisable corpus sémiotique. Leur déploiement des fonctions symboliques actives crée un processus sémiotique dont nous pouvons établir la typologie.

a. pré-signe.

Le point est la source du cercle et le trait est le principe des autres formes. Ils sont en état d'engendrement symbolique, mais ils n'ont pas encore la corrélation signifiant/signifié. Par exemple, le point et le trait, en écriture, représentent pour le premier la fin, pour le second l'union, ou l'extension de l'explication (—), qui sont de pures conventions. L'alphabet télégraphique de Morse, composé de traits brefs et longs, est aussi conventionnel. Pourtant ces pré-signes (le point, le trait horizontal, le trait vertical) peuvent construire un système symbolique: ils sont les trois éléments du système des voyelles en coréen, contenant les symboles du ciel, de la terre et de l'homme. La corrélation établie n'est pas arbitraire, puisque la terre (un trait horizontal) a une ressemblance figurative. Cependant, ces traits ne sont pas utilisés pour désigner le ciel ou l'homme, ils sont des signes abstraits à usage purement phonétique. Par la combinaison d'un, deux ou trois éléments, les dix-huit possibilités sont utilisées par les voyelles coréennes.

b. naissance de signe par opposition

La composition du trigramme qui est la base du *Yi-Jing* est une combinaison fondée sur un seul trait: un trait et deux traits (ou un trait divisé). Ce trait est un élément non-signifiant, mais dès qu'un trait prend la position opposée, ils deviennent des signes: le trait continu est le yang, le principe masculin, le trait discontinu est le yin, le principe féminin.

Un trait horizontal et un trait opposé vertical qui se coupent forment une croix. Le signe mathématique fonctionne par opposition: un seul trait horizontal n'aurait pas de sens sans la figure composée d'une horizontale et d'une verticale qui signifie le «plus». Il y a une logique évidente dans le fait que le signe *plus* est

celui auquel est ajouté un trait *de plus*. Le signe de la multiplication n'est pas une figure opposée au signe de la division, composé d'un trait et de deux points, mais un opposé fonctionnel. Quant à la croix utilisée comme symbole religieux, elle est un symbole de l'union des opposés, du ciel et de la terre.

c. formème

Nous arrivons maintenant au cœur de notre sujet. Le cercle, le carré et le triangle existent par l'extension du point et du trait. Ces figures ajoutent la valeur de la dimension spatiale. De même que le cercle émané du point devient une image circulaire, temporelle, céleste, qui représente le système dynamique, le carré, ancré sur quatre côtés, symbolise l'arrêt, la stabilité, c'est une figure anti-dynamique. Dans les théories platoniciennes, le quaternaire se rapporte à la matérialisation de l'idée, au monde des phénomènes. Quant au triangle, il représente les essences, l'esprit par rapport aux matières représentées par le carré. Si nous tentons de schématiser tous les systèmes d'idées depuis l'antiquité jusqu'à nos jours, nous verrons qu'ils entrent tous à l'intérieur de ces trois formes. C'est le cas même pour un système complexe de pensée: il consistera alors en une série de juxtapositions ou de combinaisons de ces trois formes.

d. juxtaposition des formèmes

Puisque le système de notre langage ne peut plus échapper à ces trois formes, les images vont jouer le rôle principal. Elles deviennent des métalangages, ou des métasystèmes. C'est la raison pour laquelle dans tous les systèmes dogmatiques, le sens du dogme est transféré sur des symboles qui englobent ce que la langue n'a pas pu exprimer. Tout ce qui est de l'ordre du divin et du sacré adopte ce moyen. Le symbole du peuple d'Israël, l'Etoile de David, est composé d'une juxtaposition de deux triangles. Cependant, la juxtaposition ne donne pas simplement deux triangles, mais des lignes croisées qui forment d'autres figures: triangle, triangle renversé, triangle barré, triangle renversé barré. Ces triangles constituent respectivement les symboles de l'eau, de l'air et de la terre, alors que le triangle initial est le symbole du feu. Cela fonctionne aussi par rapport d'opposition (cf. b).

e. combinaison des formèmes

La croix celtique est un bon exemple puisqu'elle est composée d'un cercle, d'une croix en forme de carré et de cinq points. Les cercles représentent le divin, le néant, la vie terrestre et les cinq points représentent les cinq éléments (fig. 6). Le mandala tibétain contient les formes probablement les plus complexes: des cercles, des carrés, des triangles, un centre (fig. 7).



