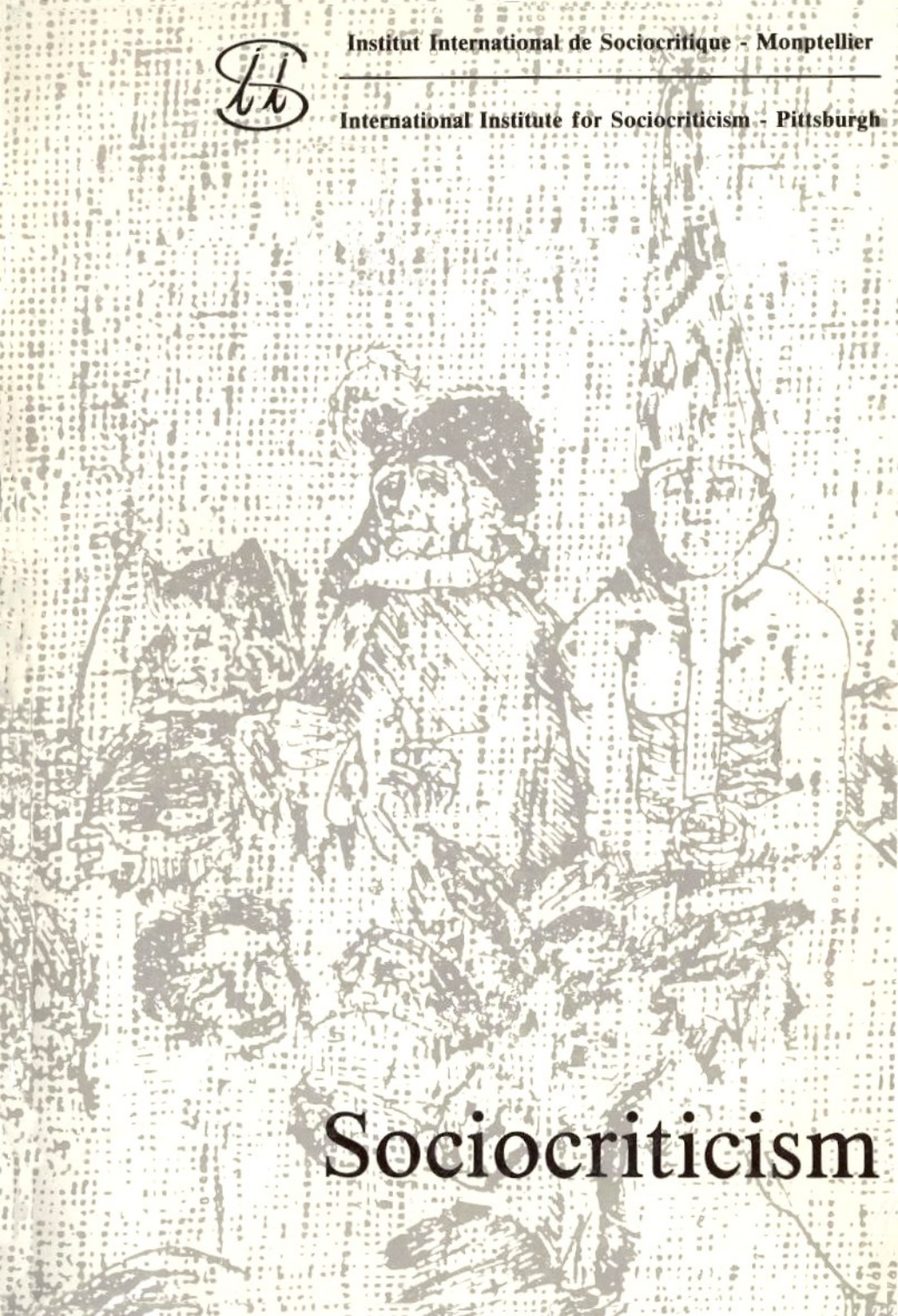




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Theories and Perspectives

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INTRODUCTION. VISÉES ET PERSPECTIVES DE LA SOCIOCRITIQUE

Edmond Cros

Faire le point de la critique sociohistorique, en présenter l'état actuel depuis la décennie des années 60 marquée par les travaux de Lucien Goldmann (1959-1970), recentrer et resserrer le débat autour de quelques visées majeures qui caractérisent la Sociocritique par rapport et par opposition à la Sociologie de la Littérature. Tel est l'objectif de *Sociocriticism*.

Cette prise de position implique, comme le souhaitait déjà Claude Duchet, dans sa magistrale Introduction à *Sociocritique* «une réorientation de l'investigation sociohistorique du dehors vers le dedans, c'est-à-dire l'organisation interne des textes, leurs systèmes de fonctionnement, leurs réseaux de sens, leurs tensions, la recontre en eux de discours et de savoirs hétérogènes»¹. Cap difficile à tenir comme en témoignent les Actes des différentes rencontres Internationales qui se sont tenues sur le sujet, entre autres à Paris. Vincennes (1977), à Ottawa (1979) à l'Université Libre de Bruxelles (juin 1980)², qui témoignent tous d'une hétérogénéité plus ou moins grande de points de vue, de présupposés et de finalités où semble s'abolir la spécificité de notre démarche.

¹ *Sociocritique*, Actes du Colloque de Vincennes (nov. 1977) édités par Claude Duchet, in Nathan-Université, Paris, 1979.

² Les Actes de la rencontre d'Ottawa n'ont pas été publiés. Ceux de l'Université libre de Bruxelles l'ont été dans *Opérativité des méthodes sociocritiques*, Textes réunis par Ralph Heyndels et Edmond Cros. Montpellier, C.E.R.S., Imprévue 1984².

Au seuil de ce premier numéro, il me paraît donc important de rappeler que la Sociocritique n'est pas l'héritière de la Sociologie de la Littérature. S'il fallait lui donner des origines nous devrions nous tourner plutôt, d'une part, vers la critique formelle dont elle reprend et avale les notions de *texte* et d'*écriture* pour en faire, à l'encontre du néopositivisme, des objets premiers d'étude, critique formelle dont elle se distingue cependant, radicalement, dans la mesure où elle prétend que la signification sociale et historique d'un texte est *codée* dans sa forme, considérée elle-même comme produit d'une structure³. De l'autre, vers le matérialisme historique sur lequel elle fonde sa stratégie argumentative, sa visée, ses catégories conceptuelles et en fonction duquel elle se propose d'étudier le processus de transformation sémantique qui préside à la transcription dans l'objet culturel des structures de société, et, donc, en dernière instance, des rapports de production, ce qui suppose que soient reconstituées l'ensemble des médiations qui déconstruisent, déplacent, réorganisent et re-séminent les différentes représentations du vécu individuel et collectif.

Cette dernière préoccupation explique l'importance que la Sociocritique accorde à l'analyse du discours social auquel on ne s'étonnera pas de voir consacrés dès notre premier numéro un certain nombre d'articles. Sur ce point, la convergence des travaux de Jürgen et Ursula Link, Henri Mitterand, Marc Angenot et Régine Robin est d'autant plus frappante que les équipes et chercheurs allemands et français se sont jusqu'ici superbement ignorés les uns les autres, même si leurs démarches respectives semblent avoir été, de plus ou moins près et plus ou moins directement guidées ou éclairées par la lecture de Michel Foucault. Tous mettent l'accent sur la «polyphonie» du réseau discursif, ses «contradictions», ses «prédicats contradictoires», son «entrecroisement de contradictions et d'ambiguïtés», y voient «un réservoir de formes interdiscursives et de symboles collectifs».

Reste qu'il n'y a pas de «discours social» sans pratique sociale et que c'est en fin de compte celle-ci qui fait fonctionner, d'une certaine façon «ce qui se dit et s'écrit dans un état donné de société». Comment dès lors s'articulent pratique sociale et pratique discursive ou pratique d'écriture? C'est à cette question que nous essayons de répondre Antonio Gómez Moriana et moi-même aux

³ Cf. sur ce point Edmond Cros, *Théorie et Pratique Sociocritiques*, Paris/Montpellier Editions Sociales/CERS, 1983.

différents niveaux de la théorie et de ses applications. Coupes synchroniques et diachroniques se complètent ainsi car ce qui se répète et circule à un moment donné dans l'ensemble d'une formation discursive garde cependant toujours en mémoire les conditions idéologiques de son émergence qui, lorsque s'inscrit un énoncé collectif dans un texte, y inscrivent avec lui des zones conflictives. L'écriture aurait alors comme fonction de restituer à ces fragments de discours social, provisoirement banalisés dans le hors-texte, leurs significations authentiques et originelles, en les faisant fonctionner comme noyaux de fixation de conflits et comme révélateurs de contradictions. Le tissu textuel transcrit donc l'ensemble d'une formation discursive et ne saurait être réduit à une vision du monde ou à une structure explicative monosémique et c'est probablement sur ce point que, comme l'écrit Pierre Zima, en prenant le problème par un autre biais, la Sociocritique s'écarte le plus radicalement du structuralisme génétique de Lucien Goldmann.

Mais on ne peut aborder les problèmes du texte et de l'écriture sans faire référence à l'Institution, dans la mesure où celle-ci s'articule sur le système modélisant qu'est la pratique discursive littéraire, sans pour autant se confondre avec elle. C'est l'ensemble de l'*Appareil* qui régit l'écriture en lui donnant des normes à respecter et à transgresser. En ébauchant les grandes lignes de ce qui pourrait être une histoire de la Culture, Jacques Leenhardt nous rappelle que l'*Appareil* scolaire, que nous savions déjà être responsable du caractère spécifique et fictif du *dire* littéraire —en particulier depuis les travaux de Renée Balibar et Denis Laporte—⁴ propose également à chaque lecteur les normes de légitimité de sa lecture. Ainsi une démarche sociologique située en aval de l'œuvre nous ramène-t-elle vers le *dedans* du texte, dans la mesure où une même instance se donne à voir comme dictant les règles d'encodage et de décodage du sens. Cette coïncidence où s'abolit à un certain niveau la classique distinction entre destinataire et destinataire montre à l'évidence le rôle que joue le littéraire dans la reproduction des effets idéologiques. Comment l'imaginaire et le symbolique se trouvent-ils piégés par l'idéologie, cette «dimension de la socialité née de la division du travail, liée aux structures de pouvoir (...)

⁴ Cf. *Le français national, politique et pratique de la langue nationale sous la Révolution* Paris, Hachette, 1974 et de Renée Balibar, *Les français fictifs, le rapport des styles littéraires au français national*, Paris, Hachette, 1974.

Condition mais aussi produit de tout discours?»⁵ C'est à cette question que s'efforcent de répondre, par des voies multiples, les différentes approches sociocritiques qui ne sont cependant pas réductibles à de simples études sémiologiques de l'idéologique.

La diversité même de ces approches témoigne de la difficulté du projet due, en grande partie, à des difficultés de définitions, même si, cédant aux suggestions d'Althusser, la Sociocritique s'oriente en ce domaine vers la mise en évidence de traces sémiotiques concrètes, vectrices de l'idéologique où s'objectivent des rapports au monde qui ne sont ni perçus ni perceptibles au niveau de l'immédiateté du vécu et qui inscrivent dans le texte l'ensemble d'une formation sociale⁶.

L'exemple de Jacques Leenhardt montre que la Sociocritique ne peut se permettre en dépit ou en raison même de sa visée d'ignorer les champs de recherches qui lui sont le plus proches et dont elle est susceptible d'intégrer les résultats et les avancées. C'est en particulier évident pour tout ce qui touche aux *media* sur lesquels Charles Grivel nous invite à méditer et qui nous sont présentés comme d'infatigables producteurs de *textes sociaux* selon les termes d'Henri Lefebvre, qui font de notre civilisation, d'une façon qui peut paraître quelque peu paradoxale, une civilisation du texte et donc de la lecture, immergée dans la fiction. En ramenant le texte littéraire à une catégorie plus générale qui, avec celui-ci, englobe les textes des medias et les textes sociaux, Charles Grivel déplace un certain nombre de catégories textuelles ainsi que la problématique du sujet dans l'espace du vécu urbain quotidien et nous fait nous interroger une fois de plus sur la fonction de la littérature dans la Société et sur son devenir. Ici encore, tout ce qui est dit du *texte social* nous renvoie à tout ce qui vient d'être dit du *discours social* et de leurs incidences respectives dans le texte de fiction.

H.U. Gumbrecht s'interroge ouvertement de son côté sur ce devenir lorsqu'il se demande, en se plaçant du point de vue d'une histoire des formes et des moyens de communications (imprimerie, dactylographie, radio, TV etc...) qu'il appelle de ses vœux, si la littérature ne peut pas être considérée comme un phénomène métahistorique dérivé de l'Institutionnalisation de l'Imprimerie et donc appelé à disparaître. En examinant le rapport qui existe dans l'Espagne des Rois Catholiques entre l'écran que constitue l'imprimé,

⁵ Claude Duchet, voir note 1.

⁶ Edmond Cros, voir note 3.

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merie, d'une part, et, de l'autre, les mentalités — en particulier le surgissement de la conscience et celui, corrélatif, de l'intention — son article fait apparaître la nécessité de tenir compte d'un nouveau paramètre qui affecte les projections intratextuelles du sujet.

On observera donc que, en dépit de ce que je disais au début de cette Introduction, de la nécessité d'affirmer les visées majeures de la Sociocritique celle-ci ne se pense pas comme une Théorie acquise et définitivement élaborée mais bien plutôt comme une discipline en perpétuelle gestation, sensible à toutes les remises en question qui se profilent à son horizon critique.

**I. DISCURSIVE FORMATIONS
AND SOCIAL PRACTICES**

ABOUT INTERDISCURSIVENESS *

Edmond Cros

At the outset, I should like to give particular emphasis to the fundamental contribution of Michel Foucault, and more particularly, of the *Archaeology of Knowledge*, in which he redevelops in a new perspective certain analyses of *Madness and Civilization*, *Birth of the Clinic*, and *The Order of Things*. As is well known, this perspective consists in an interrogation of discourse on the rules of its formation, that is to say, in an initial search for the unities of discourse formed in a discursive field and free from all earlier forms of continuity:

We must grasp the statement in the exact specificity of its occurrence; determine its conditions of existence, fix at least its limits, establish its correlations with other statements that may be connected with it, and show what other forms of statement it excludes. We do not seek below what is manifest the half silent murmur of another discourse; we must show why it could not be other than it was, in what respect it is exclusive of any other, how it assumes, in the midst of others and in relation to them, a place that no other could occupy. The question proper to such an analysis might be formulated in this way: what is this specific existence that emerges from what is said and nowhere else? ¹

After having privileged, in a first approximation, the discourses which define the sciences of man, while emphasizing, however, that

* Translated, from French, by Jerome Schwartz.

¹ *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A.M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Pantheon Books, 1972), p. 28.

this mapping is neither definitive nor necessarily valid, Foucault undertakes the description of the relations discernable within those great families of statements such as grammar or medicine. This leads him to observe that the unity of each of them is not founded upon a hypothetical field of objects nor on a definite type of enunciation, nor on a well defined set of notions, nor on the permanence of a thematic.

Hence the idea of describing these dispersions themselves; of discovering whether, between these elements which are certainly not organized as a progressively deductive structure, nor as an enormous book that is being gradually and continuously written, nor as the *oeuvre* of a collective subject, one cannot discern a regularity: an order in their successive appearance, correlations in their simultaneity, assignable positions in a common spaces, a reciprocal functioning, linked and hierarchized transformations².

Thus, we shall speak of *discursive formation* every time we can discern and define a regularity among objects, types of enunciation, concepts, thematic choices; and of *rules of formation* to designate the conditions of existence of these various elements. Let us take the case of psychiatric discourse in the 19th century: it is not characterized by its objects but by the manner in which it forms them, viz., by establishing relations among old instances of *emergence* (family, close social group, workplace, religious community) and new ones (art, sensuality, legal punishment); instances of *delimitation* (medicine, justice, religious authority, literary and art criticism); *grids of specification* (systems «according to which the different 'kinds of madness' are divided, contrasted (...), classified, derived from one another as objects of psychiatric discourse...»)³. It is precisely in so far as discourse establishes relations among social institutions, economic and social processes, behavior patterns, systems of norms, techniques, types of classification, modes of description (ibid., p. 45), that it is perceived as a social practice. It is by establishing discursive relations among all these elements that discourse forms the object of which it speaks, and that it itself accedes to the status of a discursive *practice*, this «place in which a tangled plurality —at once superposed and incomplete—

² Ibid., p. 37.

³ Ibid., p. 42.

of objects is formed and deformed, appears and disappears» (ibid., p. 48). This is why discourse is not «a mere intersection of things and words» nor «a slender surface of contact, or confrontation, between a reality and a language (*langue*), the intrication of a lexicon and an experience». It presents itself to us as irreducible to language and to speech and it cannot translate verbally a pre-existent synthesis effected elsewhere.

Understood in this sense, the concept of discursive practice, which, as we have just seen, always implies the sociality of the speech act and a profound relationship to history, is at the center of Foucault's reflections; that is to say, the enunciative modalities of clinical discourse do not refer to the unifying function of a subject, for if the planes from which the subject speaks are linked by a system of relations, «this system is not established by the synthetic activity of a consciousness identical with itself, dumb and anterior to all speech, but by the specificity of a discursive practice» (p. 54f.). The same is true in the case of the analysis of the formation of concepts and of the enunciative field where rules of formation do not reflect mentalities or the consciousness of individuals but the discourse itself; these rules «operate therefore, according to a sort of uniform anonymity, on all individuals who undertake to speak in this discursive field» (p. 63).

One sees then that discursive relations do not bear upon the chain of ideas, concepts and words inside discourse; they determine, rather, «the group of relations that discourse must establish in order to speak of this or that object, in order to deal with them, name them, analyse them, classify them, explain them» (ibid., p. 46). Nor is it a question of writing the history of the referent. [«In the example chosen, we are not trying to find out who was mad at a particular period, or in what his madness consisted, or whether his disturbances were identical with those known to us today...»] (ibid., p. 47).

On the contrary, of fundamental interest to Foucault are the historical conditions which make possible the emergence of the object of discourse. «One cannot speak of anything at any time whatever» (p. 44). Fields of perception are reorganized as a function of mutations which affect institutions and social practices. In posing the problem of relationships between discursive and non-discursive practices, Foucault could not have failed to encounter historical materialism. Thus, Régine Robin, while recognizing the «immeasurable debt that historians of the discursive field owe to M. Foucault»,

and while calling attention to the interest of his positions in opposition to such notions as the anthropology of the subject, history as a continuum, the history of ideas, and the hermeneutics of meaning, regrets that «the relationship between discursive and non-discursive practices [is] thought of in terms of *juxtaposition* without hierarchy, without dominance, without the discursive level ever being related to the articulated whole of a social formation, to its complex play of instances and dominances»⁴. Is such a reservation acceptable? Does Foucault not present his reflections as a set of observations intended to outline problems, and open avenues of exploration? In what can be considered a first approach, the instant in which discourse is instituted and, by that very fact, institutes its object, alone holds his interest. Finally, and above all, does he not refer implicitly to this complex play of instances, when he distinguishes the system of *primary or real relations* which are not always superposable upon the relations that go to form objects [«the relations of dependence that may be assigned to this primary level are not necessarily expressed in the formation of relations that makes discursive objects possible» (Foucault, op. cit., p. 45)], from the system of *secondary or reflexive relations* and from the system of relations that can properly be called *discursive*?

This debate itself leads us to restate the Marxist concept of social formation, on the one hand, in so far as one can ask oneself questions about the relation that this notion bears in Foucault's mind to the new concept of discursive formation which he proposes, and, on the other hand, in so far as such a relation has been explicitly posed by other critics.

Let us recall, with Régine Robin, that the multiple contradictions of a social formation «cause the functions of the ideological state apparatuses to jam, to veer off track, to deviate, to be transformed» (op. cit., p. 110), and with Pierre Macherey, that these same contradictions are invested in the literary text, which leads us to another basic concept of historical materialism, that of social formation. All societies present a certain number of classes and social groups engendered by the specific straddling of several modes of production; it is this complexity of economic structures, interacting with a complexity of superstructures, which is called *Social*

⁴ Régine Robin, *Histoire et Linguistique*, op. cit., pp. 85-89. Cf. also Dominique Lecourt, «Sur L'Archéologie du Savoir, à propos de Michel Foucault», *La Pensée* (August 1970).

Formation, a notion that must be considered as corresponding to a concrete, historically determined social totality: «The concept of mode of production characterized by an opposition of two antagonistic classes never exists in the original state», affirms N. Polantz. «In fact, there exists solely a historically determined social formation, that is, a social whole, in the broadest sense of the word, at one moment of its historical existence. [...] Thus, Bismarck's Germany is characterized by a specific combination of capitalist, feudal and patriarchal modes of production. Only the combination exists in the strict sense of the term»⁵. This means that «if the State is thought of as the expression of the dominant class, as an economic digest, as the official expression of society, the State is, however, analyzed by the classics of Marxism in an equally complex manner, with every sort of displacement and dislocation with respect to class domination, and to the domination of a mode of production»⁶.

This brief summary will permit us to intervene in two debates touching upon Spanish literature of the Golden Age.

1. In contradistinction to those who would like to see in sixteenth-century Spain, above all, a society of castes (Christians of long standing, *moriscos*, *conversos*), I should like to affirm that this distinction does not eliminate the problematic of class. To those who may accept the validity of his analyses for the modern world, but not «for the middle ages, in which Catholicism, nor for Athens and Rome, where politics, reigned supreme», Karl Marx retorts:

In the first place it strikes one as an odd thing for any one to suppose that these well-worn phrases about the middle ages and the ancient world are unknown to anyone else. This much, however, is clear, that the middle ages could not live on Catholicism, nor the ancient world on politics. On the contrary, it is the mode in which they gained a livelihood that explains why here politics, and there Catholicism, played the chief part. For the rest, it requires but a slight acquaintance with the history of the Roman republic, for example, to be aware, that its secret history is the history of its landed property. On the other

⁵ *Pouvoir politique et classes sociales* (Paris: Maspéro, 1968), p. 11. Similarly, moreover, the Russia between 1917 and 1927 analyzed by Lenin presents a patriarchal peasant economy, a small commercial sector, private capitalism and State capitalism.

⁶ Régine Robin, *Histoire et Linguistique*, op. cit., pp. 98-99.

hand, Don Quixote long ago paid the penalty for wrongly imagining that knight errantry was compatible with all economic forms of society⁷.

2. Undoubtedly the corresponding social formation is dominated by the feudal mode of production but this domination operates within the framework of a specific combination of other modes of production (patriarchal, crafts, precapitalist). The presence of a bourgeois mode of production, in particular, is attested by the work of a number of historians. We shall not hesitate, then, to speak of a bourgeoisie (a rural bourgeoisie bearing witness to the onset of the disintegration of the peasantry, an industrial bourgeoisie and a mercantile bourgeoisie) even though, in the corresponding period, the latter had not yet been constituted as a class. We shall refer here to what Marx said about the small-holding French peasantry of the 1850s:

In so far as millions of families live under economic conditions of existence that separate their mode of life, their interests and their culture from those of the other classes, and put them in hostile opposition to the latter, they form a class. In so far as there is merely a local interconnection among these small-holding peasants, and the identity of their interests begets no community, no national bond, and no political organization among them, they do not form a class⁸.

Michel Pêcheux uses the notion of *discursive formation* in an appreciably different sense from that proposed by Foucault. For Pêcheux, the ideological state apparatuses constitute simultaneously and contradictorily both the site and the means of domination of the dominant class and the site and the ideological conditions of transformation of the relations of production. Moreover, they do not constitute a mere list of juxtaposed elements but are organized in a complex set, to the degree that their regional properties («their specialization in religion, knowledge, politics etc. 'goes without saying'...») situate them hierarchically with respect to each other. Hence his notion of «*ideological formation*», which implies both

a regional character and a position of class. «We shall speak of ideological formation in order to characterize an element likely to intervene, as a force confronting other forces, in the ideological conjuncture characteristic of a social formation, at a given moment; thus each ideological formation constitutes a complex set of attitudes and representations which are neither 'individual' nor 'universal' but are more or less related to positions of class in conflict with one another»⁹. These ideological formations are organized in the form of a «complex whole in dominance», by a structure of inequality/subordination which reproduces that of the ideological state apparatuses.

Pêcheux poses, moreover, as theses: that the *meaning (sens)* of a word does not exist in itself but «is determined by the ideological positions set in play in the historical social process in which words, expressions and propositions are produced (that is, reproduced)». In other words, a word changes meaning according to the position of the person who uses it. «Consequently we shall call *discursive formation*, in a given ideological formation, that is to say, from a given position in a given conjuncture determined by the state of the class struggle, that which determines «what can and must be said (articulated in the form of an harangue, a sermon, a pamphlet, an expose, a program, etc...)» (Ibid, p. 144-145). Discursive formations represent then «in language» the ideological formations which correspond to them. The latter «necessarily include as one of their components, one or several interrelated discursive formations»¹⁰. Discursive formation is the locus of the constitution of meaning, as it were, its matrix.

The interest of Pêcheux's work resides precisely in the manner in which he links this constitution of meaning to the constitution of the subject through Louis Althusser's concept of ideological interpellation.

The latter's well-known thesis is synthesized in a now famous phrase: «Ideology interpellates individuals as subjects». Pêcheux insists rightly on the displacement on the formula «individual/subject» and on the paradox that it presupposes of a «subject called to existence». He remarks with great keenness that this paradox consists in the fact that by a *retroactive effect* every individual is

⁷ Quoted by R. Robin, op. cit., p. 96. [Translator's note: I have used the English translation of *Capital* by Samuel Moore and Edward Aveling (text of the 1887 English edition) (New York: International Publishers, 1967), I, ch. I, p. 82 (note).]

⁸ *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* (New York: International Publishers, 1963), p. 124.

⁹ Michel Pêcheux, *Les Vérités de La Palice* (Paris: Maspero, 1975), p. 130.

¹⁰ Claude Haroche, Paul Henry, and Michel Pêcheux, «La Sémantique et la coupure saussurienne; Langue, langage, discours», *Langages*, 24 (Dec. 1971), 102.

already a subject; «the subject has always been an individual interpellated as subject», doubtless because «all individuals receive as self-evident the meaning of what they hear and say, read and write [...] as speaking subjects», that is, to yield to Althusser's suggestions again, as *subject-forms*. [«No human, that is, social individual, can be the agent of a practice unless he assumes the form of the subject. The 'subject-form' is indeed the form of historical existence of every individual, agent of social practices»¹¹. How does the individual constitute himself as subject of his discourse? To this question Pêcheux replies: by *forgetting* what determines him, by the fact that he identifies himself as *subject-form* with the discursive formation which dominates him, and he identifies himself with the latter by reproducing in his own discourse the traces of what determines him.

In order to understand Pêcheux's position one must now open a parenthesis and recall the work of Paul Henry concerning the «preconstructed», a term which refers to a prior external construction, independent with respect to what is «constructed» by the utterance. From the following example: «he who saved the world by dying upon the Cross has never existed», Pêcheux observes that «the discourse of militant atheism denies in the 'total proposition' the very existence of that which is presupposed in the subordinate clause»¹². This utterance apparently stripped of meaning has the merit of placing in relief a lack of correspondence between «what is thought before, elsewhere or independently, and what is contained in the global affirmation of the sentence». Whence the distinction he proposes between two «fields of thought», one overflowing the other.

Now this preconstructed is the vehicle for utterances produced by the «complex whole in dominance» of the *discursive* formations [which are themselves articulated upon the «complex whole in dominance» of the *ideological* formations], a complex that Pêcheux terms *interdiscourse*. This preconstructed interpellates the individual as subject but the subject creates for himself an illusion of autonomy by taking responsibility for this «elsewhere», by integrating into his

¹¹ L. Althusser, *Réponse à John Lewis* (Paris: Maspéro, 1973), p. 93.

¹² P. Henry, *De l'énoncé au discours: présupposition et processus discursifs* (mimeographed; CNRS-E.P.H.E., 1974), quoted in Pêcheux, *Vérités...*, pp. 88, 89. Henry quotes the following example: «It is not the steady growth of the cost of government which calls for an increase in taxes, but the Vietnam war», in which the relative clause functions as a preconstructed.

own discourse, this «always already there», which interpellates him; in other words, it is by identifying himself with this «elsewhere» that he identifies with himself. It is in this preconstructed matter that the speaking subject constitutes himself. Pêcheux distinguishes this *interdiscourse* from *intradiscourse*, understood as the functioning of discourse with respect to itself; this *intradiscourse* redistributes *interdiscourse*; in this sense it appears as the thread of the discourse of the subject as «an effect of the interdiscourse upon itself, an «interiority entirely determined as such from the exterior» (op. cit., p. 152). I do not think I am betraying Pêcheux's thought when I say that in reproducing itself in the speaking subject, in the form of an allegedly interiorized specularity, the Subject, while at the same time reproducing himself as such, hides this congruence with himself in the illusory effect of the autonomy of the speaking subject¹³.

Pêcheux continues his reflections by showing how self-identification is equal to identification with others in the framework of a given discursive formation «in which the subjects that it dominates recognize one another as mirrors of each other: this is to say that the coincidence (which is also a connivence, indeed a complicity) between the Subject and oneself is established by the same movement among the subjects, according to the modality of the «as if» (as if I who am speaking were there where I am listened to), a modality in which «the incorporation» of the interdiscursive elements (preconstructed and articulation—sustaining effect) can go as far as mingling them so that there would no longer be any demarcation between what is said and that about which it is said...» (ibid., p. 153). He illustrates his observation with a brief analysis of the following sentence: «The white cross that the demonstrators had attached to a lamp post was not touched by the police» (*Le Monde*, report on Ireland), showing that the «poetic» effect of the *mise en scène* rests upon a discrepancy between «present and past, coupled with a lack of that correspondence of a subject to other subjects which constitutes identification («Ireland as if you were

¹³ Cf. in this connection Althusser: «God needs to 'make himself' man, the Subject needs to become subject, visible to the eyes, tangible to the hands (cf. St. Thomas) of subjects, as if to show empirically that, if they are subjects subjected to the Subject, this is uniquely so that they may return at Judgment Day, as did Christ, to the bosom of the Lord, that is, to the Subject» («Idéologie et appareils idéologiques d'État», *La Pensée*, N° 151, 1970, p. 35).

there» «If you had been there, you would have seen that cross and you would know what I am speaking about»).

Pêcheux's work is obviously of great interest. Unfortunately, however, his observations remain at the level of enunciation, and isolate these discursive formations from social practices, even though the former are presented to us generally as if they were articulated upon the infrastructure. It is on this question that the contribution of Michel Foucault is essential, for his perspective permits us to understand how, within a determined ideological formation, the latent utterances of the Subject are actualized by the expedient of a *discursive practice*. Let us take an example to make this clearer: We have seen elsewhere, in sixteenth —and seventeenth— century Spain, in civil law as well as in the case of inquisitorial practice, how the dominant ideology interpellated its victim as subject, at the very instant it condemned him precisely for having evaded it¹⁴. Indeed, at the very foot of the stake or the gallows, in so far as it obliges the victim to acknowledge his «errors» and the justice of his torture, it obliges him for that very reason to reproduce that dominant ideology, and, doing so, it incarnates itself in him one last time the better to survive him.

In this case, to identify oneself with the Subject is no longer to identify with oneself but quite the contrary to exorcise and forswear the self. Therefore the enunciative level alone does not constitute a pertinent unit of analysis for sociocriticism. On the other hand, let us repeat, these rites of self-profanation and self-humiliation produce the phenomena of diffraction of consciousness which are invested in the picaresque novel whose textual structure is essentially conflictual, problematizing in its own way the ideological interpellation in question. Now the latent utterances of the Subject only reach the discourse stage to the extent that a writing or a discursive practice relates these social practices to other practices, such as the organization of charity, or to the play of the ideological state apparatuses (Religion, family,...), or to economic and social processes (the development of arterial roads, the need to organize trade routes and the corresponding development of mule transport, inns, towns...; phenomena of currency inflation, econ-

omic crises, bankruptcies of individuals and of the State, the intervention of foreign banks...), to conflictual situations (rise of the merchant and rural bourgeoisie; tensions within the nobility), to behavior patterns and to normative systems (money, honor, chastity, opulence, poverty, asceticism, the distinction between licit and illicit love, etc....), to debates which themselves transcribe the evolution of the infrastructure (on the reform of begging, on the reform of highways, on luxury, idleness...), to modes of description (typology of beggars, pages, nobles, priests, princes of the Church, women, nationalities...), to an ideological practice which offers a specific matrix (the literary tradition with its clichés, its rules, its techniques...).

By taking account of this *non-discursive* or rather this *prediscursive* one will avoid confusing ideological formation with discursive formation, that is, what determines with what is determined.

I have another reservation to make which, this time, bears upon the functioning of this «complex whole in dominance», termed *interdiscourse*. I should like to emphasize clearly that this interdiscourse is itself a space of conflict, constituted of contradictory «discursive formations» and that, while referring in the last instance to a dominant formation, it is nonetheless articulated in an endlessly fluid combinatory form apt to organize itself, if only fleetingly, around another domination. Here, the choice of terms is a problem: whereas in orthodox Marxism the notion of *formation* implies a complexity of contradictory economic structures, the same term in Pêcheux designates both the totality and each one of the elements in combination. This is why it seems to us preferable to apply it only in order to define this «complex whole in dominance» which would be constituted in this case by *discourses* in each one of which are invested divergent and contradictory social interests. Clearly, then, the identification of the speaking subject can be an identification with the discursive formation (in the sense in which we shall henceforth take it) or with a discourse itself defined by its relationship to a class—and to a region (e.g., the discourse of the bourgeoisie on the family at a specific period).

We can then pose the problem of the asserted (*l'asserté*), whose relation to the discursive formation is not very clear in Pêcheux. If the preconstructed (*le préconstruit*) refers to a discursive formation or to a discourse, to what does the constructed (*le construit*) refer? Régine Robin replies: «To the individuality of the subject as support, as a situated point of view, to what is placed within

¹⁴ Edmond Cros, «Prédication carcérale et structures de textes. Pour une sémiologie de l'idéologique», *Littérature*, N° 36 (Dec. 1979); *Sémiotiques du roman* (Paris: Larousse), pp. 61-74; and *Ideología y genética textual; El caso del Boscón* (Madrid: Planeta, 1980).

a system of gestures and speech, to something which functions in subjectivity, to what, in a sense, still refers to ideology»¹⁵. Clearly in this case, Robin is making use of the hypotheses of Th. Herbert, who distinguishes two forms of ideology: ¹⁶ an *empiricist* form, referring to the process of production and a *speculative* form, referring to the social relations of production. Each fills a distinct function: in the first, the position of agents in the production process is «disguised ... in other signifying chains which have the effect both of signifying that position ... and of hiding it from them...» The second aims at permitting the subject to identify with the political and ideological structures and above all ... gives him the illusion that he is the source of his ideas and of his subjectivity. Thus the mechanisms of ideological subjection correspond to a double guarantee, an empirical guarantee linked to «reality», and a speculative guarantee which «is mirrored by the other's support as reflected discourse, testimony, proof or myth which identifies subjectivities to the discourse they pronounce, that is, which are pronounced in them...»¹⁷ Now the first of these forms is organized according to Herbert around a system of signals which mark out behaviors, gestures, speech.

One can see how Robin is able to relate the *preconstructed* as reflected discourse to the speculative form and the *asserted* (or the constructed) to the empirical form. This *asserted* or *constructed* corresponds to a set of traces «situated at the level of explicit judgments, rationalizations, interiorized norms, values, models, assertions, and complex phenomena that cause the subject to interject in his own discourse ... pejorative or meliorative features such as 'fortunately', 'unfortunately', etc.». At this level, writes Robin, «there is never total effacement of the place of the enunciating subject (*sujet d'énonciation*) and of the conditions of production».

In order to clarify what we have just said I should like to proceed to a concrete example: I have published in a recent number of *Imprévue* an analysis of a text from *Guzmán de Alfarache* by Mateo Aleman (1604)¹⁸. The *preconstructed* elements here are

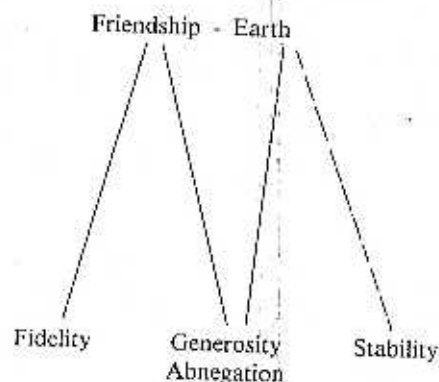
¹⁵ Régine Robin, *Histoire et Linguistique*, p. 105.

¹⁶ «Remarque pour une théorie générale des idéologies», *Cahiers pour l'analyse*, N° 9 (Summer 1968).

¹⁷ R. Robin, *op. cit.*, p. 102.

¹⁸ Edmond Cros, «Formation sociale et discours figuratif», *Imprévue* (1981-1), *Espaces dialogiques* (Montpellier: C.E.R.S.), 19-39.

several and noticeable at different levels, which leads us to state that this notion does not merely concern enunciation: in this precise case the preconstructed elements are related at the mythical and topical levels (Golden Age, Generosity of the Earth) as well as at the level of didactic thematics (theme of Friendship). From this latter point of view, one observes that the first part of the text develops from an «already said», «before, elsewhere, and independently», namely that the true friend is essentially faithful and capable of abnegation. This implies a veritable sedimentation of common places remaining implicit or *not said*, because presumed to be included in the preceding definition [frequency of false friendship, harmfulness of appearances, sense of authenticity, condemnation of selfishness and selfish motives...], of values [fidelity, generosity, friendship], that is, a whole system of latent utterances accompanying this schematic textual enunciation [«it has always been considered difficult to find a true and faithful friend»]. In reproducing this affirmation, the narrator presents himself to the reader as the *receiving/emitting* consciousness of a discourse which, through the expedient of universals, aims at effacing the relations of class in place: at the same time that he reproduces this discourse, he bears witness in fact to his adhesion to this «already said», takes responsibility for it, thus creating the illusion of his autonomy. Thus, he presents himself for all to see as «*subject-form*», as *agent* of a social practice; this enunciation belongs to the domain of discursive formation, that is, according to the definition we have just offered, to the *dominant discourse* [in the framework of a complex whole in dominance]. It constitutes for that reason one of those traces about which we expressed the view in the preceding chapter that they bear witness to the manner in which literature as an ideological form marks its messages. However, I am more interested in what is *asserted*, that is, in the enunciation which articulates this *preconstructed* upon the text and which consists in instituting the Earth as paradigm of Friendship. But, on this new point, there appears a new *preasserted*, conveyed by *topoi*: the motif of the Earth's Generosity, a motif which certainly permits one to pass from one preconstructed to another, in such a manner that the *asserted* here consists in attributing a quality to the Earth I was going to call new, namely its stability, its fidelity.



(Dotted line = the *asserted*)

If this *asserted* is situated in the whole of Mateo Aleman's text one sees that he is entering a complex dialectical system [Stability vs. Instability] which is organized around monetary themes. Let us say, briefly, that everything that is contaminated by money bears the sign of the inauthentic, the ephemeral, the unstable. In the chain of semiotic equivalences, money becomes the metonymical sign of the unstable, such that I believe it possible to establish the following contradictory equations: *Money* (= Instability) vs. *Earth* (= Stability). One cannot help comparing this symbolism created by the text with phenomena of monetary inflation which characterized the Spanish sixteenth century, especially the last decade, and which, in the context social and economic life, brought in turn a quest for inflation hedges such as land.

In this case, to what must this *asserted* be connected? At first we would be tempted to relate it directly to a determinate socio-economic conjuncture, at least if we were to isolate it from its context. If, quite to the contrary, we try to link it to the chain of meanings, our perception rather changes. In this case, we observe that this enunciation is but one of the textual marks through which a prephysiocratic discourse, bearer of specific social interests, is invested in the text. Now these interests are opposed to other social interests conveyed by another discourse invested equally in the same text —mercantilist discourse— in such a way that in these few lines the complex and contradictory totality of a social formation can be recognized as a background to the production of meaning. How,

in such conditions, can one pose the problem of the speaking subject? Upon reflexion, it is clear that the analyses of Michel Pecheux and of Regine Robin do not take into account the specificity of the literary text. Indeed, to do so would require that the production of meaning be analyzed also as a function of writing and not merely in terms of *subject-supports*.

THE REVOLUTION AND THE SYSTEM
OF COLLECTIVE SYMBOLS ELEMENTS
OF A GRAMMAR
OF INTERDISCURSIVE EVENTS *

Jürgen Link
Ursula Link

In a 1983 lecture on Kant Michel Foucault commented also on that passage from «The Conflicts of the Faculties» of 1798 where Kant considers the lasting effect of the French Revolution, taking account that the Revolution may outwardly fail by a return to the status quo ante. In Kant's reflection on the lasting effect of the revolutionary *enthusiasm* Foucault detects an anticipation of the preference for the 'little' (otherwise also called 'molecular') over the 'big' events and of the auto-reflexive — 'sagittal' question concerning the *actual* reality of a subject who 'enthusiastically' finds himself to be a part of a We, a question that was — in a very different way, however, — at the centre of his own thinking. Foucault comments that «nothing but the revolutionary enthusiasm is a sign, after all, of the 'moral tendency' of mankind towards such a condition. The Revolution as drama, not as gesticulation, as a source of enthusiasm for the audience and not as a principle of radical change for the protagonists (...)»¹. This commentary provokes a number of questions, especially when seen against the background of Foucault's concept of discourse: If «discourse» is any ordered, institutionalized articulation of knowledge through

* Translated from German by Rolf Diel.

¹ See the French original version of Foucault's lecture on Kant in the *Magazine littéraire* (Mai 1984).

speech in such a way that the «things» involved are thereby constituted to a considerable degree, if, further, discourse especially includes the ritualized *acts* which are connected with speech, what does the separation of the enthusiastic audience from the historical protagonists imply — assuming this is what Kant was really getting at? And what would be the status of such a uniting, We-forming enthusiasm among spectators in Foucault's theory of «discursive events»? In this case we are obviously not dealing with a discursive event in the sense of special innovations of knowledge in specialized discourses, not even with a merely philosophical event. As is shown particularly by the symbols of the *theatre*, we are dealing with an experience of totalizing character — and indeed, it seems at most to be an *interdiscursive* event transcending individual discourses. Assuming that the *literary discourse* has fulfilled important totalizing, i.e. interdiscursive functions since the 18th century², the literary scholar may possibly assist in clarifying the preceding questions.

As regards his separation of enthusiasm and historical action Foucault refers to the following passage in Kant: «This phenomenon does not consist in important deeds, either valorous or atrocious, committed by man, whereby things which used to be great are made small among men, or things which used to be small are made great, and, as if by magic, ancient and brilliant state edifices disappear to be replaced by others emerging from the depth of the earth»³. Speaking from a literary historical point of view: *those things* during the French Revolution which were merely a matter of baroque-like principal and ceremonial action, merely *tragédie classique à la Corneille*, were less important. Yet does this mean that the Revolution did not have a literary effect in a *different* way, a way which exactly aroused enthusiasm? If so, one would have to recall, for example, that the Revolution produced a new epochal collective symbol, right at the beginning, with the *destruction of the Bastille*, which aroused enthusiasm like no other symbol. As was shown by Ernst Bloch, the *people's dance on the debris of the Bastille* temporarily abolished the separation of protagonists and spectators, the dance became in fact the acted-out enthusiasm of

the spectators⁴. Therefore, the interrelation between Revolution, collective symbols, enthusiasm and interdiscursive events, being the subject of the following, can for the time being be illustrated most clearly by making reference to the example of the razed Bastille. By collective symbols I understand metaphors whose collective embedding is a result of their socio-historical relevance, and which may be used both metaphorically and representative-synecdochically, but above all pragmatically (i.e. they can be acted out)⁵. It is a well known fact that Goethe belonged to the few German intellectuals who seem to have been immune to the revolutionary enthusiasm. Still, he also uses the symbol of the conquered Bastille in his «Theory of Colour», namely at that dramatic climactic moment when he describes his rebellion against Newton: «We compare Newton's colour theory to an ancient castle whose original foundations were laid by its architect with youthful rush, to be gradually extended and equipped by him, however, according to the requirements of the time and the circumstances, and likewise to be increasingly strengthened and protected on the occasion of feuds and hostilities (...)»⁶. It is true that the description of a twisty «Gothic» castle does not correspond to the real Bastille, but Goethe nevertheless identifies this castle with the «Bastille» afterwards, because the two are symbolically equivalent. Despite his opposition to the political revolution Goethe thus imagines himself being a scientific revolutionary: having become largely independent of political standpoints, the collective symbol of this was to become the «Bastille». As regards Goethe's dispute with Newton about optics we are dealing with a discursive event in the narrow sense of Foucault: it is an example of the evolution of knowledge and science; at the same time the use of the Bastille symbol transforms it into an interdiscursive event, by «transporting» the Revolution into the specialized discourse (meta-phorá), with the intention of creating an enthusiastic We (Goethe and his readers). Thus a collective symbol may be used in disparate dis-

² See, for further information, Jürgen Link: *Elementare Literatur und generative Diskursanalyse*, München 1983; J.L./Wulf Wülfing (ed.): *Bewegung und Stillstand in Metaphern und Mythen*. Fallstudien zum Verhältnis von elementarem Wissen und Literatur im 19. Jahrhundert (Sprache und Geschichte, Vol. 9), Stuttgart 1984.

³ *Werke* (ed. Ernst Cassirer), Vol. 7, p. 397.

⁴ Ernst Bloch: *Das Prinzip Hoffnung*, Vol. 1 Frankfurt/Main 1959, p. 185 ff. Cf. also Jean Starobinski: 1789. *Les emblèmes de la Raison*, Paris 1973.

⁵ For a more detailed analysis, cf. the studies mentioned in note 2, and Axel Drews/Ute Gerhard/J.L.: *Moderne Kollektivsymbolik*. Eine diskurstheoretisch orientierte Einführung mit Auswahlbibliographie, in: *Internationales Archiv für Sozialgeschichte der deutschen Literatur*, Special Vol. 1985, p. 219-266 (with further bibliographical references).

⁶ *Hamburger Ausgabe*, Vol. 13, p. 317 ff.

course areas and from disparate ideological points of view, a fact which I would like to clarify further by use of a second example (from Clemens Brentano): «Principles? — that sounds so awkward to me, as if I was meant to erect an internal Bastille made of square stone blocks of principles in order to imprison the desires; I say the desires for who can catch the act once it is born? Declare it outlawed, it is terribly swift, and drops into the conception of an action like a spark into the powder barrel»⁷. Here we are dealing with a sort of sexual cultural revolution, and the Bastille is used as a metaphor once again.

As is generally known the Bastille was not the only metaphor in which the revolutionary enthusiasm was concentrated. Rather, the Revolution brought forward a whole series of partly new, partly re-interpreted collective symbols which, as is revealed by their numerous combinations and catachreses in the texts, functioned like a kind of synchronic system and in their entirety they created or transmitted the enthusiastic effect⁸. As an example, I quote from a speech by the jacobin Karl Clauer from Mainz: «The Franks have made a new constitution, they have demolished their old Gothic state edifice, a dark robber baron's castle with huge walls and narrow windows, with plenty of drawbridges, dark passages and bear moats, in order to build a safe, open, bright and comfortable (...) dwelling — and their miseries have come to an end. The people of this cruelly treated nation, formerly domestic animals of kings, aristocrats and priests — have become beings again; (...). This enormous and radical change in the state is an electric shock which has shaken the whole of Europe, and this great example set by the Franks will find its emulators elsewhere; (...). We are treading on an undermined ground which is filled with combustible substances; death is among our princes». For lack of space I have not verbatim mentioned the metaphors of the *dam against the flood*, the *lace-up corsets* and the *fetters*, the *wounds of despotism*, the *prison* and the *monastery*, most of which appear in the same text

several times. The result is clear enough to be seen: The Revolution had the effect of a catalyst which 'activated' a large number of collective symbols or metaphors so that they formed a certain constellation, and during this process several chains of equivalents emerged which were partly overlapping. Thus the Ancien Régime was like a *Bastille*, or more generally, like a *prison with dungeons and fetters*, like a *Gothic castle*, but also like a *lace-up corset* that rapes the *body*, and like the *yokes on beasts of burden*. In contrast to these, the Revolution was regarded as the *fire* and the *blaze* which destroys the *prison*, as the *mine* which *blows up* the *prison*, as the *electric shock* which *healthily shoots through the body*. While Clauer applies these symbols (as was done by thousands of journalists and orators at that time) he mentions the power of «enthusiasm» time and again — obviously the symbols have the function of creating and multiplying this enthusiasm so that it may become a powerful force.

It was above all Alfred Opitz¹⁰ who has demonstrated that the anti-revolutionary enemies used exactly the same symbols, only with the opposite ideological evaluation: they were wailing over the act of *arson* committed against the *state edifice*, over *flooding* etc. This complementary employment is typical of collective symbols: antagonistic *discursive stances*¹¹ are thus created. Their high degree of historical continuity is one reason for the collective quality of metaphors (cf. especially Alexander Demandt)¹²: The positive evaluation of the *state edifice* and the evaluation of the *blaze* as a criminal act were cliché and traditional, so that the positive evaluation of *flood*, *blaze*, *explosion*, *destruction* etc. by the revolutionaries apparently shot through minds and bodies and triggered enthusiasm. As is shown by the example from Brentano's 'Godwin', this was not least connected with the fact that the traditional religious, moral and pedagogical discourses had advocated the suppression of sexuality with the same metaphors they had used for the suppression of civil rights.

⁷ *Werke* (ed. Wolfgang Frühwald/Friedhelm Kemp), Vol. 2 München 1963, p. 104.

⁸ See my article «Über ein Modell synchroner Systeme von Kollektivsymbolen sowie seine Rolle bei der Diskurs-Konstitution», in: *Bewegung und Stillstand...*, loc. cit., p. 63-92; cf. Hans-Wolf Jäger: *Politische Metaphorik im Jakobinismus und im Vormärz*, Stuttgart 1971; Alexander Demandt: *Metaphern für Geschichte*, Sprachbilder und Gleichnisse im historisch-politischen Denken, München 1978.