Fig. 6.



Fig. 7.

f. formème en trois dimensions.

La sphère, l'hexaèdre, le tétraèdre sont des formes de trois dimensions appliquées à l'architecture, mais difficile à appliquer aux schémas de la pensée. Pourtant nous les trouvons dans l'ancien texte coréen, *Tchun Bou Kyung*,⁹ pour exprimer une conception philosophico-cosmologique. Comme la plupart des textes initiatiques, ce texte est composé d'une manière énigmatique, accompagné de chiffres, mais récemment à partir du texte un modèle sphérique contenant l'hexaèdre et le tétraèdre basé du cercle, du carré et du triangle a été établi (fig. 8)¹⁰. Le modèle sphérique



Fig. 8.

comme la mesure de l'observation astronomique existait depuis longtemps: nous lisons que lorsque le roi Shun (2257 av. J.-C.) a succédé au roi Yao, il a d'abord observé le modèle sphérique du mouvement des astres en jade pour bien gouverner le pays. Cet épisode nous amène à nous poser la question suivante: une civilisation où la conception cosmique était

⁹ Transmis oralement et fixé en écriture ancienne au quatrième millénaire av. J.-C., puis transcrit au IX^{ème} siècle de notre ère en chinois d'après un épigraphe.

¹⁰ Réalisé par AN Ki-Suk, in *Le secret du Tchun Bou Kyung et la culture du peuple Baik Dou*, pp. 159-179.

représentée par une forme sphérique n'aurait-elle pas eu un système de pensée différent du système propre à la civilisation qui se représentait la terre sous la forme d'un carré? Nous y reviendrons.

g. trois formèmes en esthétique picturale.

En ce qui concerne la création picturale, les religions aniconiques adoptent les formes géométriques pour la décoration du temple, formes auxquelles sont attribuées des significations très chargées. Dans la peinture abstraite, et surtout dans le mouvement du «Cavalier bleu», les trois formèmes jouent de toute évidence un rôle important. Kandinsky analyse et utilise les formes dérivées du point et de la ligne. Ce qui nous intéresse ici est l'explication qu'il en donne. Il dit que le but de la théorie est de «trouver la vie, rendre perceptible sa pulsation, constater la conformité aux lois de tout ce qui vit»¹¹. Paul Klee voulait pénétrer l'intérieur et non refléter la surface et il a réalisé des tableaux composés de traits droits, de carrés, de rectangles, de triangles, de demi-cercles. Les formes sont quelquefois discernables uniquement par la couleur. Chez Mondrian le cadre même du tableau prend la forme d'un carré. De plus, l'espace intérieur du tableau est divisé par des lignes droites en plusieurs formes différentes de carrés. Victor Vasarely a affirmé que « toute création de l'homme est géométrique comme la structure interne de l'univers », et les formes du cube, du cercle, deviennent les unités de son art cinétique. En outre, les séries et les transformations des unités engendrent de nombreuses formes virtuelles. De ces formes émanent des sens. Vasarely a publié un livre¹² dans lequel il tente de donner une explication de ses compositions géométriques: par exemple sur «Le cosmos et les dieux», «connaître», «optimisme» etc. L'un des tableaux de Sengai¹³, un moine du bouddhisme zen, représentent seulement un cercle, un triangle et un carré juxtaposés¹⁴. Il ne l'a pas intitulé lui-même «l'Univers», mais nous supposons

¹¹ KANDINSKY, *Point et ligne sur plan*, folio, essais, 1991, p. 183.

¹² VASARELY, «GEA», Editions Hervas, Paris, 1982.

¹³ Sengai (1750–1837).