⁹ Claus Träger (ed.): *Mainz zwischen Rot und Schwarz*, Die Mainzer Revolution 1792-1793 in Schriften, Reden und Briefen, Berlin-DDR 1963, p. 55 ff.

¹⁰ Alfred Opitz: «Das gallische Pandämonium. Frankreich und die französische Literatur in der konterrevolutionären Presse des ausgehenden 18. Jahrhunderts», in: Pierre Grappin (ed.): *L'Allemagne des Lumières*, Metz 1982, p. 379-410.

¹¹ See, for further information on this concept, the articles mentioned in notes 2, 5 and 8.

¹² Cf. note 8.

However, the symbols of the Revolution would have failed to trigger this specific enthusiasm if they had consisted of traditional (merely re-evaluated) elements only: rather, dominant positions were assumed — and with particular pathos — by modern symbols which also filled the old ones with new meaning. For the purpose of illustration I would like to refer now to a few symbols from the field of technology (in the wider sense). The major collective symbol from the whole spectrum of technology was already at that time and still is the *machine*, of course. We believe that a 'mechanical' state is something negative as against an 'organic' state — we have «known» this, however, only since the restoration; it is a case of (symbolic) 'knowledge', originally produced during the Revolution. The following passage from Emmanuel Sieyès's famous manifesto 'What is the Third Estate' is frequently quoted: «People will never comprehend the social mechanism if they don't decide to analyse a society just like any ordinary machine, to look at each of its parts separately first, and then to re-assemble these parts one after the other in their heads in order to experience its polyphonic tones (accords) and to appreciate the general harmony which is supposed to escape from it»¹³. Our (particularly 'German') knowledge of the *mechanical* concept of state held by the French revolutionaries appears to be borne out by the first half of the above quotation — but we should carefully read the second half, too. Then it becomes clear that Sieyès obviously has a *musical instrument*, e.g. a *piano*, in mind when he is talking about his *machine*. Instead of suggesting that Sieyès may have a 'mechanical' idea of the most German of all arts, we should rather ask ourselves seriously whether his concept of a machine may perhaps have been completely different from ours. He obviously saw no opposition at all between *machine* and *organism*, but identified the two. In his thinking the symbols of the *body* and *organisation* are functionally equivalent to that of the machine: «It is impossible to create a body for a particular purpose without giving this body an adequate organisation, forms and laws for those functions which it is intended to fulfil»¹⁴. Descartes's definition of all animal-feeling bodies (including the human one) as *machines*¹⁵ led, before the Revolution, to

¹³ Emmanuel Sieyès: *Que'est-ce que le Tiers Etat?* Nouv. Ed. Paris 1982. p. 65.

¹⁴ Loc. cit., p. 66 f.

¹⁵ On the machine symbol, cf. the bibliography mentioned in note 5; see in particular Achrich Meyer: «Mechanische und organische Metaphorik politischer

a downgrading of the machine only in those cases where nature, too, was correspondingly downgraded in relation to the spirit — where a nature was enjoying the highest prestige (as in Rousseauism and sensualism), however, the machine paradoxically became almost a holy thing, the symbolic equivalent of the *organism*. With regard to his cherished plants, the botany-loving Rousseau could speak of the «running and play of those living machines»¹⁶, and concerning man, it says in Herder's 'Outlines of a Philosophy of the History of Man': «His fabric of fibres is so elastically fine and delicate, and his fabric of nerves is so entwined in all parts of his vibrating body that he can almost immerse himself, as an analogon of the highly sensitive Godhead, in any creature (...) and share its feelings (...). Our machine also sympathises with a tree, as long as the tree is growing and turning green; and there are people who cannot physically bear the fall of this tree or its mutilation during its prime youth»¹⁷. The models for these machines, which were by no means 'dead' but were conceived of in sensualistic terms, were the 'beautiful' machines, such as the *clock*, the *musical instrument*, the *sailing ship* and (since its invention around that time) the *balloon* — i.e. things which we can no longer conceive of as machines due to the current laws of discourse. «Thus the Revolution had ended», wrote Görres who had only just converted from jacobinism, «like and aerostate it had climbed the highest spheres among the fiery meteors where it had been hovering majestically above all base and earthly things, above storms and thunder, remote from everyday human nature; but the medium was too fine, too ethereal for the crude jacket, for the springiness of the combustible gas; the jacket burst, and down to the earth the hovering palace sank (...)»¹⁸. As a rule, the «aerostate» was also called 'aerostatic machine' by contemporaries, and the passage from Görres is an example of how a new machine symbol could become the 'medium'

Philosophie», in: *Archiv für Begriffsgeschichte* 13 (1969), p. 128-199; Wilhelm Schmidt-Biggemann: *Maschine und Teufel. Jean Pauls Jugendsatiren nach ihrer Modellgeschichte*, Freiburg and München 1975; Peter Sprengel: «Maschinenmenschen. Ein zentrales Motiv in Jean Pauls Satire», in: *Jahrbuch der Jean-Paul-Gesellschaft* 1977, p. 61-103; Otto Pöggeler: «Das Menschenwerk des Staates», in: Christoph Jamme/Helmut Schneider (ed.): *Mythologie der Vernunft. Hegels 'ältestes Systemprogramm' des deutschen Idealismus*, Frankfurt/Main 1984, p. 175-225.

¹⁶ See the Septième promenade des *Rêveries du promeneur solitaire*.

¹⁷ *Sämtliche Werke* (ed. Suphan), Vol. 13, p. 156.

¹⁸ *Ausgewählte Werke und Briefe*, Vol. 1, Kempten and München 1911, p. 54.

for enthusiasm when it was used in conjunction with traditional metaphors, such as *meteor* (see below), *storm*, *thunder-storm*.

The concept of 'living machines' started to form an opposition to the feudal machines which seemed 'dead' by then, such as the machines of *torture*, *militarism*, *intrigue* ('machinations'), *theatre* as well as to the merely useful *mills*: «Thus a monarchical state has to be conceived of as an inspired body if it is ruled according to internal laws of the people, and it has to be conceived of as a mere machine (a handmill, for instance) if it is ruled according to one single absolute will; in both cases, however, the concepts are necessarily *symbolic*» (Kant)¹⁹. In the way the revolutionary enthusiasm saw the rise of a classical building in the place of 'Gothic' bastilles, it also saw the replacement of a dead machine by a living organic machine. As is revealed above (Clauer), this life was also seen (on the basis of the then latest medical 'knowledge' of mesmerism)²⁰ as an *electric shock* which forces an *ethereal fluid* through the body machine. In electricity the enthusiasm could find a metaphorical equivalent: just like a mesmerist body chain it combined revolutionary masses to apparently living organisms. The *ethereal fluid* shares the electricity symbol with the symbol of the *cosmic* (mostly planetary) *system*, and the brief survey of the main symbols of the Revolution would indeed be incomplete without this symbol. Before the publication of his «Critiques» Kant had tried to explain (partly in anticipation of Laplace's theses) the different excentral positions of the planets solely in terms of the impact of gravitation and (based on speculation) repulsion on a rotating chaos²¹, and the treatment of the *comets* was of particular importance among these ideas. If comets and meteors spelt disaster in the traditional system of collective symbols, here was a fresh chance to create new meanings: The vigour of the comets also seemed to symbolize the revolutionary enthusiasm, and their extremely excentral positions seemed to symbolize 'freedom from a centre'. It is known how important the symbol of the excentral-asymmetric orbit of planets or comets was for Hölderlin's aesthetic speculation — the politico-revolutionary connotations are very obvious, too²².

¹⁹ *Werke* (ed. Cassirer), Vol. 5, p. 429.

²⁰ See Robert Darnton: *Mesmerism and the End of French Enlightenment* Harvard 1968.

²¹ Cf. his «Allgemeine Naturgeschichte und Theorie des Himmels».

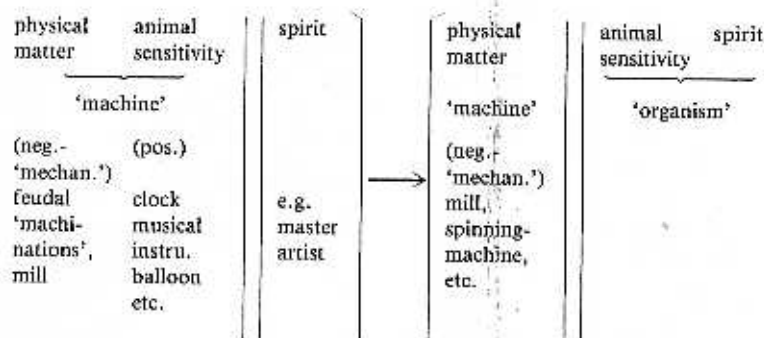
²² Cf. my paper «Asymmetrie und Exzenrizität bei Hölderlin», in: *kultuRRe-volution*, zeitschrift für angewandte diskurstheorie, number 6 (1984), p. 56-59.

This becomes even more obvious in the case of young (jacobin) Görres who symbolized the old and the new types of state as conic sections with the help of precise mathematical formulae: «If one imagines the legislative and the executive power below the two foci of a curved line whose area suggests the state, the circular line will correspond to the monarchical despotic form. A beam is sent out from one focus and is reflected so that it returns to its starting point, the eccentricity, i.e. the distance between the two powers is = 0; the despot sits right in the figure's centre of gravity (...). Apart from the conventional hieroglyphic name despotism, the algebraic equation $y^2 = ax - x^2$ is another equivalent of this figure»²³. If the Ancien Régime accordingly corresponded to the circle, the not yet fully democratic republic corresponded to the ellipse and the democracy corresponded to the parabola (loc cit.), in cosmological terminology: despotism corresponded to something that does not exist in nature, the moderate republic corresponded to a planetary orbit and the democracy to an extreme cometary orbit.

If the space for this article was not restricted it could be shown how the Revolution and its enthusiasm continued to be symbolized nearly ad infinitum: by numerous other symbols not mentioned so far (e.g. *fermentation* and *wine production*, *chemical experiments*, *volcano*, *sunrise* etc.), by combinations of all symbols, by means of polemical distortions and re-evaluations of some or all symbols. Are we wrong to see in this game without frontiers one of the most important media for enthusiasm? If we believe that the symbols created enthusiasm and, conversely, that both the growing and the fading enthusiasm revolutionized the symbols? For it is known that the enthusiasm faded away: not least because its metaphors (such as the balloon in the case of Görres) seemed to be 'bursting'. The symbolic system of the revolutionary enthusiasm was exposed to the most severe endurance tests because of the development of the Revolution (terror, seizure of power by the bourgeoisie, transition to wars of conquest, Napoleon). If the desired organic state had quickly become a «bugbear» (to use Tieck's words in 'Puss in Boots'), was it not a machine as 'dead' as the Ancien Régime? Thus the cooled-off enthusiasm led to the discursive event which was the origin of the antagonism between *machine* and *organism* which is still valid today. One of the first unequivocal pieces of evidence

²³ *Ausgewählte Werke* (ed. Wolfgang Frühwald), Vol. 1, Freiburg/Basel/Wien 1978, p. 25.

for this new discourse stance can be found in the mysterious cultural-revolutionary manifesto which has become known as the 'Oldest Systematized Programme of German Idealism': «the idea of mankind first — I want to demonstrate that there can be no 'idea' of the *state*, because the state is a *mechanical* thing, nor can there be an 'idea' of a *machine*. Only what is the subject of *liberty* is called *idea*. Therefore we must even get beyond the state! — For any state is bound to treat free people like mechanical trains of wheels; and it must not do this; therefore it ought to *exist no more*»²⁴. Here the enthusiasm clearly persists: The failure of the French Revolution is ascribed to its trust in a new state; instead, a radical cultural revolution is supposed to abolish the state completely and to directly bring about an anarchist society (without a state). The beautiful living machine becomes a victim of this enthusiastic effort. The machine becomes coextensive with negatively judged mechanics, its 'crossed-out' part, as it were, is left vacant for the future *organism*, which is now merely the opposite of *machine*:



This diagram, of course, forms and ideal type reconstruction, a discursive frame in which all concrete applications may be located, but without falling under a certain category in each case. If one misses the sensualist discourse stance which is reconstructed here it may easily appear as if there were a simple continuity between

²⁴ *Mythologie der Vernunft* (see note 15), p. 11f.

the critique of 'machinations' and the 'organic' position later on. However, this would be to neglect the decisive influence of the Revolution which consists in the 'transfer' of the enthusiasm into stances critical of the Revolution, as they become perhaps noticeable in the 'Systematized Programme' for the first time (still in the context of a cultural-revolutionary elevation).

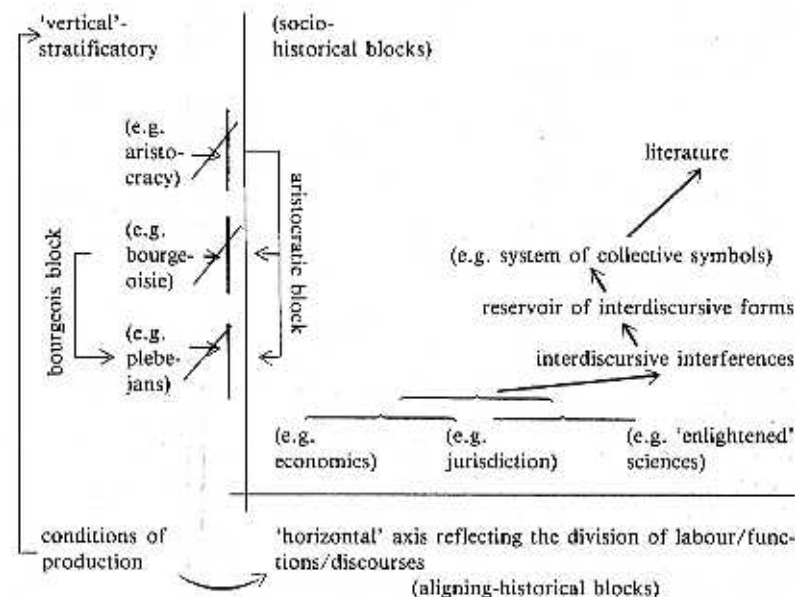
Since the 'Systematized Programme' developed among a group of people around Hölderlin, whose 'Empedokles' still needs to be discussed later on, a few introductory remarks about Hölderlin's discursive stance are useful now: The use of *machine* and *mechanical* in his essay 'On Religion' might lead one to assume that this use is similar to the one in the 'Systematized Programme' — there is some other evidence, however, which contradicts such a conclusion: In the essay 'On the Mode of the Poetical Spirit', for instance, there is mention of «that intermediate state between childhood and mature humanity, between a life which is mechanically beautiful and a life which is humanly beautiful, due to its freedom»²⁵; and unmistakably sensualist way of usage (the child as something 'mechanical'). Or one may think of the term *workshop* used for the Alps in the enthusiastic first stanza of the elegy 'Homecoming': «the old torrents of water are falling like flashes of lightning, causing the ground below to steam, echoes are resounding, and the vast workshop is stirring its arm all day and night, sending out gifts». Only if one takes it for granted that Hölderlin was not among the 'symbolic machine wreckers' (and this would also be decisive evidence against his authorship of the 'Systematized Programme') can the positive use of terms like *mechané* and *kalkul* in his late poetry be understood as well. This discursive stance, however, was closely connected with the fact that Hölderlin *sticked to the revolutionary symbols as a whole* (the passage from 'Homecoming' is an example: the *workshop* is both *thunderstorm* and *flood*). This was not least due to the fact that the sensualist stance made it possible to think of the human mind as different from the *despot of the machine*!

Before it is useful to elaborate on further examples of the assimilation of the Revolution symbols in literature, a *theoretical summary* should be included at this point. Admittedly, the line of argumentation with regard to the theories of symbols and discourse has until now been implicit and partly suggestive, because I thought it was important to present illustrative material first. At any rate,

²⁵ *Kleine Stuttgarter Ausgabe*, Vol. 4, p. 266.

it has already been put to the reader to assume that discourse theory obviously aims at something other than to prove that the Revolution is 'reflected' in (journalistic-primary as well as artistic-poetical) literature, or that the literary texts are 'embedded' in the socio-historical context of the Revolution, or that collective symbols are a 'mediative level' between the Revolution and literature. But what else? The discourse theory advocated here is not interested in *homologies* between structures in society and discourse structures, but sees the ensemble of discourses, which is a direct result of the fact that society is structured according to the division of labour, as an essential substructure of the structure of society itself. Assuming that a society's 'conditions of production' constitute two fundamental 'axes' — one 'vertical'-stratificatory, the other one 'horizontal'-reflecting the division of labour/functions/discourse (cf. diagram)²⁶ — it seems obvious that a direct way to literature only leads from the axis which reflects the division of function, not from the stratificatory axis. For example, a number of *specialized discourses*, a few of which were analysed by Michel Foucault, reflect the division of labour and functions in 18th century society. Among these discourses, those of an 'enlightened' knowledge are particularly remarkable (cf. their summaries in the 'Encyclopédie'). Every society has to *re-integrate* these diverging specialized discourses by means of a reservoir of *interdiscursive forms*. One component, among others, in this reservoir are the *collective symbols*, i.e. the ensemble of 'metaphors' in which a society 'conceives' its actions, processes, conflicts, events etc. Since the interdiscursive forms emerge from the permanent interplay of *interference between the specialized discourses*, it is no wonder that the block of 'enlightened' discourses is matched by certain symbols of enlightened knowledge within the system of 18th century collective symbols (a few of these symbols were discussed) — in addition to their own meanings, these symbols modify the character of the whole system (under their influence, for example, *buildings* are imagined either as 'dead' or 'living machines', either as 'rigid' or as 'living planetary systems' etc.).

²⁶ For a more detailed analysis of the interrelations between sociocritics and discourse theory, cf. Jürgen Link/Ursula Link-Heer: *Literatursoziologisches Propädeutikum*, München 1980 (systematizing and trying to develop further Gramsci's notes on sociohistoric «blocks», on «hegemony» etc.), and the above quoted journal *kultuRRevolution*.



On the basis of such a theoretical model it seems now possible to think of the Revolution as a discursive, or rather: *interdiscursive event*, and the same applies to its assimilation in literature. Once the interdiscursive forms and, in particular, the collective symbols are available, they may theoretically be used for the purpose of creating meaning in any context (a machine, for instance, may symbolize a farm, a lawcourt, a science etc.). The Revolution had the effect, however, that a large number of collective symbols was used, both qualitatively and quantitatively, to symbolize the Revolution. The symbols crystallized at and around the Revolution in such a way that some sort of fixed classification developed with regard to a number of symbols (such as *volcano*, *flood*, *fire*, *electricity*, *balloon* and others). As a result of the (from an ideological point of view) positive or negative *evaluation* of the Revolution symbols two *antagonistic discursive stances* arose spontaneously which were afterwards used by the antagonistic sociohistorical blocks (the aristocratic one and the bourgeois one) as distinctive signs (such a block includes not only the class which is dominant at a given time, but numerous classes). Again, this process was substantially

determined by the characteristic feature of all collective symbols, namely by the fact that the individual symbol can always be read or acted out both metaphorically and representative-synecdochically (as *pars pro toto*) and, above all, pragmatically. Let us use the example of the *working animal which is groaning under the yoke*: The example is taken from the section of the feudal economy which it represents as *pars pro toto* — metaphorically it is used to symbolize the relationship between the aristocratic and the bourgeois socio-historical block; the latter feels treated like a *beast* by the former. By way of simple semantic mechanisms (some '-free') the series of the symbols *animal under the yoke/fettered prisoner/frozen flood* (cf. Hölderlin: 'The fettered river')/*fettered balloon* etc. is intensified at the same time. The enthusiasm is mainly a product of the spontaneous shared feeling among all those who hate the *yoke* and the *fetters* and the *ice* etc. The result was the complex interwoven net of Revolution symbols which both integrated the knowledge of the time handily and seemed to be offering a handy formula for the expression of the socio-historical antagonism. It appeared to be offering this formula until a number of antagonisms, instead of merely one, developed at a later stage during the Revolution. As was already suggested when the example of the *machine* was discussed, the two discursive stances now started to split into a multitude of stances. The material of the Revolution symbols now seemed to have been 'released', as it were, and was thus free to be used for complex combinations and for a play of diverse — partial or even complete — re-evaluations. If Görres (cf. above) thought that the *balloon* of the Revolution had burst, he was already in the process of changing to the opposite discursive stance (*balloon* = negative, blasphemous machine). Besides such a direct re-evaluation, however, the Revolution symbols could then also be used paradoxically (e.g. when some romantics thought of the feudal state as an *organism*) and, in many ways, selectively (the *flood* of the Revolution was now perhaps regarded as dangerous, while the *flood* of poetry continued to be regarded as positive etc.). This interplay of combinations and re-evaluations shaped literature in the narrow sense, above all. It is true that literature (cf. the last diagram) cannot be seen exclusively, but nevertheless in some major parts in terms of an assimilation of interdiscursive forms, e.g. of collective symbols (whereby these collective symbols are individualized, sometimes to the degree of esotericism). It has 'inherited' its integrative, life-totalizing function from the interdiscursive forms.

When referring to the 'vertical'-stratificatory axis in society, however, literature is not at all restricted to an expression of sympathy or antipathy for the existing blocks: it may refer to fantastic, unreal and, frequently, even to unfeasible «block-projects»²⁷. Such social sympathies or antipathies in literary texts, often hardly tangible, are articulated not least by means of paradoxical combinations and re-evaluation of the system of collective symbols, as will be shown by a few examples in the following.

Let us begin with Schiller: After the drastic change in 1792/93, he becomes a typical representative of the stance of a selective re-evaluation of the complete Revolution symbols. The classical evidence from the aesthetic works need not be repeated here in detail. When it says in the third letter from his work 'On the Aesthetic Education of Man' that the «living clockwork of the state» can never be halted, but has to be improved while running, the revolutionary-sensualist stance seems to be very cleverly turned against the Revolution: The old «natural state», too, now becomes a *living machine* which must not simply be put to death. This stance is connected with a strong emphasis on the (mentally conscious) *master* of the machine. If it says in the fifth letter that the «rough and lawless desires» of the plebeian classes are rushing «with uncontrollable fury towards their animal-like satisfaction», the anti-revolutionary discourse stance is drastically confirmed in this point: under the *yoke* there were indeed *beasts* which should not have been «unbound», the *steering* must not be abandoned. In this respect the master did not need to be a king by any means, it could also be a bourgeois genius, a Bonaparte. Schiller explained this position to those affected in the 'Song of the Bell' drastical-aesthetically, so to speak; the assimilation of the *fire* symbol of the Revolution and the *manufacturing of a bell* (area of the machine symbols) are essential here. It is said with a raised index finger that whoever has to deal with the revolutionary *floods and fires* has to be a *master* and, in addition, he has to be on his guard. The symbol of the *razing of stronghold Uri* in 'Tell', with its obvious connotation of the collective symbol of the *Bastille*, shows that these were not Schiller's conclusive words.

²⁷ See, for further informations on the «interdiscourse» concept, the references given in note 2.

²⁸ Cf. *Literatursoziologisches Propädeutikum*.

From Schiller to Goethe who performs a change of evaluation almost opposite to that of Schiller. After an interval of 10 years, in 1802, Goethe wrote to Schiller about the Revolution: «On the whole it is the immense view of brooks and rivers falling against each other from numerous hills and valleys with physical inevitability, eventually causing a vast river to swell and a flood which swallows those who forecast it as well as those who were unsuspecting. This enormous empiricism is pure nature, and there is no trace of what we as philosophers would like to call freedom (an ironic dig at Schiller! J.L.). We want to wait and see whether Bonaparte's personality will delight us further with this magnificent and predominant phenomenon»²⁹. Not only in this passage does Goethe stress the laws of nature which govern the revolutionary *floods*, *fires*, *earthquakes* etc. Towards the end of «Faust II» he playfully combines the Revolution symbols with the latest knowledge in geology (volcanism and neptunism).

The 'Conversations of German Emigrants' allow us to study Goethe's assimilation of the Revolution symbols. The people of the framestory represent the two antagonistic blocks³⁰, and with their polemic conversation Goethe also stage-manages the Revolution symbols from journalism which are by now familiar to us. Karl, who represents the revolutionary block, defends the jacobins: «How can you virtually condemn these people? (...) Of course, they did not possess the few habitable rooms in the old building and could not there look after themselves; rather, they experienced the unpleasantness in the neglected parts of your stately palace the more, because they had to spend their days there wretchedly and oppressed: they did not, corrupted by a mechanically lightened business, regard as good what they were used to; (...)». As usual, this passage also combines the 'Gothic' building of the Ancien Régime connotatively with a «mechanical» dead machine. On the other hand, the baroness speaks about the revolutionary *storm tide*: «The civil constitution, she said, seems to be a ship which takes a great number of people (...) across dangerous waters, even in times of a storm; only at the moment when the ship is wrecked does one see who can swim, and even good swimmers perish under such circumstances». Afterwards the novellas at first seem to 'forget the topic of the Revolution completely or to subsume it, at most,

under the wrong tracks of the 'passions' (most clearly in the Ferdinand novella with its allusions to «sophistry about property and law»), until it is resumed in the 'Fairy Tale' on the highest poetic level of 'assimilation', so to speak³¹. The collective symbols of *building* and *ship* from the framestory now reappear — almost surrealistically defamiliarized to become individual symbols — as 'floating temples'. It has already been said that the collective symbols which appear in Goethe's writings play a major rôle in Schiller's 'Aesthetic Letters', too — it would appear to be justified, then, to assume that the 'building which is floating underground' is supposed to symbolize (at least this would be *one* meaning) Schiller's 'movement from the nature state to the rational state'. «The edifice of the nature state is swaying», these had been Schiller's words — «the ground started to sway below them», it says in Goethe. It is known that, just like the earthquake in this passage, the *shack*, too, belonged to the reservoir of the collective symbols of the revolutionary era, likewise the *lumières* of the *Enlightenment*, changed by Goethe into the «jack o' lanterns» (by no means only with a negative sense) of speculative reason which he compares with the «dust eating» snake of experience which never loses contact with the *ground*. Even a more thorough analysis of the Revolution symbols assimilated in the 'Fairy Tale' would certainly not lead to a 'conclusive reading' of the whole — rather, this style (which is resumed and continued in 'Faust II') is obviously directed at 'causing' these symbols, burdened with so much enthusiasm or fanaticism, 'to dance' by means of sweeping defamiliarisation of both the political antagonisms which are connected with these symbols, their typical usage and their typical contexts — the aim being to transform the enthusiasm into irony and aesthetic serenity (this also with the purpose of putting Schiller's programme in concrete form).

The case of Hölderlin is completely different. He belonged to the generation of people who were about twenty years old when the Revolution started, and he was never prepared to forget the enthusiasm which he experienced at that time. The encounter between Hyperion and Alabanda in the 7th letter of the 1st volume

²⁹ Letter dated March 9 of 1802; *Briefe* (Hamburger Ausgabe), Vol. 2, p. 431.

³⁰ Cf. *Literatursoziologisches Propädeutikum*, p. 340-351.

³¹ Cf. Peter Pfaff: «Das Horen—Märchen. Eine Replik Goethes auf Schillers *Briefe über die ästhetische Erziehung des Menschengeschlechts*», in: *Geist und Zeichen*, Heidelberg 1977, p. 320-332; Bernd Witte: «Das Opfer der Schlange. Zur Auseinandersetzung Goethes mit Schiller in den *Unterhaltungen deutscher Ausgewanderten* und im *Märchen*», in: *Unser commercium. Goethes und Schillers Literaturpolitik*, Stuttgart 1984, p. 461-484.

of Hyperion' takes place completely under the spell of the Revolution symbols: «At times, when a thunderstorm is drawing near, distributing its heavenly powers among the forests and seeds, or when a chorus of eagles is flying around the mountain peaks where I am wandering, my heart can stir as if my Alabanda was near; but he lives in me and is more noticeable, more present, more unmistakable, just like he once stood there, a fiery, stern, terrible prosecutor, when he was naming the sins of the century. How my spirit was aroused by his profundities, how the thunderous words of pitiless justice used to pass my mouth!» In Hölderlin's language the revolutionary enthusiasm has become the rhythm of sounds and meanings like nowhere else in Germany. Unlike the classic writers this generation had got involved so deeply in the Revolution, at least with regard to thoughts and plans, that the internal divisions which developed during the Revolution were by no means simply perceived as a 'bloody chaos', but that the alternative between an etatist and a civil 'continuation' of the Revolution was discussed rather seriously. It is the conflict between Alabanda and Hyperion, between a purely etatist revolution and a civil cultural revolution: «You are not asked whether you want to! You never want to, you slaves and barbarians! We don't even want to improve you, for it's no use! We only want to make sure that you don't stand in the way of mankind's victorious run. Oh! let someone light my torch so that I may burn the weed off the heath! let someone prepare me a mine so that I may blast the sluggish blocks off the earth! — Wherever possible, people put them down gently, I remarked». (loc. cit.) It was the failure of the programme of jacobin state-dictatorship, advocated here by Alabanda, that led the author of the 'Systematized Programme' (and likewise the early romantics) to a complete rejection of any state, even the revolutionary one. In the novel this attitude seems to be held also by Hyperion and Diotima ('a new church' instead of 'a new state') — if it were not for the fact that Alabanda's standpoint also retained its relative justification within the overall dialectics of the novel. The metaphor of the *orbits of planets and comets suggests this symbolically* (cf. also the prefaces) — it says about Alabanda (loc. cit.): «As usual, I took delight once more in watching this spirit on its daring wandering path, pursuing his course so haphazardly, with such fancy-free happiness, and yet so firmly». This appears to be the orbit of a *meteor*, i.e. an object which is straying through the universe (later on, Hyperion and Diotima are also wandering «from one spring

of the world to the next, across the vast area of the sun and beyond, to the other islands in the sky»). In reality, however, the main figures form a common system consisting of — even if they are sometimes highly *excentric* — planets and comets, and their separations are as regular as their reunifications³².

The conflict between revolutionary etatism and anti-etatist cultural revolution is continued in the 'Empedokles' fragments. The old state and the old church are lamenting over the results of the Empedokleian cultural revolution: «People are drunk like he is himself. They hear no law, and no want. And no judge; the customs are flooded by incomprehensible roaring like the peaceful strands. All days have turned into a wild party (...)». (Scene I, 2 of the 1st version) Here, as elsewhere in Hölderlin, the Revolution symbols (*flood, Dionysiac ecstasy*) continue to be used positively without any reservations. But why then the crisis and the temporary end of the cultural revolution as a result of Empedokles's fault? The wish of the people to make him king was a symptom of this crisis. To put it differently: While Empedokles wanted to lead the people into a stateless (an-archic) civil society, the people strove for a new *state* (even a monarchy) — how could this happen? Elsewhere I have tried to outline the following answer³³: because of symbol-syntactic mistakes by Empedokles. In the second version (II, 1) the archon Mekades quotes from that particular speech by Empedokles which the latter judges to be his «fault»: «Yet wild plants on wild ground are sown into the laps of the Gods All the mortal and the undernourished and the ground would seem dead if there weren't One waiting, reviving, and mine is the field». In my opinion Empedokles's fault does not consist in the fact that he recognizes himself to be that particular I, that transcendental consciousness, that 'World-Intellect' (*Weltgeist*), which is the actual source of life for nature and the people; nor does it consist in the fact that he even articulates this insight. Rather, his fault is to have expressed this insight for himself and the people in a *code of rule*, to be more precise in a *code of private property* («the field is mine»). These symbols of property and rule (as is well known Rousseau had been of the opinion that the latter developed from the former) 'naturally' make the people demand a new and (because

³² See the article quoted in note 22.

³³ «Schillers Don Carlos und Hölderlins Empedokles: Dialektik der Aufklärung und heroisch-politische Tragödie», in: *Elementare Literatur...*, loc. cit., p. 87-126.

Empedokles turns away in horror) even old rule (restoration). Therefore Empedokles will also have to revolutionize the Revolution symbols by extinguishing their still existing elements of rule symbolism and also by performing symbolically the complete «return to nature» (*fall into the volcano*, the natural Revolution symbol par excellence). In this context it is interesting to observe how Empedokles exposes his early socialist-anarchist programme in his famous 'testament' («then join hands again/be faithful and share the goods»); «The children of the earth tend to shy away from the new and the strange. The life of the plant and the cheerful animal only strive to stay at home. With their limited property they are worried about their survival, and they don't aspire to more in life. But eventually the anxious have got to come forward, and every creature sinks into the elements by dying, in order to refresh itself and rejuvenate as in a bath». In this passage property, as it were, symbolically appears as part of the vegetable-animal-human *machine* (in the sense of Herder), which 'dis-limits' every creature at the moment of its death so that it merges into the *flood* of absolute nature, but which the human spirit may voluntarily 'dis-limit' by means of a cultural revolution during lifetime. In his symbolic suicide Empedokles will carry out both simultaneously — so that the people may no longer have to depend on rule and state, but may live without rule in a 'new church' thanks to a symbolic repetition of Empedokles's return to nature.

Schiller 'toned down' the Revolution symbols, Goethe played on their keyboard poetically, Hölderlin tried to subject them to an immanent revolution. If there was enough space, it could be shown now how Novalis made an effort to particularly resolve their contradictions (e.g. *machine/organism*) in the synthesis which he tried to form by systematic combinations of discourses (in this process, by the way, he stuck to the positive use of the *machine* especially radically) — it could be shown how Jean Paul splitted the Revolution symbols into minute elements, and how he sprinkled this metaphorical 'dust', sometimes used as enthusiastic sugar, sometimes as ironic salt, onto the at first sight bizarre contexts of his writings which had the effect that both the still living memory of the revolutionary enthusiasm and the irony resulting from the

disappointment remain nearly omnipresent³⁴ — finally, the fascination which the Revolution symbols had for Kleist to the very end would have to be revealed; how this fascination is led, as it were, through all modulations, in 'Earthquake in Chili'. As is shown by his reflections on the marionette, Kleist, too, stuck to the *living machine* in a particularly radical way — so radical, in fact, that he tried to base the plot of his dramas on the unconscious in his characters instead of the conscious, on the *floods, currents, energies* of their sensitivity — the mesmerist motif of *somnambulism* being a particularly characteristic example of this.

What is the contribution of the analysis of the Revolution symbols and their literary assimilation in Germany to the issues raised by Foucault? To a decisive extent the enthusiastically 'watching' audience obviously saw the revolutionary 'drama' through the 'perspective' of the Revolution symbols. The enthusiasm was not least a result of the fact that the individuals, normally fragmented according to the rôles they had to fulfil under the division of labour, could feel like complete human beings and *We* in the medium of these symbols — including the sceptical minister Goethe who, despite his scepticism, secretly stormed the *Newton Bastille* in his laboratory. The Revolution thus was an *interdiscursive event* with epochal energy, because it caused a large part of the discourse integration necessary in society (formation of an aligning-historical block against the division of labour) via a medium, which always and at the same time connoted the major conflict in society. This is the reason for the previously seldom seen 'charge' of all interdiscursive mechanisms with the 'highest interest of mankind'. There is a second point to be made: While the journalistic discourses actually described the Revolution like a *drama* (e.g. a drama by Schiller), as *interaction of consciously acting protagonists*, the Revolution symbols (with their anonymous *floods, earthquakes, streams of lava* etc.) unconsciously and consciously undermined such a point of view. So the audience, at the same time, was 'watching' a *drama* and feeling a *natural process*. How could the Revolution simultaneously be conscious interaction and unconscious natural process? This question, hardly ever asked consciously found its solution in the sensitive experience of the *enthusiasm*:

³⁴ Cf. «Riskante Bewegung im Überbau. Zur Transformation technischer Innovation in Kollektivsymbolik am Beispiel des Ballons», in: *Elementare Literatur...*, loc. cit., p. 48-72.

obviously an analogy to the phenomenon that the 'spectator'-individuals, even though separated from each other due to the division of labour, still felt as part of a common *flood and fire*, namely the enthusiastic *We*, whose integral part they had become, not through conscious interaction, but through an *unconscious flow*.

If Kant of all people who certainly was hardly prone at all to make any concessions to the unconscious, regarded the enthusiasm as a lasting fact of the Revolution, he certainly did not mean this in the sense of an opposite to contemplation and action — but rather in the sense that the enthusiasm could still be sure, even beyond the failed interactionist drama, that an irresistible and, in spite of all, essentially hopeful process had started for mankind at that time. Taken as an interdiscursive event, the *electric shock* of the Revolution, which gave rise to enthusiasm, would not least be the product of a contradictory symbolic double-coding of historical events as interaction and natural process: The bloodier the drama became, the less sufficient the conscious acting of the protagonists seemed to be as the basis for an explanation of what was actually happening. The energy of this double-coding, not least fed by the daily experience of the individual that his *desires* rebel against the *fetters* of his morals, determined the frequently paradoxical process of 'passing on' the revolutionary enthusiasm to a multitude of new discursive stances. Of decisive importance in this process was always the doubt, raised by the Revolution symbols, whether we are not being unconsciously determined in our actions instead of consciously acting — and whether this might not be beneficial in some cases, namely the deep doubt about the principium individuationis which seems to be at the start of the long process of a return to nature, a process which still determines our cultures today. Revolutionary enthusiasm as a lasting hope that nature and spirit, the unconscious and the conscious, spontaneity and planning, the mass and the subject might yet come together — and that his might be the real 'promesse de bonheur'?

L'INSCRIPTION DU DISCOURS SOCIAL DANS LE TEXTE LITTÉRAIRE

Régine Robin
Marc Angenot

Nous nous proposons d'aborder dans le présent essai une des tâches essentielles de la sociocritique qui est de décrire et de rendre raison de la manière dont le discours social vient s'inscrire dans le texte littéraire.

La sociocritique peut chercher à rendre compte de la *socialité* du texte sous deux points de vue: en tant que le texte contribue à produire un imaginaire social, à offrir aux groupes sociaux des figures d'identité (d'identification), à fixer des représentations du monde qui ont une fonction sociale. L'autre point de vue, génétique, consiste à se demander comment la «socialité» vient au texte. Par de multiples façons, sans doute; celle que nous voulons privilégier ici est ce que nous appellerons l'inscription du discours social.

Contrairement à l'axiome de l'ancienne «sociologie littéraire», qui contourne ou néglige perpétuellement le travail sur le langage et dans le texte, la matérialité du texte même, nous poserons d'abord que la littérature n'a affaire qu'à des référents textuels; elle ne se rapporte, elle ne renvoie qu'à d'autres discours, lors même que la visée de l'écrivain serait de saisir l'extra-texte, de connaître et de représenter une des vérités du monde. Sans doute, la question de la référence du texte littéraire au monde concret mérite d'être posée, mais c'est après avoir bien compris que cette référence au réel s'opère dans la médiation des langages et des discours qui, dans une société donnée, «connaissent», différenciellement et même de façon antagoniste, le réel.

Il faut poser d'abord selon nous la question de savoir comment la littérature comme pratique symbolique opère dans la complexe topologie des discours depuis l'oral sous toutes ses formes, le conversationnel jusqu'aux grands genres discursifs d'appareils; comment la littérature travaille sur le déjà-là des systèmes de représentation du monde et de la vie sociale. Une telle perspective devrait permettre aussi de poser la question de la *spécificité* de la pratique littéraire par rapport aux autres pratiques discursives. La sociologie littéraire naïve, dont la sociocritique cherche à dépasser les prémisses, n'est naïve — qu'on nous entende bien — qu'en ceci qu'elle confond la *visée* de la pratique littéraire qui est, d'une façon ou de l'autre, de «connaître» le réel, d'en rendre compte, de l'exprimer, de le donner à voir, avec le matériau qui lui est propre et qui n'est aucunement le réel, mais les diverses manières dont le réel est déjà thématique, représenté, interprété, semiotisé dans des discours, des langages, des symboles, des formes culturelles. (Ces discours et langages faisant aussi bien *partie* du réel). Pour nous, l'écrivain est d'abord quelqu'un qui *écoute* du point où il se situe dans la société, l'immense rumeur fragmentée qui figure, commente, conjecture, antagonise le monde. Cette rumeur, c'est ce qu'en un premier temps nous pourrions appeler le *discours social*. Le choix d'une telle expression (et particulièrement le fait de l'employer au singulier, de ne pas parler simplement des discours sociaux) implique qu'au-delà du fragment, de la diversité des langages et des thèmes, de la cacophonie et du chaos, le chercheur pourrait arriver à reconstituer les règles du dicible et du scriptible, une division réglée des tâches discursives, des réseaux interdiscursifs, des règles de formation des discours déterminés mais aussi une topique, des manières de dire propres à un état de société et déterminant avec une certaine systématisme l'acceptable et le légitime discursif d'une époque. Cette possibilité qui s'offre comme tâche au chercheur de reconstituer des systématismes locaux et générales qui rendent raison des caractères propres à un *Zeitgeist* conflictuel, à un état de culture, n'est cependant pas ce qui s'offre à l'écrivain, au romancier, si «omniscient» que soit construit son narrateur.

L'historien, le chercheur est légitimé à nommer *discours social* cette entité construite formant un *système* discursif, quoique constitué de fragments non aléatoires. Du point de vue qui est le nôtre ici, celui de la pratique littéraire, nous envisageons cette instance construite comme un horizon qui est nécessairement présupposé dans toute réflexion sur les discours et pratiques en société, comme

de certaines régularités qui se laissent deviner, entrevoir, mais dont le régime systématique n'est jamais objectivé en tant que tel, et dont la mise en lumière totalisante n'est pas la tâche de l'écrivain. Revenons à notre première approche: nous appellerons discours social ce qui vient à l'oreille de l'homme-en-société, et partant de l'écrivain, comme fragment erratique, rumeur démembrée, mais encore porteuse dans le chaos même des enjeux et des débats où elle intervient, des migrations et mutations par quoi elle est passée, des logiques discursives dont elle est un élément. Les énoncés qui migrent dans une société, dans la conversation, l'affichage, le journal, le livre et les discours d'apparat, n'ont pas seulement une multiplicité de sens, ils sont porteurs d'efficaces spécifiques, de charmes et de fonctions; leur forme, leur «contenu», leur rôle pragmatique, leurs destinataires d'élection forment un tout complexe qui ne peut se résoudre au message univoque et exsangue des théories axiomatiques d'une linguistique ou d'une sociologie réduites à de «la communication». Le fragment, la lexie, ce que «l'oreille» retient, ne sont pas porteurs d'un sens immanent ni stable, mais porteurs aussi obscurément de marques d'origine, de traces des enjeux, des réinscriptions dans de contextes variés, des rémanences qui forment une certaine mémoire de la *doxa*.

Dans ce qui vient à l'oreille de l'écrivain il y a des lieux communs, des clichés, des maximes qui balisent l'ordre doxique, le «mentalitaire»; il y a aussi des paradigmes plus construits, de l'opinion publique et des savoirs disciplinaires, des thèmes en migrations avec leur cortège de prédicats et d'épithètes, des slogans politiques, de grandes doctrines construites en visions du monde, en historiosophies. Ces fragments, ces morceaux de figures, d'enthymèmes et de phraséologies, l'écrivain ne les perçoit pas comme des monades closes sur elles-mêmes, ni pouvant se combiner librement, aléatoirement, mais comme des éléments semidisponibles présentant des affinités, — les uns patentes les autres «étranges», — avec d'autres fragments de la représentation. Les lexies que dépose le discours social dans les esprits ont des magnétismes, des «atomes crochus», alors même que le système qui en organise la circulation n'est pas objectivé ni connaissable en synchronie. Comme les pièces d'un puzzle, la configuration particulière de l'objet discursif fragmentaire suggère des connexions sans offrir jamais *a-priori* la pièce manquante. L'écrivain, du moins celui de la représentation «réaliste», serait quelqu'un pour qui le réel à travers la rumeur du discours social, se présente comme un puzzle en désordre mais,

comme dans tout puzzle, avec la certitude, la garantie, qu'au prix d'un certain labeur, de conjectures et de manipulations, une figure en sortira et que chaque pièce, par son dessin et son contour mêmes, révèle une partie de l'énigme sans imposer cependant le choix assuré des pièces contiguës. Le monde pour l'écrivain «réaliste» n'est ni une figure de tous temps visibles, ni une énigme chaotique définitive, mais l'incertain effort de passage de l'énigme à la figure. (Si notre métaphore du puzzle a quelque valeur suggestive il faudrait dire au moins que le travail de l'écrivain sur le discours social correspondrait à un puzzle-fort chimérique-d'où plusieurs figures imprévisibles pourraient sortir).

Contrairement à une image reçue chère à l'époque naturaliste, l'écrivain n'est pas celui dont la vue serait la plus perçante (le fameux sens de l'«observation»), mais celui dont l'oreille fine discriminerait le mieux dans le brouhaha des discours ce qui vaut la peine d'être transcrit et d'être travaillé. Ici l'image de l'écrivain serait celle du «socioanalyste» dont l'«attention également flottante» retiendrait avec art ce qui compte. Il nous faut ici faire appel à une autre notion: celle de *discours transverse* qui, comme le syntagme le suggère, traverse l'épaisseur des discours avec leurs axiomatiques propres, et leurs fonctions instituées, régissant par des voies de récurrences thématiques, cognitives et figurales ce qui se dit dans une société; le *transverse* c'est la surdétermination des dicibles sociaux dans une hégémonie.

Nous posons par hypothèse que l'écrivain choisit d'occuper une position singulière dans le processus de réception, de reconfiguration et de réémission transformée de cette immense rumeur du discours social. L'idéologue cherche à produire du systématique, de l'homogène se posant d'un point de vue de certitude, de stabilisation et d'autorité. Tout idéologue opère comme une sorte de collimateur discursif—si on se souvient qu'en optique le collimateur est ce petit dispositif qui met en parallèle des rayons divergents. La parole ordinaire est aussi, tendancielle, ce bricolage par lequel l'individu s'institue comme sujet idéologique, «choisit» dans le matériel hétérogène des discours, des éléments combinables qui lui permettent de dire «moi, je...». Avec de l'hétérogène bricolé, l'homme-en société ravaude de la certitude identitaire et du roman socio-familial. Monsieur Homais est quelqu'un qui se sait et se proclame complaisamment voltairien, rousseauiste, enthousiaste du Progrès, ennemi-juré de l'obscurantisme clérical: des éléments du discours social ont formé précipité, et dans ce précipité le pharma-

cien d'Yonville s'est re-connu. Emma Bovary a lu au couvent Madame Cottin, Madame de Genlis, Ducray-Duminil et dans les héroïnes chlorotiques et médiévales de ces romans gothiques et sentimentaux, elle s'est aussi, bien différemment, reconnue et ne cesse de répéter dans ses aventures personnelles, comme sa névrose de destinée, cette construction énigmatique transformée en parole de devin.

L'écrivain quant à lui, s'interdit de transformer l'énigme en moyen immédiat et naïf de se donner une «identité», ni d'aplanir l'hétérogène en doctrine. S'il n'est cependant l'écrivain (post-) moderniste qui se satisfait du chaos, des chatoiements du kaléidoscope, du travail de Sysyphe de bricolages pervers toujours recommencés; s'il n'est pas plus le romancier à thèse, l'essayiste à diagnostics qui se contente d'incarner allégoriquement des idéologèmes mis en récit ou de couvrir d'un *ornatus* rhétorique ses états d'âme maquillés en certitudes, il est alors celui qui, d'abord, reconnaît pleinement le caractère problématique, cacophonique, conflictuel, incertain des façons dont le discours social se donne à représenter le monde, mais qui prétend au-delà, y reconnaître, y inscrire et y déplacer ultimement une «figure». Dans la problématique esquissée ici du fait littéraire comme travail interdiscursif, et spécificité textuelle, certains aspects de la question ont déjà fait l'objet de recherches abondantes même si elles n'ont pas été pensées et définies dans le cadre heuristique qui est le nôtre. Nous ne traiterons pas ici de questions, largement documentées, quant au travail qu'opère le texte sur les présupposés linguistiques, sur les *clichés* au sens étroit, sur les savoirs constitués (éthnocasualistiques, techniques, spéculatifs), sur des idéologies-doctrines au sens précis de «littérature et darwinisme», «littérature et fascisme» etc. Nous choisissons de faire porter notre attention sur des faits socio-discursifs moins délimités, moins isolables, plus flous et omniprésents: ces conglomerats de figures, d'images, de prédicats qui forment *concrétions socio-discursives* autour d'un sujet thématique. Ces objets sont, avec des nuances que nous marquerons, de l'ordre de ce que la sociocritique de Claude Duchet désigne comme *sociogrammes*.

Claude Duchet définit le sociogramme, objet de ses travaux récents, dans les termes suivants: «Ensemble flou, instable, conflictuel, de représentations partielles centrées autour d'un noyau, en interaction, les unes avec les autres». Ensemble flou, attirant des éléments aléatoires, doté d'un coefficient d'incertitude, dont les

frontières avec d'autres concrétions thématiques ne sont ni ne peuvent être éanches. Instable: car ne cessant de se transformer par une dynamique interne et en s'adjoignant, en phagocytant des éléments empruntés, —sinon le sociogramme tend à se figer, à se fossiliser en slogan, en lieu commun inerte. Conflictuel, car les éléments juxtaposés sont porteurs d'enjeux, de débats, d'intérêts sociaux. De représentations partielles: parce que arrachées chacune de discours spécifiques avec leur régularités, entrant dans le texte littéraire comme de l'hétérogène en interaction: le sociogramme n'est pas une juxtaposition de monades, une chaîne de redondances partielles liées à un objet thématique.

Avant même de chercher à illustrer ce concept et à conjecturer à son propos, il convient d'en marquer le mérite heuristique *a-priori*. Claude Duchet voit bien que l'objet réel pour l'historien des discours et des idéologies, l'objet premier est un objet composé complexe. Certes, on peut en analyser les composantes sous l'aspect de «monèmes» sociodiscursifs, maximes, enthymèmes, myèmes, connexions adjectivales, prédicats... Mais l'analyse part du fait que ces composantes élémentaires ne sont pas autonomes, qu'elles ne sont ni juxtaposées ni additionnables; que d'autre part, les représentations sociales n'appartiennent pas essentiellement ni toujours à la seule logique homogène de l'idéologie comme sous-ensemble formant système; que le social et le doxique c'est d'abord du dialogisme, de la confrontation, pas seulement dans la polémique explicite mais dans la «polémique larvée» dans une hétérogénéité constitutive (Bakhtin) qui est au cœur de toute interaction verbale. L'unité dont il convient de partir pour penser le travail littéraire, ce n'est pas (ou c'est rarement) l'idéologème univoque, mais ce sociogramme comme agglomérat, comme vecteur sémantique conflictuel.