¹⁴ Encre sur papier, 28,4 x 48,1 cm. D'après le catalogue de l'exposition sur Sengai, mai-juillet 1994 à Pavillon des Arts à Paris, p. 87.

sans hésitation que c'est une représentation absolue de l'univers. Dans ce sens, le suprématisme de Malevitch rejoint cette démarche de recherche de l'absolu par l'unité picturale. Il a peint *le cercle noir*, *la croix noire*, *le carré noir* en 1913, puis en 1915 ses œuvres sont devenues des agencements de cercles, de carrés et de triangles¹⁵. Enfin il a donné les explications du carré noir sur fond blanc. C'est pour construire "la cinquième dimension (économique) comme fondement sur lequel doivent se développer les formes de tous les efforts créateurs des représentations et des arts"¹⁶, et à travers les 34 dessins de 1913-18, il a achevé le carré blanc pour faire apparaître "l'impulsion vers les fondements de la construction du monde comme action pure considérée comme étant connaissance de soi dans la perfection purement utilitaire de «homme universel»"¹⁷, et le carré est sur fond blanc pour montrer "la force du repos dynamique visible"¹⁸. Mais ayant atteint la limite de la forme absolue après avoir "pulvérisé" le monde des objets, il était obligé d'abandonner la pratique du suprématisme. Il est donc revenu au «figuratif».

De ce long exemple de formème pictural nous pouvons retenir deux questions sémiotiques: l'une portant sur la limite du système symbolique du formème, la deuxième sur le système de négation. Les artistes-philosophes s'intéressaient aux unités de formes dans leur recherche de l'expression vitale, absolue. Le cercle, le carré et le triangle sont des formèmes, donc une unité de forme indivisible. Est-ce pour cette raison que Malevitch ne pouvait aller plus loin? Pourtant Vasarely a pu sortir de cette impasse. Au lieu d'aboutir à un seul cercle ou un seul carré, il a combiné les formèmes. Un de ses tableaux est composé de la manière suivante: dans un grand carré, neuf cercles sont alignés par trois, et l'on trouve encore vingt-cinq petits carrés juxtaposés par rangées de cinq. «Basculant du temps absolu dans le temps relatif, la philosophie se fait

¹⁵ Cf. M. COSTANTINI, "L'énoncé pictural — notes méthodologiques sur Malevitch", *Degrés*, n° 22, été, 1980, Bruxelles, g1-g16.

¹⁶ K. MALEVITCH, *De Cézanne au suprématisme*, Slavica-Ecrits sur l'art, Editions l'Age d'Homme, Lausanne, 1974. p. 114.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 122.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 119.

confiante»: telle est la sagesse selon Vasarely et il intitula ce tableau *La sagesse*¹⁹.

De l'universalité à l'anamorphose

Au niveau de l'interprétation et de l'application, les trois formèmes prennent sans cesse une nouvelle fonction sémiotique, en ajoutant de nouvelles valeurs à des idées communes par des opérations de concaténation. Comme la racine d'un arbre qui se propage, leurs fonctions symboliques dérivent. Quelles sont les fonctions sémiotiques qui rendent possible le caractère universel de ces formes que l'on trouve dans presque toutes les cultures. Mais pourquoi trouvons-nous une variation de leurs fonctions symboliques selon les cultures?

La structure géométrique qui fait naître le calcul mathématique engendre les mêmes types de formes logiques indéformables. Pourtant la corrélation entre les idées et les formes n'est pas du tout conventionnelle — si elle l'était, le triangle aurait pu représenter le ciel, mais ce n'est pas le cas. Pourtant, si le cercle est choisi pour le ciel dans la plupart des cas, nous ne pouvons pas dire non plus que c'est par une contiguïté «naturelle» — le cercle représente le ciel plutôt par une contiguïté conceptuelle — ni par une relation de ressemblance au référent, le ciel ne ressemblant pas tout à fait au cercle. Les formes du cercle, du carré et du triangle échappent aux définitions peirciennes du signe. Ne sont-elles pas des signes? Ne seraient-elles pas plutôt des non-signes? La question se pose puisque leur nature est dotée d'un pouvoir de transformation. Nous les appellerons plutôt des formes en mutation signifiante. Leur système de signes varie selon l'écran où il est projeté: c'est l'anamorphose sémiotique.

L'anamorphose sémiotique procède des capacités d'abstraction différentes de l'esprit humain qui organise la globalité de ses expériences personnelles et collectives. Les expériences personnelles font ressortir les formes archétypiques, qui sont ensuite acceptées collectivement. Les *yantras* indiens sont des diagrammes

¹⁹ VASARELY, *ibid.*, p. 41.

composés souvent de cercles, de carrés et de triangles représentant l'univers divin. Selon la tradition, ils sont dérivés des formes révélées au cours d'états mystiques, et sont ensuite voués au culte. Le *stupa* bouddhique est une sorte de yantra en trois dimensions qui juxtapose les éléments fondamentaux, à commencer par le carré, le cercle, le triangle, etc. Ainsi, chaque civilisation adopte les anciens symboles en leur conférant un sens nouveau, ou des symboles nouveaux auxquels elle donne un sens utilitaire. Ce qui est le cas pour la croix celtique: la forme de la croix chrétienne est ajoutée à la forme du cercle qui caractérisait essentiellement la culture celtique par son triscèle²⁰. Comme l'Etoile de David (ou le Sceau de Salomon) qui a repris les symboles utilisés dans l'ancien temps au moment de la fondation d'un pays unifié autour de l'identité d'un peuple, et qui confère une nouvelle signification aux six éléments formés de deux triangles.

L'anamorphose sémiotique qui combine le cercle et le carré pourrait aller jusqu'à une coexistence d'entités contradictoires.

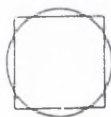


Fig. 9.

Cela existe dans le cas de la géométrie, par exemple dans la quadrature du cercle (fig. 9): il faut obtenir l'aire du carré égale à celle du cercle. C'est mathématiquement impossible puisque l'aire du carré est toujours environ un pour cent plus grande que celle du cercle²¹.

C'est un faux problème que les géomètres anciens tentaient de résoudre pour obtenir symboliquement "le passage du terrestre au céleste, de l'impureté à la pureté"²², comme l'alchimiste tente en vain de transformer le métal en or.

Où est donc la limite valable de la mutation anamorphique sémiotique des trois formèmes? Qu'est ce qui exerce le pouvoir régularisateur à l'intérieur d'un procédé symbolique?

²⁰ Voir LLOYD et LAING, *L'Art celte*, traduit de l'anglais par Léna Rozenberg, Thames & Hudson, 1992.

²¹ L'aire du cercle est $r \times r \times \pi = r^2 \times 3,141\dots$, l'aire du carré est $r^2 \times 3,171$. Voir *L'Art des bâtisseurs romans*. p. 2.10.

²² *Ibid.*

Homéostasie sémiotique

Emprunté au vocabulaire de la physiologie, l'homéostasie est la faculté qu'ont les êtres vivants de maintenir ou de rétablir certaines constantes physiologiques quelles que soient les variations du milieu extérieur. En sémiotique, nous employons ce terme pour désigner la faculté de stabilisation par l'autorégulation à partir d'un équilibre préalablement fixé. C'est cet équilibre que nous essayons de retrouver dans le système sémiotique des trois formèmes. Quelle est la force régulatrice interne qui s'adapte aux variations du milieu extérieur?

Le cercle donne, d'une manière équivoque, les mêmes propriétés à des contenus qui ne sont pas interprétables autrement, c'est-à-dire qui sont difficilement traduisibles par d'autres signes. Le temps circulaire et en mouvement, l'absolu de la divinité où tout est symétrie et proportion, l'éternel retour, le caractère cyclique du processus vie/mort, dans lesquels les perfections circulaires ne peuvent être représentées autrement. Ce n'est pas simplement la logique picturale, ou la trajectoire astrologique qui ont des modalités communes, mais aussi l'expérience mystique où la divinité est décrite souvent comme un cercle de lumière.