Puisque notre réflexion nous fait rencontrer celle de Claude Duchet, il est à propos de rendre ici hommage au mérite de son travail qui est au centre de la sociocritique française. Duchet a plus qu'un autre entrepris de travailler en théorie littéraire dans une tradition matérialiste qui, sans réduire le texte à un artefact conceptuel ni à une immanence vide de signification, dépasse la vieille alternative sociologisme/formalisme. Dans cette perspective, son appareil d'analyse fait apparaître à bon droit que la reproduction des représentations du monde se fait toujours non à partir d'un réel objectivé sur un modèle de type «photographique» mais à partir de l'hétérogène toujours déjà là, de l'amalgame, de l'affrontement,

et sans qu'il faille invoquer d'emblée un métasystème hégémonique. Les analyses de Claude Duchet, selon les fins qu'il se donne, portent essentiellement sur le texte littéraire déjà donné et sur le travail qu'il lui paraît opérer sur les représentations sociales. Nous nous plaçons ici, plus spéculativement, à ce moment pré-textuel où certains secteurs du discours social offrent une prégnance qui attire l'attention, esthétiquement éduquée, de l'écrivain. La sélection même, la «bonne écoute» est sans doute le premier acte esthétique de l'écrivain, celui qui montre sa juste intuition de ce qui se joue dans l'épaisseur du discours social. Il semble que toujours le «grand» écrivain perçoive adéquatement dans telle nébuleuse thématique ce qu'elle peut représenter par synecdoque du «mystère» social. Pour reprendre l'image du puzzle, l'écrivain doit être celui qui s'empare de la *bonne pièce*, celle par laquelle il fallait commencer. Ajoutons que le choix de la pièce, d'une image culturelle-filtre, et de certains de ses vecteurs sémantiques doit être également adéquat par les enjeux propres au genre littéraire avec l'entropie de sa tradition, tenant compte du fait que toute oeuvre novatrice s'inscrit comme dissidence critique à l'intérieur même de la tradition génologique où elle se place.

Si l'écrivain se méprend, s'il ne retient du discours social que des excroissances en définitive sans grande signification, du tape-à-l'oeil ou du tape-à-l'oreille, la mise en fiction, quelque talent ou subtilité qu'il y investisse, ne produira que du dérisoire, avec peut-être la douteuse consolation du succès de mode ou de scandale. Posons en outre que la *valeur herméneutique* des concrétions sociodiscursives ne vaut, nous semble-t-il, que pour un état de société, pour un moment de la culture et en quelque sorte signe et définit ce moment-là. Flaubert avec *Madame Bovary* sélectionne d'abord, base d'une intrigue voulue grise, un sociogramme presque vulgaire, banal, de transmission orale, rendu suspect par la gaudriole du vaudeville et le pathos du mélodrame: celui de l'adultère provincial et de la femme romanesque et mal mariée. Il faudrait pouvoir dire pourquoi, dans l'état de développement du genre romanesque et dans l'économie du discours social social en 1850, ce qui faisait un bon élément «conducteur» ne l'eût pas été trente ans plus tôt, eût été impossible à manipuler textuellement trente ans plus tard. Au contraire, si l'on nous permet ce contraste pédagogiquement simpliste, voici Paul Bonnetain, naturaliste honorable et non dépourvu de «talent»: au début des années 1880, il donne *Charlot s'amuse* et compte que son labeur littéraire et son

mérite rencontreront le succès: ce succès fugace, il l'aura, et le scandale en outre (tout comme *Madame Bovary* à ce dernier égard. Bonnetain a sélectionné dans le discours social des éléments très criards portés par la publicistique et la science et éminemment idoines aux visées novatrices du naturalisme: l'*Adolescent masturbateur* («Charlot s'amuse»!) futur détraqué, fils d'une mère hystérique et inassouvie et d'un père alcoolique collectionnant les tares héréditaires, avec le cortège des énoncés sur l'atavisme, l'hérédité et la dégénérescence... Ces thèmes-là, le discours social les lui portent aux oreilles de façon insistante et on peut dire que Bonnetain, tout en les travaillant et les liant entre eux, écrit sous sa dictée. Apparemment, cette dictée-là n'était pas «la bonne» et Bonnetain, comme beaucoup d'autres naturalistes et «modernistes» de la fin-de-siècle, avait une mauvaise oreille...

Nos concrétions socio-discursives, pourraient également s'apparenter à ce que Edmond Cros nomme des «ideosèmes», lorsque dans son travail sur *Guzman de Alfarache* il rend compte à la fois de la circulation interdiscursive des genres, des énoncés, des images et de la singularité de leur textualisation: «Je dirai donc que tout élément qui relève du discours de prédication dans le texte (sentences, autorités divines, interpellations, lieux communs de la pratique du sermon, exemple etc) ne me renvoie plus à un ensemble de principes abstraits qui constituent ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler la morale chrétienne mais reproduit ce rapport en fonction de ses virtualités métonymiques. J'appellerai ideosème relevant d'une pratique idéologique tout phénomène textuel qui produit cet effet»¹.

Le sociogramme et son inscription-transformation dans l'oeuvre ne forment pas un thème au sens des diverses critiques «thématiques», en ceci même qu'il n'est pertinent et prégnant qu'en un moment donné du discours social et selon une logique occulte que sa reconnaissance à tâtons permet de parcourir: il est vain et trompeur d'étudier la Ville d'Alexandrie à nos jours, l'Amour vénal de Pétrone à Baudelaire, les libations bachiques de Properce à Malcolm Lowry! Les thèmes-noyaux d'un sociogramme n'ont d'intérêt et de sens que par rapport au débat général qui se condense autour d'eux, par rapport à une économie globale des représen-

tations sociales dont ils ne sont que la synecdoque. Walter Benjamin, parmi d'autres exemples possibles, a essentiellement fait apparaître que les «thèmes» de la critique baudelairienne: l'amour vénal, la ville-labyrinthe, le spleen, la mauvaise ivresse, loin d'être des thèmes poétiques archétypaux ou au contraire idiomatiques par rapport au psychisme singulier du fils de Mme Aupic, résultent d'un travail de sélection perverse et méthodique, qui vaut comme herméneutique de la «modernité», sur les objets discursifs qui s'offrent à l'oreille au milieu du siècle passé.

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Pour poursuivre, il est opportun d'illustrer ce qui précède et la façon dont nous comprenons le sociogramme dans ce chœur à deux voix. Pour l'une (RR) le sociogramme, c'est ce qui constitue le passage du discursif au textuel. Il ne s'agit pas simplement d'une interdiscursivité généralisée, mais d'une mise en texte produisant son «effet de texte». Si le sociogramme bouge, ce n'est pas simplement parce que certains des idéologèmes qu'il s'incorpore se transforment, mais parce que la mise en texte littéraire, le processus esthétique lui-même opère une transformation.

Pour l'autre (M.A.) il s'agit de l'ensemble des thématisations que la fiction et les autres discours inscrivent sur un sujet donné, de l'ensemble des vecteurs discursifs thématissant cet objet. Comme on le voit, la sociocritique, qui a tout à attendre du caractère heuristique du «sociogramme», en est encore à saisir les contours d'une notion qui par définition ne veut pas se laisser enfermer dans les paradigmes de la configuration, de la clôture.

Nous chercherons à décrire schématiquement deux sociogrammes riches et significatifs, pertinents, dans deux moments culturels et deux sociétés. Nous aborderons le sociogramme du héros dans la fiction russe des années 1840-1870 environ, et le sociogramme de la prostituée et sa pression thématique sur les lettres françaises après 1870, principalement et pendant la «fin de siècle»².

Soit le thème du héros qui va nous retenir et qui ne commence à nous intéresser que lorsqu'il se spécifie, ancré dans la société russe,

¹ Edmond Cros, *Théorie et pratique sociocritiques*, Paris-Montpellier, Éditions sociales, C.E.R.S., s.d. p. 71.

² Sous les deux points de vue que nous venons d'esquisser, la sociocritique qui travaille sur les textes du point de vue d'une sémiotique historique et sociale se distingue d'une sociologie de la littérature dont l'objet est de décrire la façon dont les écrits, leurs producteurs et leurs publics sont inscrits dans une institution spécifique (avec son champ, son marché, ses appareils...).

et dans une conjoncture particulière, large mais précise, celle qui voit émerger le débat entre les pères (Herzen, Turgenev) et les fils (la génération de 1860) jusqu'au populisme constitué et au Netchaevisme. La circulation des énoncés propre à cet état de société et à ce temps, imprime à ceux-ci des traits reconnaissables à l'air du temps. Ce n'est plus le thème qui nous retient mais ces concrétions socio-discursives, ces traits saillants du discours social qui s'imposent à tous, qui obligent les écrivains à s'emparer de ces nébuleuses préconstruites et instables, et qui, en ce qui concerne notre «héros», passent par une désignation adjectivale dont le vecteur oriente le dispositif figural depuis «l'homme inutile» jusqu'à «l'homme nouveau» en passant par «l'anti-héros» ou «l'antihomme nouveau», «l'homme véridique», «l'homme authentique».

Le passage du discursif au textuel nous semble décisif pour cerner la façon dont s'inscrit le discours social dans la fiction, et la façon dont se transforme le sociogramme du héros. Le point de départ pourrait être ce que Dobroliubov a appelé «l'obolomovschchina», terme générique renvoyant à «l'homme inutile» qui, de Lermontov à Turgenev traverse la fiction russe. Il s'agit d'un type littéraire caractérisé par un ensemble de traits de caractère, d'attitudes, de circonstances et un même type de rapports avec soi-même, avec autrui, en particulier avec les femmes. Il s'agit souvent d'aristocrates esseulés atteints du mal du siècle, velléitaires, apathiques, avec une forte propension à la rêverie, aux voyages qui en l'occurrence déformeraient plutôt la jeunesse. Toujours ailleurs, toujours de trop et toujours malheureux, on aura reconnu une des figures emblématiques du romantisme. Il ne s'agit pas cependant pour nous, de voir simplement le sociogramme du héros comme un type dégagé à partir du «contenu». L'important c'est la textualisation de cette figure discursive qui varie de Lermontov à Gogol' et de Goncharov à Turgenev, passant à chaque fois par l'aspect valeur, littérarité du texte, par un objet, une écriture, un lieu, un espace symboliques, structurant l'ensemble des images et des énoncés. Chez Lermontov, le héros inutile est inséparable de la belle Caucasiennne, du cheval, de l'univers aristocratique de la nature sauvage, des montagnes et des chevauchées. Chez Herzen et chez Gogol', c'est la patache le tarantass ou la brichka qui marquent l'errance, les courses folles à travers la steppe ou à travers l'Europe. C'est l'errance sur place chez Oblomov qui est importante. Toute la mise en texte se fait autour du lit, du vieux divan, de la fatigue, du sommeil et de la vieille robe de chambre

qui revêt des dimensions mythiques. Le monde de Turgenev quant à lui, met en scène des héros inutiles dans des lieux privilégiés et antagonistes les villes de perdition (les grandes villes) à l'étranger de préférence, les villes de mort (Rudin meurt sur les barricades à Paris, Insarov à Venise) et en contepoint, les domaines, les propriétés dans la campagne russe, la nature, les grands jardins de lilas et de tilleuls sous les étoiles. Ces quelques exemples pour souligner que le sociogramme du héros inutile ne peut se ramener à un type, à un idéologème mis en image. Il lui faut sa structure étoilée d'images fortes et singulières, le passage du socio-discursif au socio-textuel. Il reste que dans le discours social russe des années 1850, Dobroliubov inaugurerait une polémique, un débat, une recherche. A l'homme inutile, à Oblomov indolent dans sa robe de chambre, il fallait opposer un héros quelque peu «positif». C'est bien ce à quoi aspire la génération de 1860 qui domine la critique radicale du temps.

Turgenev est l'écrivain le plus sensible à l'écho des polémiques; vivant la plupart du temps à l'étranger, c'est pourtant lui qui va faire bouger dans l'ambivalence et la confusion, l'image du héros, l'obligeant à opérer un premier parcours. Dans *Nakanune* (A la veille) de 1860, Turgenev tente de figurer un premier héros positif (ce dernier avait été à peine esquissé par Goncharov dans le personnage de Shtolts) incarné par le révolutionnaire bulgare Isarov dont s'éprend la sympathique Elena qui quittera père et mère pour le suivre à Venise, où il mourra de tuberculose sans avoir pu rejoindre sa patrie. Turgenev fait bouger le sociogramme du héros dans une ambivalence inouïe. En finir avec l'homme inutile? certes! mais pour le remplacer par quoi exactement?

Deux types «d'hommes nouveaux» se profilent à l'horizon littéraire. D'abord, ce pauvre Lupoiarov qui vient rendre visite à Insarov mourant à Venise, et qui incarne le nouveau radical, sec et borné. Insarov le reçoit au milieu de sa toux, de sa respiration haletante. Lupoiarov se lance dans un long bavardage pédant; lorsqu'il sort de la chambre, Insarov épuisé dit de lui «voilà dit-il avec amertume, après un coup d'oeil à Elena, voilà votre jeune génération! J'en connais qui prennent des airs importants, qui se donnent un genre, et qui dans le fond, ne sont que des phraseurs comme ce Monsieur». Insarov est une autre type d'homme nouveau. Energique, travailleur, dévoué à la cause, il a cependant des yeux loyaux, quelque chose d'enfantin. Certes, lui aussi par certains aspects peut faire penser à une caricature. C'est un homme de fer qui ne se

laisse pas fléchir. La maladie cependant fera ressortir son humanité. Sur les 160 pages du texte russe, plus de vingt sont dévolues à Venise, à l'agonie du héros. Elena et Insarov sont à Venise dans l'attente d'un signal qui leur permettrait de passer sur la côte dalmate. En attendant, ils voguent en gondole, vont au musée, vont voir la Traviata, jouissent de la beauté de la ville sur fond de mort, de coupoles et de dômes. Le héros positif meurt avant d'agir véritablement. Le roman s'achève sur l'énigme de l'émergence des hommes nouveaux, des hommes valables, des hommes véridiques ou des hommes tout court. L'hésitation du narrateur est partout inscrite, comme si le présent était tellement précaire, tellement tremblé, qu'on ne pouvait que poser les problèmes sans pouvoir donner véritablement un visage à cet homme nouveau. L'avenir est-il du côté des Insarov? Mais comme on le sait, il meurt de tuberculose à Venise après avoir assisté à une représentation de la Traviata. Le héros nouveau ne peut pas être cet homme dont on promène le cercueil en gondole. L'avenir est-il du côté de Lupoïarov à peine esquissé mais assez pour qu'on recule d'horreur à la vue de ce qui nous attend? Alors cet homme nouveau, est-il un rêve impossible, infigurable? Ne pourrions-nous jamais sortir de l'ambivalence byronienne des hommes inutiles?

Turgenev répondit à la critique généralisée de son oeuvre par une nouvelle incarnation du héros positif dans *Pères et fils* de 1862, par la figure de Bazarov, personnage quelque peu énigmatique, difficile à interpréter, qui pour les uns représentait ce qu'il y avait de plus haïssable dans le radicalisme et qui pour Pisarev symbolisait au contraire, même dans la maladresse, l'homme de l'avenir.

Bazarov, le tout-d'une-pièce, qui ne s'intéresse qu'aux sciences naturelles, ne voit la nature que pour y ramasser des grenouilles à décérébrer, qui ne voit le jardin qu'avec un oeil rentable d'agronome, Bazarov se moquant des vieux humanistes lecteurs de Pushkin et joueurs de violoncelle. Pourquoi dans ces conditions les interprétations divergentes données à l'oeuvre? Il suffirait de dire que Turgenev en Bazarov a donné une caricature de l'impossible «homme nouveau», qu'il a même décrit avant Dostoïevskii un anti-homme nouveau, un anti-héros. Le sociogramme du héros aurait bougé du côté d'un héros totalement négatif qui aurait vu de cette façon la réhabilitation de l'hamletisme et de l'homme inutile. Il n'en est rien. Là encore Turgenev nous plonge dans l'ambivalence et là encore le héros meurt, mais il s'était rendu utile cette fois, accompagnant son père médecin des pauvres en pleine épidémie de typhus.

Pisarev, le critique scientifique, le chantre de l'utilité sociale s'est reconnu en Bazarov. S'il est tragique dans sa maladresse même écrit Pisarev, c'est parce qu'il est seul, que les temps ne sont pas mûrs. Le vrai héros positif c'est Chernyshevskii qui va le créer en 1863 du fond de la forteresse où il est emprisonné, et ce sera le fameux *Que faire*. Dans ce roman complexe où s'entremêlent des épisodes hérités du roman noir, et l'utopie sociale, l'écriture met en texte trois types de héros et trois plans narratifs.

Trois types de héros: les héros triviaux, toute la galerie des pauvres gens totalement aliénés à la haute société égoïste. Les parents de Vera Pavlovna, le propriétaire de la maison, les milieux d'officiers noceurs, la cocotte française qui se vend au plus offrant. Second étage, les hommes nouveaux comme Vera Pavlovna, Lopuklov et Kirsanov. Ils ne sont qu'esquissés sans épaisseur véritable. Ce sont des héros transitoires. Ils disparaîtront dès qu'ils auront rempli leur mission. Afin que ces héros ne soient pas inaccessibles au «lecteur perspicace moyen», Chernyshevskii les oppose à Rakhmatov, l'être parfait, trop en avance pour être un modèle, le superman totalement positif, celui qui préfigure l'humanité d'après-demain. A l'humanité ordinaire, il faut présenter les hommes nouveaux qui vivent dans le dévouement, la recherche du mieux être social et de leur bonheur personnel, ce qui ne va pas sans à coup. A l'humanité d'exception, «l'être remarquable» Rakhmatov, le rigoriste, celui qui a délibérément choisi la voie de l'ascèse personnelle pour le bien commun. Il fait de la gymnastique pour habituer son corps à l'endurance et le rendre plus résistant, il suit un régime alimentaire très sobre, il est chaste, dort parfois sur un silice. C'est un homme d'acier, un être de volonté qui a le sens du devoir, qui sait où est la vérité et y sacrifie son confort et sa vie personnelle. C'est un être organisé, rationnel, rigoureux, précis, qui ne perd pas son temps en vaines lectures. Rakhmatov, ne tient que par la voie du narrateur et disparaît de la diégèse dès que le narrateur prend congé de lui. Cet homme nouveau a vu se dresser immédiatement contre lui la quasi-totalité de l'institution littéraire russe. Non seulement les *Zapiski iz podpolia* (le sous-sol) de Dostoïevskii, mais toute une pléiade de romans anti-nihilistes qui tentent, non pas à la manière de Turgenev de faire bouger l'image culturelle de l'homme nouveau, mais de la renverser, en construisant, selon les propres termes de Dostoïevskii, un *anti-héros*. L'habitant du *podpolie* sombre et solitaire s'attaque à la morale rationnelle fondée sur la science, à la morale utilitariste et pédagogique des radicaux

et de Chernyshevskii en particulier. Il se moque de ce que «2 et 2 font quatre», des statistiques et du mur des lois de la nature. Il taille en pièces l'optimisme hérité des lumières de l'auteur de *Que faire*. Pas d'avenir radieux, pas de garantie fondée sur la raison, pas de transparence! Contrepartie obscure de l'homme nouveau, l'anti-héros du sous-sol est méchant et fait le mal par caprice. Il est cependant comme l'homme nouveau, raisonneur, didactique, tout d'une pièce.

Ils sont quasiment symétriques, sans doute parce qu'avec l'un et l'autre, on se trouve à la limite du sociogramme du héros, ce qui signifie que ce héros tout entier positif ou tout entier négatif risque de se figer en stéréotype, en archétype sans plus pouvoir bouger. Ni Turgenev dans *Terres Vierge*s, ni Tolstoï dans la *famille contaminée* n'échappent à ce danger. La seule alternative fictionnelle c'était, non pas de retourner à l'homme inutile, mais de dépasser l'homme nouveau caricatural ou l'antihéros tout aussi fanatique, de trouver ce que Turgenev nommait l'*homme véridique*. La percée, ce fut le polyphonisme de Dostoïevskii (dans d'autres romans que le *Sous-sol* ou que les *Possédés*), et les héros problématiques, maladroits, ambivalents de Tolstoï les P. Bezukhov et les Levin.

Du héros de notre temps de Lermontov à toute la galerie des hommes inutiles, des nouveaux héros ambigus aux hommes nouveaux de Chernyshevskii, des hommes nouveaux aux antihéros antinihilistes de ces caricatures à un ressourcement problématique, le héros de la fiction russe accompagnant la rumeur, les débats sur le réalisme et sur l'utilité sociale de l'art, sur l'être et le doit-être de l'esthétique, s'est cherché pendant un demi-siècle — rien n'a pu faire basculer cette inscription, ni la réaction violente du symbolisme ni le décadentisme, ni l'avantgardisme et, via la *Mère* de Gor'kii (1906) un nouveau héros positif ressurgira après la Révolution d'octobre, faisant encore une fois bouger le sociogramme du héros. Trajet figural complexe donc, de longue durée, impossible à analyser sans son co-texte et la circulation des discours³.

³ On trouvera une analyse plus détaillée du sociogramme du héros dans la société russe et soviétique dans Régine Robin, *Le Réalisme socialiste: une esthétique impossible*, à paraître aux Éditions Payot.

LE SOCIOGRAMME DE LA PROSTITUÉE⁴

La limite d'extension du sociogramme me semble correspondre à la cumulation de tous les vecteurs discursifs thématiques un objet socialement identifié en un moment donné, surtout lorsque ces thématiques produisent un véritable noeud gordien de représentations intriquées et incompatibles dont l'enchevêtrement implique l'ensemble des discours d'une société à un moment donné. On a noté bien des fois sans que, jusqu'à des recherches récentes, on ait cependant dépassé le stade du constat, l'omniprésence de l'«amour vénal» comme thème romanesque et comme thème poétique au XIX^e siècle, avec du reste des déplacements métaphoriques dont le principal est justement la figuration (baudelairienne) de l'écrivain comme prostitué. À partir de 1880, l'«histoire d'une fille» devient un objet obligé du roman (Goncourt, Zola, Maupassant, Huysmans...) et la vénalité sexuelle occupe tout autant la poésie moyenne ou d'avant-garde (Verlaine, Richepin, Rollinat, Bruant...), la thématique prostitutionnelle recevant enfin, avec la vogue du roman russe, des renouvellements de sa thématique (Tolstoï, Dostoïevskii). Nous n'esquissons ici qu'un travail complexe d'enquête qui consisterait dans les belles-lettres et dans le discours social ce noeud gordien de représentations contradictoires qui a tant attiré les littérateurs mais dont il faut dire qu'il ont peu réussi à le déconstruire critiquement, mais plutôt, même chez les meilleurs, à en magnifier la fascination en en esthétisant les ambivalences. Les vecteurs porteurs de représentations de la prostitution sont notamment des vecteurs de l'oralité masculine bourgeoise, de la «conversation de fumoir» drainant des mythes, des anecdotes et des préjugés avec tout l'investissement de savoirs cyniques et semi-clandestins. Ailleurs il y a le grand discours de la médicalisation et de la déviance pénale et du sexe, où des médecins positivistes se mettent à la tête d'une cohorte de surveillants de l'ordre dont le bras séculier est la police des mœurs; le discours médico-administratif scelle l'alliance du moraliste, du médecin, de l'hygiéniste et du fonctionnaire «réglementariste», argumente la répression sur la syphilophilobie et sur la nécessité de l'ordre social. Le crimi-

⁴ Je me réfère ici aux travaux partiellement inédits de Gehrard Kaiser, Professeur à l'Université de Giessen sur la prostitution comme métaphore centrale dans les lettres au XIX^e siècle et parmi beaucoup d'autres, en matière de référence historique, aux *Filles de nocce* d'Alain Corbin (Aubier-Montaigne, 1978).

nologue, promoteur d'une science émergente, construit avec Lombroso le concept de prostituée-née, véritable «bête humaine» atavique dans le progrès de l'espèce. Mais dans un autre champ, moins appuyé sur des appareils, mais éminemment producteurs de représentations sociales, il y a dans la France de la III^e République la vaste presse et littérature libertines — boulevardières (*Gil Blas*, *Courrier français*, *Vie parisienne*) où se chantent l'apothéose de la cocotte, de l'horizontale, du Paris des plaisirs.

Pas trop loin on trouverait la littérature si «bien écrite» du lyrisme aphrodisiaque faisant où triomphent les Catulle Mendès, Maizeroy, Ad. Belot... La prostitution est construite aussi dans le journalisme d'information où le thème de fait-divers de la prostituée égorgée, de l'Affaire Pranzini à Jack l'Eventreur (1888-1889) et au-delà, figurent un avatar décadentiste de la *Liebestod*, mêlant en une suprême «expiation», le sexe et le sang rédempteur et érotisé. Sur la périphérie, le contrediscours socialiste, variante «anar», construit l'image d'une Double exploitation des fils et filles du peuple, «chair à usine, viande à plaisir». La littérature dans ses formes diverses a déjà travaillé le sociogramme: le post-romantisme baudelairien en a fait l'image de la Beauté antiphysique du beau infâme, le roman réaliste en fait dès Balzac l'allégorie de la société moderne, avec le «cash payment as the sole nexus» (Carlyle cité par Marx). L'écrivain de la fin du XIX^e siècle reçoit ces thématiques variées, anxiogènes, crépusculaires, gaudriolesques, cyniques, libertines, émoustillés, damnatrices; la mémoire sociale lui montre le parcours opéré depuis le modèle romantique de la «Prostituée vertueuse» (Fleur-de-Marie, Fantine) et l'influence scandinave, russe lui propose encore le modèle périphérique d'un rédemptionnisme fumeux et philosophant que les gens d'esprit montrent comme ridiculement antagoniste du bon ton parisien!. Bruant trouvera à renouveler cette thématique en cherchant à «dévoiler» la réalité brutale du Paris faubourien, avec ses marmites, ses marlous, ses michés et ses pantès et... crée pour un demi-siècle le romantisme du bourlingage montmartrois⁵. Il n'est pas jusqu'à la chanson de café-concert avec ses inepties et ses doubles-sens de maison publique qui n'offre à l'écrivain d'autres formes triviales de thématisa-

tions⁶. L'expérience littéraire, c'est de travailler sur ce matériau-là. Se demander si le romancier naturaliste et le poète décadent fréquentent les maisons à gros numéros, c'est faire preuve du même contresens que de s'étonner que Rimbaud écrive «le Bateau ivre» en n'ayant pas encore «vu la mer». Ce bateau ivre, nous rappelle Etienne, bourlingue sous toutes les latitudes, de la poésie parnassienne au *Journal des Voyages*. De même, si Maupassant fréquente les Maisons Tellier, c'est peut-être pour se convaincre que l'«expérience» de l'écrivain fixe son inspiration dans le réel sans phrases. Pour en revenir au sociogramme qui s'est imposé à tant d'écrivains et a été imagé, déconstruit, mis en connexion provocante avec d'autres entités doxiques de tant de façons, il semble qu'au bout du compte la littérature ait ici surtout constitué une caisse de résonance de la rumeur sociale et rarement ait proposé une reconfiguration des mythes et des lieux communs. Notre hypothèse, sommairement esquissée, est que ce sociogramme central, pétri d'ambivalence, satisfaisant syncrétiquement à tous les réquisits de la *doxa* et à des esthétiques modernistes a constitué une sorte de magma idéologique inanalysable, fascinant pour l'artiste qui y voyait à juste titre un instrument herméneutique, mais formant un lacs si inextricable d'idéologèmes en tension qu'il ne pouvait provoquer qu'une inépuisable et vaine fascination. Le sociogramme prostitutionnel répondait à tous les besoins nouveaux de la littérature: renouveler son complexe d'Asmodée (la littérature comme machine à faire voir les choses cachées), produire une anti-esthétique de l'infâme et de l'abject, un beau perversément dissocié du bien; travailler sur de l'ambivalence, qui est la position inconfortablement idéale des lettres; trouver une allégorie de la société capitaliste, de la ville, des anonymats du monde moderne. A mesure que les discours de contrôle et d'information balisent de mieux en mieux le social, la littérature se tourne avec prédilection du côté des «incivismes», des en-dehors, des là-bas, des hors-caste comme si elle se reconnaissait, étant marginalisée, en ces espaces périphériques. La thématique de la prostituée permet de figurer l'artiste comme un blasé qui a besoin d'objets de haut goût pour ses papilles dépravées et affecte de partager ces mets pimentés avec «l'hypocrite lecteur». Elle permet aussi d'assumer sa position antiphilistine, étant

⁵ Voir L. Chevallier, *Montmartre du plaisir et du crime*.

⁶ A la même époque la caricature artistique des Chéret, Willette, Forain, la peinture de Degas, de Raffaelli, de Toulouse-Lautrec se donnent à cette thématique prostitutionnelle.

plus ou moins assurée du scandale; elle confirme accessoirement la littérature comme activité masculine, loin des vaines litotes de la conversation mixte (on songera à la notion de «littérature célibataire» chez Jean Borie)...On n'en finirait pas. Concluons abruptement en répétant l'hypothèse que le sociogramme de la putain, élément-clé du rapport des lettres au discours social à la fin du XIX^e siècle, accommodait tant d'exigences propres aux belles-lettres tout en constituant dans la *doxa* un complexe tellement polyvalent qu'en fin de compte l'écrivain ne pouvait guère que renforcer ce système enchevêtré (où interviennent encore toutes les représentations du sexe et de la «phème») et non le déconstruire critiquement.

Nous passerons maintenant à un essai de typologie des modes d'inscription du discours social dans le texte. Le lecteur ne doit pas cependant prendre ce qui suit pour un classement systématique qui aurait valeur en lui-même. Il s'agit de relever quelques grands types de textualisation littéraire dans le but de prolonger la réflexion sur notre thème. Notre réflexion invite à substituer à la question classique «qu'est-ce que la littérature?» une question d'un autre ordre: «que peut la littérature en opérant sur le discours social?» En quoi les absorptions, réinscriptions et transformations qu'elle opère concourent-elles soit à renforcer l'entropie doxique, les représentations hégémoniques, le transverse, soit à questionner l'ordre du discours, en le disloquant, en le «déconstruisant» si on veut, mais en reconstruisant aussi avec du matériau épars une figure inouïe, en retotalisant dans une oeuvre le discours social selon une logique problématique qui perturbe l'ordre dominant?

Cette déconstruction qui est dans l'essence même de la pratique littéraire peut aboutir, dans les esthétiques modernes de l'auto-représentation, à la contemplation narcissique de son propre jeu déconstructeur.

Deux grandes tendances polarisent donc l'activité textuelle: elle peut ne faire que renforcer, que servir de relais imaginal aux lignes de force du discours social. Elle peut au contraire interroger sa logique en en déplaçant des éléments, en pluralisant ses messages, en opacifiant ce qui dans les discours d'information et de savoir se donne dans la clarté de certitudes affirmées. Ces deux tendances ne servent pas à opposer de bons écrivains à de médiocres, des

traditions esthétiques critiques à d'autres plus entropiques. Ces tendances peuvent se mêler chez le même auteur, dans le même écrit, dans le même passage: de temps en temps l'écrivain le moins hostile au groupe qu'il décrit et auquel il donne la parole commet une sorte de lapsus, il répète passivement un fragment doxique que le développement même de son texte aurait dû dissoudre, il laisse des éléments dormants, des résidus de clichés non attaqués.

Soit un passage de la première page de *Germinal* d'E. Zola, présentant Etienne Lantier sur la grande route de Marchienne. L'Incipit est un récit à focalisation interne. C'est le regard d'Etienne en effet qui balaye la plaine, le sol noir, l'horizon plat. Une intrusion d'auteur vient perturber ce début.

«Une seule idée occupait sa tête vide d'ouvrier sans travail et sans gîte, l'espoir que le froid serait moins vif après le lever du jour». Le syntagme «tête vide» constitue une présupposition, une «gnomé» — un ouvrier sans travail a forcément la tête vide, tandis que sans travail et sans gîte» semble figé, répétable et répété dans les discours critiques ou politiques français de la fin du XIX^e siècle. Dans un texte d'ouvriers de novembre 1884 on lit la phrase suivante «Nous tous qui sommes sans travail et dont beaucoup sont sans gîte et sans pain, qui n'avons que la rue pour habits, notre devoir nous dit de ne pas supporter plus longtemps cette misère»⁷.

Zola réinscrit donc un élément presque figé du discours social sur l'ouvrier, mais aussi des locutions, des énoncés que les ouvriers eux-mêmes utilisent comme réponse au discours bourgeois, utilisant les mêmes mots, les mêmes phrases, les retournant. L'inscription que fait Zola du discours social, l'impensé présuppositionnel qui le marque (la tête vide) est à la fois un des multiples énoncés sur l'ouvrier réinscrit dans un texte littéraire mais aussi, une fois remis en circulation interdiscursive ce qui va informer la parole ouvrière. En ce sens, Claude Duchet a raison d'affirmer qu'«il est parfaitement vain de s'interroger sur l'authenticité du discours ouvrier dans *Germinal*: né d'une conjoncture dont il fait partie, il est l'une des modalités d'existence du prolétariat au XIX^e siècle, projeté hors de lui sous le regard des autres et informant des pratiques culturelles par rapport auxquelles lui, prolétariat, doit sans cesse situer précisément son discours. Autrement dit, discours sur l'ouvrier et discours de l'ouvrier forment un intertexte indissociable: l'un ne

⁷ Cité dans M. Perrot, *Les ouvriers en grève 1871-1890*, Mouton, Paris la Haye, 1973, t. 1, p. 291.

peut que renvoyer à l'autre, ou l'autre que s'inspirer de l'un»⁸. Tout au plus peut-on dire que dans cet intertexte, ce co-texte cet archi-texte, les tremblés idéologiques montrent de façon implicite les résidus de l'idéologie dominante. On l'a vu avec «tête vide». C'est peut-être encore plus visible dans ce passage de *l'Assommoir*. «Des siècles d'art passaient devant leur ignorance ahurie...» Alors que le roman est écrit pour donner la parole au peuple, alors que pour la première fois le narrateur se laisse contaminer par la parole populaire ne se tenant pas à distance du français familier voire argotique, dans quelques passages non travaillés par l'écriture, se donnant comme des concrétions évidentes intraversables cependant, le texte se réinstalle dans l'idéologie dominante et le déjà-là du stéréotype. Piégé par le discours social, mais également le déplaçant, l'attaquant, l'écrivain, ce Janus-bifrons est bien le témoin de l'interdiscursivité qui l'habite.

Il arrive que de grands pans du discours social s'inscrivent directement, venus de la tribune politique ou «publicistique» et que les formes de textualisation ne dépassent pas le niveau de l'écho sonore sans ironisation. C'est le cas de fonctionnements textuels massifs dans la plupart des romans à thèse, en particulier dans les romans du réalisme socialiste soviétique des années 1930 où les héros positifs répètent le discours de la ligne politique, la mettent en oeuvre, la popularisent sans la remettre en question. Encore ne faut-il pas caricaturer, tant la mise en texte, l'effet de fiction tend à défaire la linéarité des messages, à créer des lieux de tensions à l'intérieur du texte, voire des contradictions manifestes le plus souvent inconscientes. La plupart du temps le discours social est ironisé.

C'est l'art même du roman, de Flaubert à Proust et du comique particulier de ses personnifications que de produire des personnages-discours, avec toutes leurs idiosyncrasies incarnations d'un secteur doxique; Monsieur Homais produit du discours de la presse libérale anticléricale de la Monarchie de Juillet (version provinciale) comme Monsieur de Norpois incarne dans son habitus et ses propos l'essence stylistique de la grande chronique politique de la *Revue des Deux Mondes*. Quant aux deux bonshommes, *Bouvard* et *Pécuchet*, ils deviennent des caméléons qui passent par toutes les

⁸ Claude Duchet, «Le trou des bouches noires, parole, société, révolution dans «Germinal» in *Littérature*, n° 24 (décembre 1976): 11-39, p. 13.

couleurs des secteurs discursifs de la fin du règne louis-philippard aux débuts de celui du Prince-président.

Il arrive que les effets d'ironisation du discours social touchent à l'anti-utopie, lorsque le narrateur en vient à retourner le discours social contre lui-même. C'est le cas singulier de A. Platonov dans son intraduisible «Chevengur»⁹. Dans une langue qui fait perdre au lecteur ses principales coordonnées logiques, Platonov crée à tous moments des effets d'étrangeté dans ses chassés-croisés entre le sens abstrait, le concept et l'image concrète. Il prend le discours social à la lettre, il le parodie, le répète tel un perroquet, pour mieux en dégager l'aspect stéréotypé. Il déconceptualise, désautomatise la langue et resémantise les clichés. «Le chemin du communisme» devient sous sa plume, un vrai chemin dans la steppe, «avance vers le communisme» oblige les gens à marcher, et «bâtir le communisme pour demain» devient à la lettre une activité de construction d'un édifice, et «demain» sera pris pour un embrayeur, le «demain» d'aujourd'hui.

Plus en prise sur l'interdiscursivité et le débat polémique, le prélèvement et la réinscription d'images-catalyses, de phrases, de syntagmes, produits dans le discours politique, critique ou esthétique que les écrivains font migrer en les retournant, les réemployant, les citant en les tronquant perfidement, bref en faisant parcourir à ces idéologèmes ou images-catalyses un parcours¹⁰. C'est ainsi que Dostoïevskii excelle à s'emparer d'images qu'il ironise dans la fiction et fait constamment migrer. Dans *les Possédés*, on lit à propos de S. Trofimovitch...il admit sans discuter que le terme de «patrie» était inutile et comique, il reconnut que la religion était néfaste, mais il déclara hautement, fermement que «les bottes étaient inférieures à Pushkin et même de beaucoup». Ces bottes que l'auteur fait figurer entre guillemets ont connu un destin singulier.

Dans un article opposant Pushkin à Gogol, Pisarev s'était particulièrement acharné sur Pushkin. Ce dernier représentait à ses yeux le chef de file de l'école de «l'art pour l'art». Pisarev lui oppose

⁹ Chevengur date de 1929. La censure le refusa. Il a été traduit en français sous le titre de «les herbes folles de Chevengur», Paris, Stock 1972.

¹⁰ Voir pour tous ces éléments, l'immense travail de J. Catteau, *La création littéraire chez Dostoïevskii*, Paris, Institut des Etudes slaves, 1978 et J. Catteau, «Du palais de cristal à l'âge d'or ou les avatars de l'utopie» in *Cahier de l'Herne* n° 24, Paris (1973) no spécial sur «Dostoïevskii»: 176-195, et R. Robin, *le Réalisme socialiste: une esthétique impossible*, op. cité, à paraître.

Gogol, le réaliste, et milite pour l'utilité sociale. Il écrit «si l'Allemagne avait des dizaines de millions d'archéologues comme Jakob Grimm, elle n'en serait pas pour autant plus riche et plus heureuse (....). C'est pourquoi je dis tout à fait sincèrement que j'aimerais mieux être un artisan bottier (Sapozhnik) ou un boulanger qu'un Raphael ou un Grimm russe.

Un contemporain de Pisarev, Zaitsev tiendra des propos encore plus définitifs «Il n'est pas un laveur de parquet ou un vidangeur qui ne soit plus utile que Shakespeare».

Dostoevskii s'empare inlassablement de ces malheureuses bottes. Dans un pamphlet de 1864, sous forme romanesque, il fait adopter à son personnage «Jeune plume», un programme qui comporte en son point quatre la chose suivante: «Jeune plume», vous devez désormais prendre pour règle qu'une paire de bottes a en tout cas plus de prix que Pushkin, vu qu'on peut fort bien se passer de Pushkin, tandis qu'on ne peut se passer des bottes et que par conséquent, Pushkin n'est que luxe et fichaise. Compris». Dans un autre manuscrit, un projet d'article de 1864, on lit toujours sous la plume de Dostoevskii à propos des Nihilistes: «Ils proclament fièrement que les bottes valent mieux que Pushkin». Quant au vidangeur si cher à Zaitsev, Dostoevskii l'avait déjà réutilisé dans *Crime et châtiment*, au moment où Lebeziatnikov expose sa conception de l'art «Mais, dites-moi, s'il vous plaît, que trouvez-vous de si honteux et de si méprisable, même dans les fosses d'aisance? Moi tout le premier, je suis prêt à aller nettoyer toutes les fosses d'aisance que vous voudrez! Il n'y a pas là le moindre sacrifice. C'est tout simplement un travail, une activité noble et utile à la société, qui en vaut une autre et qui est infiniment supérieure à celle par exemple d'un Raphael ou d'un Pushkin, parce qu'elle est utile». On voit que les bottes de Pushkin, ou Pushkin tout court, ou encore Raphael ou Shakespeare, ou le vidangeur sont des images-catalyse qui accompagnent le trajet figural du héros de façon très conflictuelle. Ces images qui renvoient à l'esthétique réaliste à base d'utilité sociale de la génération de 1860 et à tout le débat esthétique sur l'art, pourraient bien ici tourner autour de la formule prédictive suivante: Un bottier est plus utile que Pushkin *versus* bottier est moins utile que Pushkin.

On retrouve le même problème fictionalisé chez Turgenev dans *Pères et Fils* où le héros positif Bazarov, ardent physiologiste, adepte des sciences naturelles, attaque la poésie et se scandalise à l'idée que le père de son ami Arkade lise Pushkin.

«Avant hier, je le regardais lire Pushkin, continuait cependant Bazarov. Explique lui, une bonne fois pour toute, s'il te plaît, que cela ne rime à rien. Il n'est plus un gamin tout de même, qu'attend-il pour laisser tomber ce fatras? Et puis drôle d'idée, vraiment que d'être un romantique à notre époque! Faites-lui faire quelque chose d'utile.

— Quoi par exemple? demanda Arkade

— *Stoff und Kraft* de Büchner, peut-être pour commencer».

Image familière qui fait de Pushkin le centre d'une constellation de formules et d'images sur l'utilité sociale et sur l'art. On la retrouve encore à la fin du roman, au moment de la mort de Bazarov «..... la Russie a besoin de moi... Non, il faut croire que non. Besoin de qui d'ailleurs? D'un cordonnier, oui d'un tailleur, d'un boucher (....) il vend sa viande... le boucher...» Si Pushkin *versus* Gogol symbolise toute une esthétique, une autre image «migrante» vient hanter le débat social et s'inscrire dans la fiction dans la longue durée, c'est le fameux Palais de cristal de l'Exposition universelle de Londres de 1851. Chernyshevskii, sans l'avoir vu en avait fait une description pour les *Annales de la patrie*. Dans son roman *Que faire* écrit du fin fond de la forteresse Pierre-et-Paul de St. Petersburg, dans un rêve de l'héroïne Vera Pavlorna symbolisant la société future et la future organisation du travail à la manière d'un phalanstère, Chernyshevskii évoque le palais de cristal comme lieu fort de l'utopie. «Alors apparaît un immense édifice comme il en existe peu, si jamais il en existe...Quelle est sa forme? peu familière à notre regard, mais peut-être une idée pourrait-elle en être donnée par le palais sur la colline de Sidenham: du fer et du verre, du verre et du fer et rien d'autre. Et encore ce n'est là que l'extérieur de l'édifice, son enveloppe (....) et à l'intérieur c'est une belle maison...Partout de l'aluminium et encore de l'aluminium et les trumeaux sont ornés de grandes glaces...Toute la maison est un véritable jardin d'hiver». Cet homme nouveau, cette cité nouvelle symbolisée par le palais de cristal va voir se dresser contre eux immédiatement Dostoevskii, qui va opposer à cette transparence, le souterrain, le trou obscur où rien ne peut être rationnellement résolu, où 2 et 2 ne font pas 4, où la transparence des rapports inter-humains est dénoncée comme un mystification dangereuse. Ce palais de cristal sera de nouveau fustigé dans «My» l'anti-utopie de Zamiatin, et ça et là dans la fiction soviétique des années 30, où des personnages négatifs reprendront l'image du cristal, de la transparence pour dénoncer le rêve d'une société

égalitaire. Ces images-catalyses, se présentent en réalité de façon beaucoup plus complexes, comme agglomérats pour composer des concrétions socio-discursives et socio-textuelles qui ensèrent le trajet thématique du héros. L'Écrivain réinscrit pour se situer en la dénonçant, en l'assumant, en la déplaçant, la transformant ou l'ironisant, l'opacifiant, la formule prédicative du noyau socio-grammaticale.

Pisarev	les bottes valent mieux que Pushkin
Dostoevskii	retourne totalement la formule
Tolstoi	la déplace
Chernyshevskii	la reprend en l'assumant tout en la déplaçant
Turgenev	l'ironise, la dénonce mais dans l'ambivalence

Bref pendant que les 10/20 ans, avant que la formule ne soit complètement déplacée, elle sert de phrase-enjeu à un débat fort important sur la définition de l'art, sur les postulats du réalisme et sur les problèmes de la figuralisation du héros comme nous l'avons vu plus haut. Là encore, l'écrivain se positionne soit en reinscrivant purement et simplement les formules, les images du discours social, soit en opérant un bougé, un déplacement des énoncés dans sa fiction. Là encore les référents de la fiction ne sont pas des morceaux de «réel» mais des référents textuels, des fragments du discours social incorporés de façon spécifique, textualisés dans la fiction.

Le discours social s'incarne dans des personnages multiples qui permettent à l'écrivain soit de créer des porte-paroles uniques, soit la plupart du temps de figuraliser l'hétérogène grâce à une panoplie de personnages, «le personnel» dirait Ph. Hamon, porteurs-certains de la même idéologie au sens large, mais dessinant comme des creux, une diversité d'aspects, de prises de position, au-delà de leur singularité d'individus. Il y a mille façon d'être républicain pendant la Révolution de 1848, comme il y a mille façon d'être «rouge» ou «blanc» dans la guerre civile russe. Que cette hétérogénéité disparaisse et l'effet de thèse vient tuer rapidement l'effet de texte. Deux exemples bien connus pour rappeler ce procédé littéraire classique qui consiste à disséminer le discours social, non plus dans la rumeur d'un fragmentaire non aléatoire, mais à travers l'identité propre d'un personnage. Chez Flaubert quatre personnages incarnent un aspect du spectre politique et social républicain: Sénécal, Regimbart, Dussardier, Deslaurier. Dans le passage ci-dessous,

analysé par H. Mitterand¹¹, le narrateur dans un raccourci saisissant campe la figure du doctrinaire, du terroriste, du dogmatique imbu de ses certitudes. «Les convictions de Sénécal étaient plus désintéressées. Chaque soir, quand sa besogne était finie, il regagnait sa mansarde, et il cherchait dans les livres de quoi justifier ses rêves. Il avait annoté le *Contrat social*. Il se bourrait de la *Revue indépendante*. Il connaissait Mably, Morelly, Fourier, Saint-Simon, Comte, Cabet, Louis Blanc, la lourde charretée des écrivains socialistes, ceux qui réclament pour l'humanité le niveau des casernes, ceux qui voudraient la divertir dans un lupanar ou la plier sur un comptoir, et, du mélange de tout cela, il s'était fait un idéal de démocratie vertueuse, ayant le double aspect d'une métairie et d'une filature, une sorte de Lacédémone américaine où l'individu n'existerait que pour servir la société, plus omnipotente, absolue, infaillible et divine que les grands Lamas et les Nabuchodonosors. Il n'avait aucun doute sur l'éventualité prochaine de cette conception; et tout ce qu'il jugeait lui être hostile, Senecal s'acharnait dessus, avec des raisonnements de géomètre et une bonne foi d'inquisiteur. Les titres nobiliaires, les croix, les panaches, les livres surtout, et même les réputations trop sonores le scandalisaient — ses études comme ses souffrances avivant chaque jour sa haine essentielle de toute distinction ou supériorité quelconque».

Senecal du reste «personnage somme» selon l'expression de M. Crouzet¹² finira pas se rallier à l'Empire et lors du coup d'Etat de Louis-Napoléon Bonaparte tuera sur les barricades son ancien camarade de combat et d'idées, Dussardier. On pourrait penser à partir de ce texte et de la figure du démo-soc intégriste qu'incarne Senecal, que le narrateur par son lexique, son ironie, illégitimise tous les Républicains de 1848 et par un effet de ricochet prend idéologiquement parti pour le camp de la réaction. On sait qu'il n'en est rien dans *l'Education sentimentale*, que le camp des légitimistes et des bourgeois apeurés est tout aussi détestable et que, dans la peinture des Républicains, on parcourt un véritable éventail des positions, de ce qui traîne dans le discours social. Dussardier s'oppose à Sénécal. C'est le vrai quarante-huitard du mythe, l'âme généreuse qui dit peu avant de se faire tuer sur les barricades: «Je

¹¹ p. 50. H. Mitterand «Parole et stéréotype» le «Socialiste de Flaubert» in *Le discours du roman* Paris PUF 1980: 213-229, p. 213-214.

¹² Michel Crouzet «L'Education sentimentale et le genre historique» in *Histoire et Langage dans «l'Education sentimentale» de Flaubert*, Paris Sedes, 1981: 77-110.

suis tellement désespéré! Est-ce que tout n'est pas fini, d'ailleurs? J'avais cru, quand la Révolution est arrivée, qu'on serait heureux. Vous rappelez-vous comme c'était beau! Comme on respirait bien! Mais nous voilà retombés pire que jamais».

Entre les deux, Deslauriers, le pauvre ambitieux, sorte de Julien Sorel, et Regimbart, très flou — au milieu encore Frederic, qui au moment où l'histoire se fait, traine amoureux dans la forêt de Fontainebleau. Bref, le discours social est disséminé dans sa variante républicaine, comme il l'est dans sa variante légitimiste. Opacité du message, difficulté de se situer, renvoi dos à dos dans une conception de l'Histoire où tout est théâtre et répétition¹³ peut-être mais à coup sûr, figuralisation de positions idéologiques et discursives, mise en texte extrêmement complexe de cette immense rumeur faite d'images, de clichés, de mémoire citationnelle que constitue le discours social.