Par sa nature homéostatique, le carré a souvent la valeur symbolique de la terre et de l'espace, même dans les civilisations où la Terre était considéré sous la forme d'une sphère. La notion du carré de la terre est révélée par les quatre points cardinaux qui sont probablement tracés et fixés d'après les endroits du lever et du coucher du soleil. Malgré que la Terre soit ronde, le pôle nord et le pôle sud indiquent la direction figée, tracent une ligne droite, qui est l'élément de la base du carré. Le carré est une représentation du temps et de l'espace relatifs par rapport au temps et à l'espace absolus représentés en cercle.

La transmission des diverses significations des trois formèmes admises par les différentes traditions et leurs emplois perpétuels dans des actes de création persuadent que ces formes ne sont pas des produits culturels, mais des aspects d'une vérité extra subjective et extra culturelle. C'est cette non-subjectivité qui forme l'équilibre homéostatique des trois formèmes de la représentation visuelle et intellectuelle.

Les systèmes de pensée et les trois formèmes

Au-delà du système symbolique des formes, le cercle, le carré et le triangle pourraient représenter des schémas du système de pensée. Les pensées extrême-orientales sont souvent réductibles au schéma du cercle: le temps est conçu comme cyclique, et non linéaire comme dans le système duel en occident; le bouddhisme zen illustre l'état divin comme un cercle, et non une croix qui rentrerait dans le système duel de l'opposition des signes verticaux et horizontaux. En Extrême-Orient, même le système duel est englobé dans celui du cercle: les deux éléments sont en mutation dans le système du cercle. Le carré est un système duel doublé par opposition, qui représente souvent le système de pensée occidental. Par exemple, pour dire rapidement, le bien et le mal, ou le capitalisme et le communisme sont opposés du point de vue moral, religieux ou politique, tandis qu'en Extrême-Orient la définition du bien et du mal dépend de la position du sujet. Nous dirions que c'est encore le système du cercle, puisque dans le cercle, il n'y a pas d'opposition: en partant du centre du cercle, toutes les mesures jusqu'à la circonférence sont égales. Les principes propres à la logique occidentale (notamment le principe *tiers exclu*²³) font reposer la pensée rationnelle sur un fonctionnement duel. En d'autres termes, la position d'une thèse se fait par l'exclusion de la thèse qui lui est contraire. Au contraire, dans le modèle triangulaire, chaque position doit être égale à l'autre. Le système de signe peircien, icône, index, symbole, appartient à cette catégorie. L'organisation des sociétés celtique, indienne, coréenne fonctionne de cette manière, mais là encore le système ternaire est dans le système du cercle. L'image du *Livre de Durrow* montre bien ce dynamisme: un petit cercle divisé par trois en forme de spirale engendre encore trois autres petits cercles du même type et le tout est englobé par un grand cercle²⁴. Est-ce que les systèmes de nos

²³ Le *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie* de André LALANDE définit ce principe de la façon suivante: "Si deux propositions sont contradictoires, la vérité ou la fausseté de l'une impliquent respectivement la fausseté ou la vérité de l'autre."

²⁴ *L'Art celtique*, p. 139.

pensées peuvent échapper aux modèles des trois formèmes ou de leurs combinaisons? Apparemment non. Est-ce que nous forgeons nos systèmes de pensée d'après les modèles de trois formes? Une chose curieuse est que nous trouvons rarement les formes carrées ou triangles dans la nature, exceptée celle du cercle-sphère. Les modèles de pensée en carré ou en triangle sont factices, artificiels, inventés et marquent probablement le commencement de la «civilisation». Les traces des premiers tombeaux des Cromagnons forment un cercle. La forme rectangulaire apparaît beaucoup plus tard. Nous remarquons que, bien sûr en simplifiant, la civilisation extrême-orientale conçoit fréquemment en cercle aussi bien dans les domaines philosophico-religieux que médical qui préconisent la manière d'être naturelle. En revanche, en Occident, l'analyse logique très "carrée" constitue le système de pensée linéaire qui prône l'idée du progrès. Comme nous l'avons vu dans le problème de la *quadrature du cercle*, en contraignant l'aire du carré à s'ajouter à celle du par le moyen d'un calcul compliqué et embrouillé, nous pouvons avoir l'illusion de résoudre un problème insoluble. Le système du carré, artificiel, ne pourrait jamais rejoindre logiquement le système du cercle, plus naturel, sauf symboliquement.