Second exemple, les Blancs et les Rouges dans *Le Don paisible* de M. Sholokhov. S'il est vrai que l'écrivain figure avec moins de «talent» les Rouges que les Blancs (ce qui lui fut violemment reproché pendant les années 20 et 30) il faut noter cependant que sa panoplie de personnages révolutionnaires est variée tant sur le plan des individualités — ce qui ne constitue pas notre propos ici — que sur la place des diverses positions du discours social qu'ils sont censés incarner. Ni supermen, ni héros positifs, ni parfaits, ni tendres. Ils sont multiples avec leurs têtes politiques, leurs héros anonymes, les commissaires qui ne tremblent pas et ceux qui tremblent, ceux qui ne supportent pas le sang, avec au contraire des sanguinaires, des dogmatiques intolérants, des figures de femmes inoubliables. Tout l'éventail des positions discursives, des sensibilités cosaques et non cosaques, à l'intérieur du camp de la Révolution. Cette dissémination des voix dans le même camp idéologique cette figuration de l'hétérogène est à coup sûr de la part de l'écrivain réaliste en particulier, un des moyens les plus adéquats d'inscrire sinon la globalité, du moins dans son épaisseur représentative, le discours social d'une société à un moment donné.

Le discours social peut encore s'inscrire par des absences qui l'ont marqué. Même si cette catégorie comme le souligne Ph. Hamon dans un ouvrage récent¹⁴ reste floue, elle nous semble essentielle.

Cette absence désarme souvent les Historiens, perplexes en face du texte littéraire. P. Guiral commente ainsi l'absence de la Révolution de 1830 dans *le Rouge et le Noir* de Stendhal: «Qui ne sait en outre que le romancier commet des erreurs, volontaires ou non, par négligence ou dessein de brouiller les pistes, ou passe à côté des réalités essentielles? Dans une analyse très percutante, M. Maurice Baumont rappelle que Julien Sorel, le héros du roman *le Rouge et le Noir*, est exécuté onze mois après la chute de Charles X. Or, Stendhal fait état des manœuvres du clan de la Mole et de la Congrégation, alors qu'ils se seraient vraisemblablement fait oublier à cette heure. Quant à Julien Sorel, en ce moment où le libéralisme paraît pour peu de temps triompher, alors que l'agitation anti-religieuse se marque partout, il aurait dû, en ce printemps de 1831, gravir les degrés de la réussite plutôt que ceux de l'échafaud...»¹⁵.

On connaît l'ampleur des problèmes chronologiques qui ont assailli Stendhal lorsque terminant son roman, l'événement historique se produisit. Le romancier choisit de ne rien modifier malgré les invraisemblances chronologiques relevés par P. Guiral et bien d'autres. L'absence de la Révolution de 1830 prend alors une valeur symbolique, politique. L'«erreur» de chronologie inscrit une temporalité politique et non plus simplement chronologique. Les membres du jury qui devaient condamner Julien à l'échafaud, allaient-ils vraiment changer au lendemain des journées de juillet? Comme le dit P. Barberis, «faisons confiance, après juillet à Valenod: il est toujours en place. Le nouveau est déjà dans l'ancien: le pouvoir bourgeois, avant Juillet, était déjà ce qu'il ne devait montrer en pleine lumière qu'après Juillet. Le refus de Stendhal de refaire le «plan» de son roman et d'en organiser le temps, compte tenu d'un événement certes voyant et sur le moment enthousiasmant, mais finalement second par rapport aux mutations déjà encourues depuis longtemps ou réalisées dans les profondeurs du réel social, ce refus de mécaniser l'Histoire, parle finalement plus fort pour l'Histoire en ceci qu'il n'en décalque pas la chronologie, mais qu'il est conforme à son flux profond. La méthode, si un tel terme a un sens pour Stendhal, est ici comme toujours une vision du monde»¹⁶.

¹³ M.A. Campinho-Cajueiro: *La Représentation de l'Histoire dans «l'Éducation sentimentale»*, thèse de III^e cycle, Paris VIII, 1979, texte inédit.

¹⁴ Ph. Hamon, *Texte et Idéologie* Paris, PUF 1984.

¹⁵ P. Guiral, *la société française 1815-1914 vue par les Romanciers*, Paris, Armand Colin, 1969 p. 10.

¹⁶ P. Barberis, *Sur Stendhal*, Paris Éditions sociales, p. 107.

Stendhal n'est d'ailleurs pas le seul à faire l'impasse sur 1830. Ni Chateaubriand, ni Balzac n'en font grand cas. Pas un héros de la Comédie humaine ne combat ou ne meurt sur les barricades de juillet. Les personnages les plus lucides de l'œuvre balzacienne analysent très bien l'opportunisme de la bourgeoisie, le nouveau compromis esquissé contre le peuple par les classes dominantes. Dusay s'écrie «... Nous voulons renverser les deux Vandenesse, les ducs de Lenoncourt, de Navarreins, de Langeais et la Grande Aumônerie. Pour triompher, nous irons jusqu'à nous unir à la Fayette, aux Orléanistes, à la gauche, *gens à égorger le lendemain de la victoire*, car tout gouvernement est impossible avec leurs principes. Nous sommes capables de tout pour le bonheur du pays et pour le nôtre». ¹⁷

Resterait à évoquer, mais nous quittons ici le discours social proprement dit, la façon dont par des connotations culturelles parfois figées, la mise en texte donne à voir des euphories collectives (ciel bleu, grand soleil) le redémarrage des luttes après l'échec (le sème: germer dans *Germinale*), des deuils, des reculs de l'Histoire (ciels gris, ciels noirs), ou des moments de grands bouleversements (tempête, neige, etc.). Dans ce domaine qui touche au cliché culturel, à une stéréotypie métaphorique le problème serait plutôt de la part de l'écrivain de dé-sémantiser ces clichés pour leur donner une nouvelle vie, mais encore une fois, nous sommes ici à la limite de notre propos.

Nous étions partis d'une simple remarque: l'écrivain n'est pas celui qui «voit» le mieux, mais celui dont l'oreille perçoit le bruit du monde, la rumeur du discours social. Chemin faisant nous nous sommes interrogés. Dans ces conditions que peut la littérature en face de la prolifération du discours social, de son immense dérive, ses figures de confusion, sa globalité trouée et son fragmentaire donné comme des flashes? Si la littérature ne «reflète» pas le réel, si ses référents sont textuels, elle n'inscrit pas non plus passivement à la manière d'une publicistique imagée le discours social; elle le textualise, le met en fiction, déplace le on-dit, le cliché, ou du moins, c'est notre pari, elle est en mesure de le faire.

Quelles sont dès lors les tâches de la sociocritique? Si le texte est un dispositif interdiscursif et intertextuel qui absorbe et réemet de façon spécifique (la textualisation, le travail fictionnel, l'effet

de texte, l'aspect valeur du texte, le travail sur la langue et en particulier sur le signifiant) et singulière les représentations du réel présentes dans le déjà-là du discours social, alors trois positions épistémologiques peuvent se faire jour, aujourd'hui.

Si on privilégie la déconstruction seule, on risque d'aboutir à une esthétisation de l'activité critique, à une anaxiologie contemplant son propre vide, au travail de Pénélope du poststructuralisme (voir Derrida, Baudrillard et al.). Si on ne prend en considération que l'activité de (re)-construction on présuppose quelque part que l'écrivain travaille non pas sur du déjà-là, sur du réel déjà-sémiotisé, mais sur un monde objectif représentable dont le texte reflètera par homologie, analogie ou par tout autre processus les structures objectives.

Si comme nous le postulons, le discours social comporte des enjeux de légitimité, d'intérêts sociaux, de lignes hégémoniques, s'il comporte des novations et des archaïsmes, des équilibres apparents au niveau discursif, des concrétions doxiques et stéréotypées la littérature alors peut être cette pratique qui résiste à l'hégémonie, qui fonctionne à l'excès (excès de langage, impossible à figurer, impossible à dire tout en se disant). En ce sens, nous ne fétichisons pas la littérature, elle ne peut pas tout. Elle ne peut se substituer à des discours d'analyse ni même à des discours qui tout en se basant sur l'analyse métaphorisent considérablement leurs argumentations (Marx, Freud). Ce disant, nous n'établissons pas de hiérarchie entre les différents types de discours. La littérature est opacifiante, polysémique voire polyphonique, plurilingue au sens que M. Bakhtin donne à ce terme, elle n'a pas le pouvoir (d'aucuns diraient heureusement car elle est d'un autre ordre) d'opposer une clarté reconquise et critique aux lignes générales de l'hégémonie qu'elle interpelle. Mieux même, toute tentative de clarification liquide son excès c'est-à-dire en quelque sorte sa littérarité.

Dans certaines conditions historiques, lorsque le discours clair argumentatif, discours de savoir ou de vérité se trouve barré, la littérature peut infiniment plus que le discours critique de débats d'idées. C'était le cas de la littérature russe au XIX^e siècle à cause de la censure tsariste. C'était le cas de la littérature soviétique de la période stalinienne et surtout post-stalinienne. Avant le discours de l'historien, du politique ou du critique, c'est la littérature qui dans les années 60 s'est mise à relire de grands événements traumatiques comme l'Histoire de la collectivisation, de l'industrialisation,

¹⁷ Cité par P. Barberis, «Juillet comme bane d'essai ou trois réactions et leurs suites», in *Romantisme*, n° 28-29, (1980): 257-278, p. 276.

de la seconde guerre mondiale, voire l'Histoire de l'alphabétisation au début des années 20.

Il y a en revanche des sociétés ou des périodes de l'Histoire où la littérature semble incapable de s'opposer à l'hégémonie du discours social ou même de le réinscrire de façon fragmentaire. Elle s'épuise alors dans ses jeux de miroir et ses auto-représentations, n'a plus rien à textualiser. Sa textualisation marche à vide. L'idéologie de l'opacification (à distinguer dans notre esprit des procédures opacifiantes de la fiction) devient tout simplement obscurantiste.

Autrement dit, la sociocritique, reprenant l'idée des fonctions des séries discursives dans une société et leur historicité (Tynianov) voudrait insister sur le fait qu'il n'y a pas une essence des formes littéraires, des genres dans l'interdiscursivité, mais des fonctions qui dépendent de la conjoncture, des modes de régulation de l'hégémonie. Non plus comme nous l'avons signalé le «Qu'est-ce la littérature» de J.P. Sartre, mais notre «Que peut la littérature»? Après les fatigues du post-modernisme, et le dépassement des problématiques du reflet, la sociocritique, tenant compte de l'apport de la poétique formaliste mais voulant renouer avec une approche sociale du texte (la socialité du texte, selon la belle expression de Claude Duchet), serait tenter de répondre aujourd'hui, en face de l'envahissement de la confusion du discours argumentatif et de la fascination narcissique des vidéo-clips, encore quelque chose. Non plus le «Tout» du fétichisme de l'institution littéraire d'autrefois, non pas le «rien» du marketing publicitaire d'aujourd'hui mais pour pasticher Sieyès à la veille de 89: Quelque chose!.

TOWARD A SOCIOCITICISM OF TOTALITIES: THE YEAR OF 1875 *

Henri Mitterand

Literary history is not without optical illusions. The most important is undoubtedly that which occurs in the perception of events in a chronological fashion: a writer's biography, the order in which his works appear, the search for sources or influences, the history of a school or of a movement. Such an approach favors the vertical and diachronic dimension, and all too often neglects the horizontal, synchronic or transchronic dimension. Yet, at any given moment it is possible to hear a polyphony of voices, passing through the same time period; that which is measurable, in any era, is a network of institutional, ideological and rhetorical constraints which govern the totality of literary discourses; it is also the permanent referring-back from one discourse to another which may either agree with or contradict it. There exists an interdiscursiveness there which must be measured. What better way to do so, experimentally, than by effecting a cut across diachronicity, by sketching out the basic contours of a particular literary year—of course, without restricting oneself only to the 'great' texts or to literature alone: politics is also important. In order to sum up this book, I have chosen somewhat at random the year of 1875.

This was apparently an uneventful year, hollow, empty, without historical significance. On January 5, Marshal MacMahon, President of the Republic, in the presence of a few kings and presidents, inaugurated the Opera. On the twenty-third, Aristide

* Translated, from French by Catharine Randall.

Boucicaut, owner of Bon Marché, gave a ball for Paris's big businessmen: 8,000 invitations. The seventh of February was the masked ball at the Opera which followed the Elysee balls and preceded Arsène Houssaye's ball; in June, the parade and the races at Long-champs. Also in June, the sixteenth, —three days after the parade— Monseigneur Guibert set in place the cornerstone of Sacré-Coeur, in expiation of Paris's sins. The masses were kept entertained, at the same time that they were being edified: in August, the Tuileries garden accommodated some orphéons —6,000 musicians— and in September, it was the international bicycle races. The future Tour de France began as a mere spin around the large pool at the Tuileries.

One wishing to analyze the myth of the Belle Epoque, that retrospective and euphoric mirage, modern incarnation of the myth of the Golden Age, could discern its elements without difficulty in bourgeois, petit-bourgeois or popular rituals, which repeat themselves year after year, and which are reported in the press, novels, songs and operettas. («Up, up in the swing!...») If we open *Rougon-Macquart*, we find them all there: the children's ball in *Une Page d'Amour*, the reception in *Pot-Bouille*, the birthday dinner in *l'Assomoir*, the première of the «Blond Venus» in *Nana*. But we can also find them equally well in Degas's and Manet's canvasses, in Daudet's novels, in Edmond de Goncourt's *Journal*, with his dinners at Princess Matilda's or his bachelor lunches with writers at the Brabant publishing house. So many images which incarnate the «remembrances of being in France», at a time when the length of the boulevards, from rue Montmartre to the Opéra, formed the axis of life in high society, journalistic or intellectual life, and when Passy, the Batignolles, and Montmartre still looked like small villages.

Apparently insouciant images. Daytrips to the countryside. The teeming streets where jostle together workers, laundresses, freight handlers with their drays, painters with their ladders, strawberry vendors, knife grinders in smocks, hatless concierges, petit-bourgeois women in button-boots, clerks with high collars and shop-boys with their hair slicked back: Parisian 'types' ¹. Guy de Maupassant could pose for the stereotypical rower and sit as model for Renoir:

¹ That was to be the title of a collection published in 1889, with the collaboration of Maupassant, Huysmans, Mallarmé, Céard and others.

«Finally the good weather has returned», he wrote to his mother, the twenty-ninth of July, «and I hope that will make you rent your house. Today it's incredibly warm, and the last Parisians left in the city will certainly flee from it. As for me, I go boating, I swim, swim and boat. I steer my big boat like anyone else would steer a yawl, and my friends who are also rowers and who are staying at Bougival are colossally astonished when I visit them around midnight and ask for a glass of rum. I continue to work up these rowing scenes I've spoken to you about, and feel that I could perhaps get a small, somewhat amusing and realistic book out of them by choosing the best of the rowing stories that I know, and further developing and embroidering on them, and so forth...» ².

The beginning of the Belle Epoque. Or at least, the site of the legend. The 'good life' of well-heeled bourgeois and, among them, of some writers who were always sure not to go hungry. Dumas, Houssaye were fantastically wealthy. Daudet nonchalantly threw away 150 francs a night on women. Gustave Flaubert was a millionaire, in 1875 francs, when francs were worth six times the 'heavy' franc of 1980. In 1875, there he was, 'ruined': but that was because he'd thrown away 1,200,000 francs on his nephew, Ernest Commanville, a dealer in wood for heating and carpentry, who was threatened by bankruptcy. Edmond de Goncourt lived off his revenue. The seventh of August, he worried:

«I've received a letter informing me that the leather merchant who owes me 80,000 francs has not paid me the quarter's rent he owes and he intimates that months, indeed years, may go by with half of my income missing and with all the trouble of a court case. Farewell, my novel! ³. All its delicate fabulation has taken wing, become lost in the void, like a bird fleeing from a thrown stone».

Let's not lapse into vulgar economic considerations. However, the foregoing is not without some effect on our views of the world.

² Guy de MAUPASSANT, *Etudes, chroniques et correspondance, dans les Oeuvres complètes illustrées*, Paris, Librairie de France, 1938.

³ He's speaking here of *La Fille Elisa* (1877).

THE BRAZIER

There was a reverse side to all this, which the Goncourt's *Journal* barely mentioned, and manuals of literary history even less so. That was the 'moral order', always present, always weighty. It was the misery and ignorance of the poor, those millions of city-dwelling or rural poor. «Never», noted Zola, «has life seemed such a heavy burden. Suicides are epidemic, a plague come from who knows where. In Paris, on certain days, up to ten suicides can be counted. The city seems marked for the scourge, with its plaintive population, its great sorrows, its enormous noise which drowns out so many sobs.» (*Le messager de l'Europe*; July 1875). It was barely a year since the law began to regulate child labor in factories.

Of course, 'moral' should be translated as 'political' and 'order' paraphrased by 'state of seige', 'exile', 'repression' or 'censorship'. Four years after the Commune, Versailles was still vigilant and continued to hound troublemakers. In 1874, people were still being executed at Satory. In February 1876, a 'transfer' of condemned Communards was to leave for New Caledonia. For two years, Thiers had been dormant; the term «French Republic» was accepted, by only one vote, on the thirtieth of January against the wishes of the Right and a part of the center Right; but the new Prime Minister, Buffet chosen on March 11, expressly invoked conservative principles, asked that a state of seige be maintained, and alloed the monarchist prefects to retain their positions. The law of July 12, concerning freedom in higher education, favored Catholic schools. In each village, children went to the «nun's school», parents revered the «big church». The arrogant mass of Sacré-Coeur, dominating Paris, was to affirm the power the bishops had recovered, the Catholic sway over public and private life. Never, since Charles X, had such an alliance of the stock exchange, the sword, and the altar imposed itself. It was the Third Restoration. The assembly elected February 8, 1871, would dissolve on December 31, 1875: it would have instituted the Republic by accident, and would have always supported the predominantly monarchist ministers. In a few months the pendulum would slowly return to the left. But, in the meantime, blackest night reigned. The Republic was yet to be conquered.

Big business and the upper echelons of the military dominated the country's government. The Duke of Audiffret-Pasquier, President of the Assembly, was also president of Anzin Mines Company,

with Thiers on his board of directors. Léon Say was in the Finance Ministry. Other ministerial functions were conferred upon Duke Decazes and General de Crissey.

The writers, journalists and artists who were exiled or deported are innumerable. Gustave Courbet, having taken refuge in Switzerland, was condemned to pay costs for the reconstruction of the Vendôme column. Henri Rochefort, who had fled from New Caledonia in 1874 with Paschal Grousset, was in Geneva. Jules Vallès lived in London, in abject poverty. He was preparing the Jacques Vingtras trilogy. But «France», he wrote to Hector Malot, «has barricaded herself against our thoughts as well as against our weaponry»⁴ Although Malot, notes Marie-Claire Banquart,

«put himself out to get his friend's work in print, there remains even so a fear of this 'legally dead' individual, who is now forbidden to sign his own name, but whose style is too recognizable and serves as his signature»⁵.

Gustave Maroteau, his friend, died in March, in prison on Nou Island in New Caledonia, just as Auguste Passedouet, administrator of the *Refractaire*, died there, insane, in 1869. The «Blanquiste» journalists, Trinquet, Humbert, Cournet, Lefrançais and Da Costa were also either exiled or deported. Auguste Blanqui himself was imprisoned in Paris. Henri Bauer⁶, who directed *l'Événement illustré*, in 1868 was also deported. Gabriel Brideau and Emile Eudes, former directors of *La Libre Pensée*, were exiled to London; college professors, doctors, officers, and, of course, revolutionary workers, militants for the Internationale were exiled to Russia, Belgium and England: Langevin, Wurth, Longuet, Camelinat, Jules Guesde, and countless others!

Thus a not insignificant proportion of French intellectuals were living outside France's borders: a situation comparable to that which had resulted from the coup d'état of 1851, or again, with that which, after 1940, would result from Pétain's seizure of power. Republican resistance had been muzzled. Who could still hear Vallès? When one considers the numerical and qualitative significance of this intellectual emigration, one understands better why the

⁴ Quoted by Marie-Claire Blancquart in her preface to *L'Insurgé*, Paris, Gallimard, 1975, 'Folio' collection.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 12-12.

⁶ Henry Bauer was the father of the writer Gérard Bauer, a member of the Académie Goncourt.

socialist movement did not rise from its ashes until after 1880, the year of the Amnesty and of the return of the exiles.

But, within, the ashes had not completely cooled, and the Marshal's government eyed them warily. More than ever, workers were compelled to keep a work card, on which the employer noted any infraction of the rules, any act of insubordination. Military justice and the police pursued the Communards who had eluded the arrests made in June, 1871. One revealing example is that of the mishap experienced by the novelist and journalist, Paul Alexis, a very close friend of Zola, Cézanne and of those painters called, since their 1874 exhibition, the Impressionists. On the morning of April 23, two police officers came to arrest him and take him to the police station. There, he was informed that since 1873 he had been condemned in his absence for having served as lieutenant under the Commune, and was to be deported to a fortified prison. Transferred, in handcuffs, to Cherche-Midi, he would stay in prison until the fifth of May. The 'war council' acquitted him (by a very slim margin): his dossier had been confused with that of a certain Paul Alexis, day laborer⁷. Alexis returned home, «saddened by the whole stupid mess»⁷. He'd had a close call, and in fact had not gotten off scot-free, for he had not reckoned on his landlord's concern for the 'proprieties'. «Returning to my house», he related, «my concierge delivered to me a paper folded in four, my eviction notice by a process server. The house is too respectable: no one wants an 'acquitted man' there». For one journalist freed, who was, all things considered, well-respected, how many other unfortunates were left, forgotten, in prison?

It was probably not by chance that Alexis's occupation, that of «journalist», attracted the police's notice. Since the election of MacMahon to the Presidency, 211 newspapers, of which 192 were Republican, were condemned to experience administrative penalties. The intimidation succeeded. Zola had been completely forbidden to publish in Paris for two years already. One of his exposés on unemployment caused the *Corsaire* to be seized and prohibited in December, 1872. The articles he sent to the *Sémaphore de Marseille* appeared without signature. Paradox: it was in Russia, in a liberal

review — *Le Messager de l'Europe* — that he was finally able to express himself, by way of a monthly letter beginning in March, and which he owed to his friendship with Turgenev. One of these articles, in July, specifically took issue with censorship: the judicial authorities were prosecuting an editor who was publishing a deluxe edition of LaFontaine's *Contes*, for «damaging public morality». The court case took place, the tribunal ordered the 18th century engraved plates which were to have served as illustrations to be destroyed, and declared LaFontaine's work to be «pernicious and amoral». «Now», cried Zola, «all we have left to do is burn Rab-elais, Regnier, Brantome, and, after them, all national novelists and playwrights. What are they trying to do? Hold an auto-da-fé in the 19th century?»⁸.

As for the theater, the Department of Censorship, an off-shoot of the Department of the Beaux-Arts, itself attached to the Ministry of Public Information, was careful to isolate all subversive manuscripts. In 1875 it had examined, monthly, 1,230 manuscripts or printed texts and 120 song lyrics. Even during rehearsals it exercised its surveillance. In April, the department stopped a play by Victor Séjour and M. Drack, *Cromwell*, after the first performance in order to «preserve the public well-being»: it felt the play showed Republicans repairing the damages the monarchists had caused... Asking for an augmentation of its budget in 1876, the commission pointed out that «it would defend itself victoriously were it able to show the public everything that the Department had prevented from being shown to the public... Had it not been for the Department, it would not have been long before the whole series of political plays in which the government was attacked, as it had been from 1848 to 1850, would have appeared...»⁹ Even older plays were forbidden, such as *Le Chevalier de Maison-Rouge*, drafted in 1847 and nevertheless performed in 1869 and 1870. *Les Misérables*, by Charles Hugo, was opposed on the grounds that it would be «completely inopportune to portray on today's stage such revolutionary street brawls, no matter what modifications to the play itself might be made». «Is it constructive to stir up political passions?», concluded the commissioners. In other plays permitted to be performed, the commission required scenes and acts to be either omitted

⁷ T.N.: The confusion hinges upon the similarity between the term 'journaliste' or 'journalist', and 'journalier', or day-laborer.

⁸ *Lettres inédites de Paul Alexis à Émile Zola*, collected and annotated by B.-H. Bakker, University of Toronto Press, 1971, page 69.

⁸ *Oeuvres complètes*, t. XIV, p. 236.

⁹ See Josette PARRAIN, *Censure, théâtre et Commune*, third level dissertation, 1973, Université de Paris III, photo-copied.

or revised; the censors prohibited anything hinting at revolt, judgment, execution, fires, conspiracies or revolutionary discourses. In the name of a so-called internal truce, censorship wielded a hidden dictatorial power which precluded all possibility of political expression on the contemporary stage.

GOOD BOOKS

It was not enough that free thinkers were expelled, imprisoned or silenced, nor that this repression prevented any questioning of the established order. It was still necessary to convince 'good people' that everything had been set up for their happiness and that they would run a great risk in listening to false prophets. Under every conservative regime, a kind of edifying literature, an amalgam of presidential speeches, dominical preaching, popular novels and, in our time, soap opera, has flourished. In this respect, the 'pousse-à-jour' under Marshal MacMahon had nothing on those of Marshal Pétain¹⁰.