Les trois formèmes sont les unités minimales de forme qui procèdent de deux éléments, point et trait, et engendrent diverses formes par combinaison comme l'étoile, la spirale... même la surface d'une sphère peut être construite par les pentagones de la même manière qu'un ballon de football, c'est-à-dire toutes les formes existantes en deux ou en trois dimensions. Non seulement dans le domaine visuel, mais aussi dans le domaine idéologique comme la projection des idées, les trois formèmes sont tout autant la synthèse de la forme que ses unités. Ils préfigurent les images des formes et, par leurs modifications divergentes, contribuent à configurer ces dernières. Par leur nature homéostatique, ils se retrouvent dans diverses cultures et leur processus d'anamorphose dynamise le champ de la recherche sémiotique.

About Authors

SUSANA G. ARTAL (1955) works as an Associate Professor of Dr. A. Alonso Institute of Hispanic Philology and Letters at the National University of Buenos Aires. She has published a book on traditional epic poetry *De guerras, héroes y cantos* (Buenos Aires, 1992) and numerous articles in specialized magazines like *Hispanic Review*, *Bulletin Hispanique*, *Filología* (Buenos Aires), *Signos* (Valparaiso), etc. As a poet, she has gained several national literary prizes and has published a book titled *De piedra al canto* (Buenos Aires, 1995).

TIINA AUNIN (1941) is the Chairholder of Comparative Literature at Tallinn Pedagogical University. She defended her Ph.D. at Leningrad University in 1981. Her main subject has been American literature. She has published articles on American Romanticism, and the discourse between history and the novel. She has been engaged in research at the universities of Surrey, Essex, Lund and Cornell.

ALESSANDRO BALDI (1959) is an Associate Professor of Italian language and literature at the University of Zaragoza. He has participated in several international conferences of literary studies and has published articles mainly on Italian literature.

LUULE EPNER (1953) is an Associate Professor at the Chair of Estonian Literature of Tartu University. She defended her Ph.D. (1987) on Estonian drama of the 1960s and the 1970s. She has published in Estonian a book on drama theory *Draamateooria probleeme* (Vol. I 1992, Vol. II 1994) and many articles mainly on Estonian drama and theatre.

KIM YOUNG-HAE was born in Seoul, South Korea. She has specialized in Oriental semiotics and works at present for the E.O.D.O.S. (Etudes des Images Dans une Orientation Sémiotique) in Paris. Since 1992, she has published several articles on Oriental cultural semiotics and in 1995 held a paper at the international conference of semiotics in memoriam Iuri Lotman in Granada.

LIINA LUKAS (1970) is a postgraduate student at the Chair of Comparative Literature of Tartu University. She has specialized in Baltic-German literature and has read a paper on Edzard Schaper's work in 1995 at a Conference of Baltic Studies in Lüneburg, in Germany.

MART MÄGER (1935–1993) was a philologist and a poet. He taught literature and poetics at Tallinn Pedagogical University and Estonian Institute of Humanities. Between 1980 and 1983 he was the lecturer of Estonian at the Finnish university of Oulu. He published, under the pseudonym of Vesipapp, verse books *Aastaringist* (1975) and *Kuningamaa* (1986) and also a book of short prose, *Animalia* (1978). His theoretical and critical writings have been collected into the volume *Luule ja lugeja* ('Poetry and Reader', Tallinn 1979).

GIUSEPPINA RESTIVO is the Professor of English literature at the University of Trieste. Specializing in English theatre, she has produced books on Beckett (*Le soglie del posmoderno: Finale di partita*, Bologna: Mulino, 1991) and Bond (*La nuova scena inglese: Edward Bond*, Torino: Einaudi, 1977) as well as many essays on Shakespeare's theatre. She has also worked on American fiction, aspects of comparative literature and literary theory.

JAAK RÄHESOO (1941) has lived for years in Pärnu as a free lance essayist and translator. He has won reputation as the translator of Joyce (*Dubliners*), Faulkner (*As I Lay Dying*, *Light in August*, short stories), T. Williams, T. S. Eliot and other English and American authors. A collection of his essays on drama and theatre, *Hecuba pärast* ('For Hecuba') appeared in 1995 in the series "History of Estonian Thought" launched by the publishing house Ilmamaa, of Tartu. For 1995 he was elected to the extraordinary Chair of Liberal Arts at Tartu University. Recently he has stayed on grants at several British academical centres.

REET SOOL is an Associate Professor at the Department of English of the University of Tartu. As a winner of the Government of Canada Faculty Enrichment Award (1993), the American Council of Learned Societies Award (1993) and the IREX Award (1995), she has done research at the University of Toronto and York University in Canada, and at the University of Michigan in the US. She has also given lectures at US universities and has presented papers at international conferences in Estonia, Finland, Denmark, Norway and the US. She has published articles on literary theory and nineteenth- and twentieth-century American literature, as well as essays, translations and poetry. In 1994 she won the Henrik Visnapuu Award.

JÜRI TALVET (1945) is since 1992 the Chair of Comparative Literature at the University of Tartu. He took his Ph.D. on the Spanish picaresque novel at Leningrad University in 1981. In 1995 his collection of articles and essays on Spanish and Catalan literature *Hispaania vaim* ('The Spanish Spirit') appeared in Tartu. In 1986, his travel essay on Spain *Teekond Hispaaniasse* ('A Travel to Spain') won Estonia's annual literary prize in essay genre. Other travel essays on some of Latin American countries have appeared in his book *Hispaaniast Ameerikasse* ('From Spain to America', Tallinn 1992). He has lectured in Finland, Holland, Norway, Sweden and Spain. As a poet, he has published three books (*Äratused* 1981, *Ambur ja karje* 1886, *Hinge kulg ja kliima üllatused* 1990).

He has translated into Estonian both classical and modern works (*Lazarillo de Tormes*, poetry by Quevedo, Espriu and Aleixandre, *Oráculo manual* of Gracián, short stories of García Márquez, etc.) In 1994 he was elected to be the Chairman of the Estonian Association of Comparative Literature.

MANUEL ÁNGEL VÁZQUEZ MEDEL (1953) has been one of the founders of the Faculty of Information Sciences of Seville University. There he teaches communication semiotics and contemporary literature. He has published essay books on poetical themes, like *El campo andaluz en la obra de Juan Ramón Jiménez* (Seville, 1981) and *Poesía y poética en Fernando de Herrera* (Madrid, 1982). He also has published poetry, in *Pájaro de la noche* (Huelva, 1994), and as a poet and essayist, has won several Spanish literary prizes. Besides, he has been very active promoting editorial activity in Andalusia and is the editor of the semiotical review *Discurso*, of the Andalusian Association of Semiotics.

KERTTU VELDI (1969) is a lecturer at the Chair of Comparative Literature of Tartu University. She defended her M.A. (1994) on modern European poetry. She has translated modern Greek poetry into Estonian and has published articles on Odysseus Elytis and Giorgos Seferis.

Estonian

Literary Magazine

The ESTONIAN LITERARY MAGAZINE, a collaboration of the Estonian Institute, the Writers' Union and the Publishing house Koge, is a twice-yearly publication in the English language. Its aim is to introduce the past and present of Estonian literature. The Magazine will be distributed on as many cultural events as possible, on book fairs, and it will be sent to all Estonian embassies abroad.

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Estonian Institute
14, Suur-Karja
EE0001 TALLINN
ph.: 372 6314 355
fax: 372 6314 356
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