Students only study great works of our national literature, and never those which modern criticism disdainfully dismisses as 'sub-literature'. This is a bit of a shame, for they thereby acquire a false or incomplete conception of the ideological role which the totality of fictional works plays in any given time period, and disregard in particular one of its components, the popular novel. Concerning the year of 1875, any literary review which only featured such names as Flaubert, Daudet, Verlaine, Renan or writers of similar stature, would not permit a full understanding of the system of references, of values, and of beliefs which governed a large part of the reading public. A more complete, or at any rate, a less distorted, image could be obtained by adding the inventory, among others, of novels of Catholic inspiration. 'Good books' continued after 1871 the task begun during the Second Empire, which made the fortune of specialized publishing houses such as Mame, Barbou,

Casterman, Plon and Vermot¹¹. This was the type of book customarily given out as end-of-the year prizes, the kind found in parish libraries. It was the literature of the masses, in 1875. Very preoccupied by the 'social question', or, again, by the 'worker's issue', as it was called, these works possessed common objectives: to distract their readers from any critical meditation on society; to inspire within them a holy hatred, or at least a healthy defiance, concerning the «socialists», and, more generally, the Republicans; to disguise social problems as moral concerns; to teach the virtues of steady work, resignation, and faith. It was a literature flourishing during the Second Empire, when it was necessary to exorcise the specters of 1848. After the Commune it again flourished, when it was imperative to impose at any cost upon the proletariat and the petit-bourgeoisie a falsified and repugnant image of the revolutionary worker.

Albéric ou le jeune apprenti, by J. Aymard (Ed. Lefort, Bibliothèque catholique), published in 1875, told the story of a spinner who had come to know a young seamstress «in a series of dangerous get-togethers»: they were both non-believers, they wallowed in vice and misery; the son, Albéric, would be taken in by a religious society, and his exemplary behavior would cause his parents' conversion. In 1873, *Ange et Colombe*, by Zénaïde Fleuriot (published by Firmin-Didot), portrayed the «horrible army» of Communards: «incendiaries, those brazen and intoxicated adolescents», «hideous shrews with red rags wrapping their heads and red scraps of cloth around their waists». In 1874, the same themes, the same images—wine, vulgarity, blood, jealousy, 'squinty eyes', crude language—in *Les Mémoires d'une pétroleuse* by M.-A. Terain. Each year several novels of the same type, with their 'rogue's gallery' of 'evil workers', of 'ringleaders', of 'socialist leaders', all portrayed like visions from a nightmare, added themselves to the popular imagination's St. George and the dragon, Tom Thumb's ogre, the one-eyed Polyphemus or Dracula the vampire... A certain Raoul de Navéry became a specialist of this genre, with *Drames de la misère* (1875) or *The Robinsons of Paris* (1878), an offensive caricature of Sue's *Mystères de Paris* or Hugo's *Les Misérables*. The titles were indicative of the formula: plagiarize successful popular novels,

¹⁰ See Gérard MILLER, *Les pousse-à-jour du maréchal Pétain*, Paris, Ed. du Seuil, 1975.

¹¹ See Pierre PIERRARD, «Question ouvrière et socialisme dans le roman catholique en France au XIX^e siècle», *Les Cahiers naturalistes*, n° 50, 1976, pp. 165-190. I am indebted to Pierre Pierrard for the examples which follow.

and then invert their meaning. *Les Dramas de la misère* described a working-class neighborhood, where socialist influence was felt. The hero of the novel, abbot Bernard, a new Rudolphe, of course found there

«the ignorance and ferocity of savages, the hatred of good, the thirst for evil; tribes of men and women who had never crossed the threshold of a church and who lived in shameful debauchery».

And so forth.

The ideological pressure, in conjunction with police repression, was stylistically expressed differently, depending on the authors and their public. It is plausible that the crass themes of *Dramas de la misère*, written for a naïve, uncultivated public, did not have a counterpart in the more elevated literary sphere. Quite the contrary. The form was more elegant in Goncourt's work but the stereotypes were identical. In the year of which we speak, Edmond de Goncourt began to put together his novel on prostitution (*La Fille Elisa*, 1877). Watch him on his visit to a working-class neighborhood, his handkerchief pressed to his mouth (August 22, 1875):

«Today I'm going to search for 'human documentation' in the area around the Ecole militaire. No one will ever understand how much the vile and ugly facts upon which we have based our works have cost us; the toll taken by our natural timidity and unease with more common folk, and the horror we felt surrounded by the riffraff. This occupation as conscientious policeman of the popular novel is definitely the most disgusting job any one with any semblance of nobility could perform».

The sociologist, philosopher and historian develop a discourse which links up with that of the serial novelist. In 1875, librairie Hachette completed publication of the great work in six volumes by Maxime du Camp, friend of Flaubert's youth: *Paris, ses organes, ses fonctions et sa vie dans la seconde moitié du XIX^e siècle*. It was the work of a polymath, but is nonetheless a very useful investigation for anyone today who would like to know what it was like to live in Paris a hundred years ago. In the final two chapters of volume six, «Revolutions» and «Dreams and Danger», du Camp allowed the hatred, insults and racial outrage provoked by the memory of the Commune to overflow. The leaders? «Eight individuals, elected to the post, belonged to this assembly which was at one and the same time both grotesque and ferocious and which,

during two months, held forth in l'Hôtel de Ville». The rank and file? «Frail, unhealthy beings, half wolf and half ferret, whom overcrowded living quarters had rendered prematurely depraved, whom second-rate poets have tried to glorify, who were lured by brandy and who were tempted by 'adventure'». The result? «The Paris fire, an act foreseen, planned long ahead of time and promised, like a timely and legitimate vengeance, to the rabble which had been roused to this end». The source of all these evils? Naturally, «the socialist principles and pronouncements of the Internationale».

«Predominance of material instincts dear to socialism, weakening of the concept of fatherland, which had been shaken by the Internationale, contemptuous distrust of liberty—such were the three main points (none of which really has much to do with the others) which can be derived from a serious study of the totality of the very cloudy doctrines or, rather, dreams, of the proletariat».

In his *Histoire de quatre ans, 1870-73*, published by Carpentier during the final weeks of 1875, Théodore Duret (also a wholesaler, art critic, historian of the Impressionists, friend of Manet and Zola, and a good Republican) was less abusive, more attentive to the reality of the Versailles massacres, but no less hostile. For him, too, the Commune was a bad fever, a collective madness, the movement of a 'bestial' crowd. This book was to serve as a source, sixteen years later, for Zola's *La Débâcle*: clichés die hard.

Taine's work, *Les Origines de la France contemporaine*, of which the first volume, devoted to the Ancien Régime on the eve of the Revolution, appeared at the end of the year, was even more ambitious. Taine had begun it in the fall of 1871. The conservative reflex characterizes his entire historical perspective. Victor Giraud, Taine's biographer, would frankly admit that, twenty-five years later:

«His memories of 1848 and 1871 came back to him, strengthened and intensified by all his impressions of the worst days of the Revolution. He feared for his country the return of similar disorders, and he felt that, to prevent them, only a strong moral doctrine, accepted by each member of the social community, possessed sufficient authority; and he attempted to sketch out its principles».

Taine's positivist morality converged with the Christian ethics of the Bonne Presse, for the same didactic ends and starting from the same political sources, which Zola analyzed as early as February 1876:

«It is unquestionable that Taine's view of the Revolution is colored by his fears as a French bourgeois who has been prevented from living a calm life of philosophical pursuits because of the agonies of 1848 and 1871. The democratic chimera is anathema to him: it disturbs his ideas about order and practical life, about conscientious work getting its just reward. That's why he's on the side of those he calls the 'privileged ones'»¹².

In fact, the terms in which Taine expressed himself concerning the participants in the Revolution of 1789 recalled the 'portraits' of *Les Drame de la misère*:

«A few thousand demagogues in this way turn loose several million savages, and the crowd in the street interprets café politics. On the one hand, brute force is at the service of radical dogma. On the other hand, radical doctrine is at the service of brute force. And there you have it, in a collapsing France, the last two powers still standing upon the remains of all others».

«L'ARTICLE DE PARIS»

Ideologues of the Moral Order's political persuasion could be found at every level of opinion. It also had its popularizers. Light lyric theater appealed to the public. The Bouffes-Parisiens put on *La Créole*, a comic opera by Albert Millaud, set to music by Offenbach. The Renaissance offered a farce by Leterrier, Vauloo and LeCoq, *La Petite Mariée*. The Opéra did not play Verdi or Wagner, but instead showed *Les Huguenots* and *La Juive*. The Opéra-Comique enacted *Carmen* by Bizet. But the Folies-Dramatiques ran *La Fille de Mme Angot* for a solid year, the first play, claimed the *Annales du Théâtre*, to run such an uninterrupted length of time.

On the dramatic stage, a few classical plays hung on—certainly non *Tartuffe*—and a few historical dramas, the dusty heritage of

¹² *Oeuvres complètes*, t. XII, pp. 533 and following.

Romanticism. The lion's share of the success—and of the money—went to the 'boulevard' froth: comedies, operettas and fantasies. *La Fille de Roland*, a comedy by Henri de Bornier, was showing at the Comédie-Française; it was as ponderous as the armor his knights wore, but «brings us back», said the *Revue des Deux Mondes*, «to serious works, things of nobility and pride». *Le Demi-Monde*, by Dumas fils, was put on again for the occasion of his installation into the Académie française, and his *L'Etrangère* was also running. The Comédiens-Français billed Corneille, Sedaine, Feuillet and Augier. Sarah Bernhardt played *Phèdre*. L'Odéon put on *Un Drame sous Philippe II*, by a novice writer, Georges de Porto-Riche, but it was still the same old thing. *Ferréol* was a success at the Gymnase-Dramatique; it was a comedy in four acts by Victorien Sardou, in which the plot revolved around a trial in the court of assizes: nothing new here. The Gymnase also played *Les Scandales d'hier*, a comedy by Théodore Barrière. At the Vaudeville, Delacour and Hennequin were showing *Le Procès Vauradieux*. The Palais-Royal played *Le Panache*, a comedy in three acts by Edmond Gondinet. The Variétés offered *La Boulangère à des ecus*, a comic opera by Mailhac, Halevy and Offenbach, and staged *Les Trente Millions de Gladiator*, by Labiche and Philippe Gille. The Porte-Saint-Martin continued to draw crowds with *Le Tour du monde en quatre-vingts jours* by Demeny and Jules Verne.

So it went with French theater; it was a time of prosperity and mediocrity out of which nothing was to endure—except perhaps *Carmen*, for its musical score. The most observant among the critics were aware of this. In December, 1875, Zola began to campaign in favor of a 'naturalist' theater, with an article on «La scène dramatique à Paris» published in *Le messager de l'Europe*¹³. He took vehement exception with a theater which «will ultimately become our shame after having been our glory». Vaudeville—comedies, sentimental comedy, or comedy as a vehicle for a message—was the gangrene in modern theater, as were melodramas and operettas. When was the time of 'truthful works' to come?

«Our plays are constructed by the dozen on inoffensive models. But the worst thing, here, is that such a system poison the nation with the routine, with the craftsmanlike tendencies of its trade.

¹³ *Oeuvres complètes*, t. XII, pp. 17 and following.

Probably nowhere else in the world is there a theater constricted in such a pitiless vise as it is here in France. Any bold innovation is forbidden us. Our plays come under the heading of what is called the Article of Paris. We cut, we sew, we paste, we polish and we concoct charming trifles which only last a season»

Let's not say that the theater of 1875 was not serious. Was it Dumas fils's influence? The uncompromising Ernest Legouvé, in a lecture on Scribe, «pleads the cause of the social rehabilitation of women. It was an issue of the future, even if the vocabulary was still a bit undeveloped. The *Revue des Deux Mondes* felt that Mr. Legouvé «says too much about it» and «professes an immoderate faith in the theater, its playwrights and actors». What naïveté, indeed, at a time when the main role of an actress, as the petit-bourgeoisie conceived it, was to teach the son of the family a thing or two about life, and to squander his over-flowing fortune.

A CRISIS LITERATURE?

Neither poetry, nor the novel, were better off. In his article on contemporary poets (*La Revue des Deux Mondes*, July, 1875), Ferdinand Brunetière mentioned two names: Sully Prudhomme (for *Les Vaines Tendresses*) and François Coppée (for *Les Humbles*). He noted the predominance of intimate poetry, with its «flavor of true emotion which distinguishes it from descriptive poetry». Frédéric Mistral's was equally a poetry of an intimate nature, according to Saint-René Taillandier (in *La Revue des Deux Mondes* for October), in his analysis of Mistral's recently published collection of poetic memoirs.

Victor Hugo also fell in with this trend. Doting on his two grandchildren Jeanne and Georges, he composed the collection entitled *L'Art d'être grand-père*:

«What do you expect? The child holds me
in his power;
I can no longer love anything but innocence».
(June 8, 1875)

Nothing exciting. Yet, Hugo was also a public figure, the intellectual leader of a group agitating within the Republican ex-

treme Left, in the columns of *Rappel*, against the more moderate factions which supported Gambetta in *La République française*. In February, he published an appeal *Pour un soldat*, in favor of a private condemned to death for having struck his corporal. On March 29, at Edgar Quinet's funeral, he associated the «Revolution which writes living books, and poetry which writes immortal ones», and praised «the vast march of ideas, progress, democracy, brotherhood and the emancipation of the masses»¹⁴. This language smelled of sulphur. Nevertheless, the powers that he hesitated to bring any action against the author of *Les Châtiments*.

Younger, unknown, Jean Richepin was more vulnerable. The original edition of *La Chanson des gueux* would be seized in 1876, and its destruction ordered, at the same time that the daily paper *Le Bien public* would be forced to interrupt its publication of *L'Assommoir*. It was not a good idea to speak of the poor, either in verse or in prose.

According to Brunetière, poetry was going through a time of crisis. His analysis, at a distance, appears accurate: the poets who were talked about then are now forgotten. The public would not recognize the names of those who would be remembered.

Arthur Rimbaud was visiting Germany, Italy, Marseille and Charleville. Verlaine was not publishing anything. Mallarmé, aloof from all literary and political circles, slowly shaped a work which, quietly and permanently, brought «the revolution to poetic language»¹⁵. It was an odd situation, nevertheless: this was the France in which Mr. Buffet was so determined to strip all the buds from the reborn branches of critical thought, as he hatched the most extraordinary plan to subvert the national language. A subtle revenge and, after the fact, an intellectual one...What censorship could ever guess at or prevent the ravages and results of Mallarmé's syntax?

The forms of the resistance to conformity, at the same time as manifestations of the creative process, were numerous. The cloak of moral order, in 1875, was no longer weighty enough, no longer sufficiently self-assured, to put a halt to all opposition. The establishment of the Republic, effected on the evening of January 30,

¹⁴ *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Jean MASSIN, Le club français du Livre, t. XVI. In that same year (1875), Victor Hugo decided to publish, under the title of *Actes et Paroles*, all the public statements he had made since his return from exile.

¹⁵ See Julia KRISTEVA, *La Révolution du langage poétique*, Paris, Ed. du Seuil, 1974.

in fact modified the 'givens' of political and ideological confrontation by strengthening the Left's hopes. Even while being persecuted, the thought and action of the extreme Left, whether radical or socialist, found room to grow here. Even while hemmed in on all sides, even curtailed by the Republican petit-bourgeoisie, the working-class was attentive to the constitutional form of the administration. Little by little, the relationships among the forces were modified, to the detriment of the extreme Right, and even to the conservative Republicans. This was apparent at each of the elections which took place in 1876 and 1877; up to the time when it would be essential that MacMahon leave office, that the Assembly return to Paris, that amnesty be decreed for the Communards, and that July 14 become a national holiday.

1880, in this respect, was a watershed. In 1875, still only indications of this could be perceived.

Quality literature contained evidence of the above, other than in a negative way, in an *underlying* fashion, as in Taine's 'warnings', for instance. There was that which was written in the shadows: the *Dictionary des idées reçues*, which Flaubert was compiling at the same time as *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, an encyclopedia of 'stupidity':

«Republicans.—Republicans are not all thieves, but all thieves are Republicans. Radicalism.—is even more dangerous because it is latent. The Republic leads us to radicalism».

There were Zola's notes concerning the eating habits, work, sexual mores and speech of Parisian workers, which he made in order to throw them in the face of a public bogged down by the proscriptions of 'cant' and 'hypocrisy'. When one was well brought up, one was not to speak of money, sex or the masses. Or, if one did write about such topics, one did so while conforming to all the amenities of the classical code which, as Ferdinand Brunetière prescribed (eyes piously raised to heaven):

«obviously it's not that the humble, the most despised, among us don't have the right to have a novel of and for their own: however, it must be on condition that, in the depths of their baseness, a ray of an Ideal shine; and that instead of closing them up in the narrow circle where either birth or vicious nature has caused them to be placed, we (the novelists) should on the contrary pull them out of it and cause them to experience that type

of sentiment which smooths all brows, moistens every eye, and makes each heart beat high!»¹⁶.

Whence the scandal of *L'Assommoir*, which Zola was to send to Flaubert with this conspiratory dedication: «In hatred of 'good taste'».

There was also in *La Faute de l'abbé Mouret*, which diverged from the mediocrity of most novels in 1875, including Alphonse Daudet's novel *Fromont jeune et Risler aîné*—«a form of realism still easily accepted», according to Brunetière. In 1874, Zola had published *La Conquête de Plassans*, a work in which it was possible to discern violent anticlerical satire, a pamphlet broadened to the dimensions of a novel. If, with *La Faute*, he came back to the character of a priest or, more precisely, to two priests' characters, Serge Mouret, the mystical, visionary abbot, and brother Archangias, «rustic, dirty, ignorant peasant, a total Catholic fanatic», was it not as an echo serving to contradict a rumor that the Church was reinvigorating public affairs? To the symbol of dominance of Sacre-Coeur's cupolas, Zola opposed the image of a priest beaten by desire, and that of a country church overrun by brambles, pressed in upon by nature, which put into perspective the Church's proper position on earth. Barbey d'Aurevilly was justifiably angry: «It's the naturalism of the beast, but without shame or modesty, placed above noble Christian spirituality». (*Le Constitutionnel*, April 20). The term *naturalism* could hardly displease Zola, who was to take it as his battle standard. *La Faute de l'abbé Mouret*, whose action seemed to take place in a time and location outside of history, in that way participated in the destruction of the spiritual discourse's self-assurance—the ideological and rhetorical support of the 'dukes' regime—and undermined the discourse's influence on public opinion. That's indeed why, from now on, Zola was suspect. The publication, one right after the other, of his four novels, *La Curée*, *La Ventre de Paris*, *La Conquête de Plassans*, *La Faute de l'abbé Mouret*—some open satire, others veiled irony—made him one of those who lifted the shroud of silence, and covered the flanks of the freethinkers in their fight in retreat. While Renan withdrew into skepticism, morose pleasure, the bitter joy of pointing out all signs of what he took to mean to end of civilization, here was

¹⁶ Ferdinand Brunetière, «Le roman réaliste en 1875», *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1975, vol. II, p. 701. Article reprinted in *Le Roman naturaliste*, Paris, Calmann-Lévy, 1891.

a man who, in some respects, took over the direction of the critical discourse, without mistaking his adversary.

This panorama could be more fully developed and refined, exhaustive lists of publications added, chronological tables drawn obituaries appended... For this year of 1875, one could follow closely the life of each author who has left his name to posterity. That would be interminable. A report on the state of aesthetic forms and expressions could also be undertaken: an even more difficult task than that of describing currents and confrontations of ideas.

All things considered, 1875 was not a vintage year for literature; but neither was it a totally empty year. The great Romantic generation had faded away, Baudelaire and Gautier were dead, the Parnasse was long gone. The defeat of the Commune had killed dreams, for ten years. Taine's acerbity, Dumas fils's ridiculous grandiloquence, Labiche's grating jokes, the Goncourt's gossiping, Renan's ambiguous smile, Flaubert's silences, were all that remained. A great popular idea had failed: Mr. Prudhomme could breathe again. It had nearly succeeded: Mr. Prudhomme was left with remembered terrors; he feared the future and saw in everything the shadow of the 'nihilists'. From this resulted the success of theories of decadence and pessimism¹⁷.

Those under the age of 35 were benighted, spied upon or disheartened. Little by little, however, they began to regain their strength. The year of 1875, with its comparative sterility but also with its muffled tensions, marked exactly that moment at which French literature, after four years of inactivity, again began to question things. This could be better measured by comparing the balance sheet of the years '75 to '80 with those four years which followed 1871.

By way of conclusion, a methodological reflection. Traditional literary history, which reduces everything to the individual destinies of the 'great authors', to 'isms', to the struggles and alliances of schools and genres, hardly enables one to comprehend the conditions, stakes, and rules of literary production in a given period. Whether one evokes, as a biographical anecdote, Flaubert's life, or whether one abstractly draws up a list of naturalism's characteristics, in either of these instances one misconstrues research. All that is needed is to examine a little closer, by taking a synchronic cross-

section, the textual production of just one year¹⁸, to discover that at each moment the literature of a nation forms a network and a confrontation of purposes, none of which can be interpreted in isolation, but each of which is nourished —and decoded— by the echo of the others. Taine recalled, perhaps unconsciously, Maxime du Camp and Zénaïde Fleuriot. Zola kept his distance from Taine, but was indebted to du Camp for his sources. Brunetière criticized Zola in the name of a moral system he shared with Barbey, who nevertheless hardly agreed with the aesthetic view of *La Revue des Deux Mondes*... And they all modulated, on varying tones and tempos, more or less brilliantly, the same social discourse, criss-crossed by contradictions and uncertainties, articulated by the anonymous voices of the press, the streets, or the salons. One dreams of a literary history which would bring to each critical period —but what period is not critical?— a global analysis of what was said and written, in the subtext behind the great texts. That would be a true sociocriticism, the sociocriticism of totalities, or at least of intertextualities. Only this method would make it possible to grasp the correlations which give each literary work a significance other than its original meaning, and which sketch out the intellectual landscape of a given time period.

¹⁷ See Paul BOURGET, *Nouveaux essais de psychologie contemporaine*, Paris, Lemerre, 1886.

¹⁸ See *L'Année 1913, les formes esthétiques de l'œuvre d'art à la veille de la première guerre mondiale*, research and sources brought together under the direction of L. BRION-GUERRY, 3 volumes, Paris, Klincksieck, 1971-74.

LA «VISION DU MONDE»: DE GOLDMANN A BAKHTINE ET MUKAŘOVSKÝ

Pierre V. Zima

La dichotomie forme/contenu, dans le cadre de laquelle s'opposaient les théories formalistes et marxistes de années vingt et trente, est en train d'être dépassée par une sociologie du texte polysémique¹. Cette sociologie, qui commence à peine à formuler ses théorèmes et à ébaucher ses orientations idéologiques, a encore affaire à une tradition hégélienne, dans laquelle les «œuvres d'art» apparaissent comme des incarnations d'idées philosophiques².

La sociologie de la littérature, en particulier celle développée par G. Lukács et L. Goldmann, ne s'est pas encore émancipée du sémantisme qui consiste à établir des *homologies* entre des textes fictionnels et des *systèmes de signifiés*.

La notion goldmannienne de «vision du monde», dont R. Heyndels analyse le passé dilthéen (herméneutique)³ perpétue la réduction hégélienne et marxiste en présupposant, «derrière» l'univers fictionnel, l'existence d'un système de signifiés caché: «On peut donc, pour avancer dans la compréhension d'un ouvrage littéraire, le mettre en rapport avec des systèmes conceptuels, philosophiques

¹ Voir: CONIO (G.), éd., *Le Formalisme et le futurisme russes devant le marxisme*, Edition de l'Age d'Homme, «Slavica», 1975.

² Voir: BOUAZIS (Ch.), *Littérature et société*, Mâme, 1972; LEENHARDT (J.): *Lecture Politique du roman. La «Jalousie» d'Alain Robbe-Grillet*, Minuit, 1973 et mon livre: *Pour une sociologie du texte littéraire*, U.G.E., 10/18, 1978.

³ Voir: HEYNDELS (R.), «Etude du concept de vision du monde», in: *L'Homme et la société*, N°1, 43-44, 1977.

ou théologiques qui n'existaient peut-être pas dans la conscience du poète. C'est précisément une des fonctions du critique et de l'historien de la littérature». (L. Goldmann, *Recherches dialectiques*, Gallimard, 1959, p. 195).

1. Vision du monde et structure significative

L'idée goldmannienne qu'il est possible de corréler des textes fictionnels avec des systèmes conceptuels, pose trois problèmes fondamentaux. Les deux premiers concernent la polysémie du texte (coexistence de plusieurs isotopies hétérogènes), le troisième la notion de cohérence.

Si le théâtre de Racine exprime les péripéties de la théologie janséniste (*Phèdre* comme «tragédie avec péripétie et reconnaissance»), il n'est guère possible de rendre compte de sa réception ultérieure et contemporaine dans laquelle le jansénisme joue *tout au plus* un rôle secondaire. *Phèdre* doit exprimer bien plus que le «refus intramondain» des jansénistes, défini par Goldmann comme «structure significative», globale: comme structure de signifiés. Que faire de toutes les interprétations de *Phèdre* ou d'*Iphigénie* (de Mauron, Jauss, Barthes) qui ignorent la structure sémantique «profonde» à laquelle Goldmann croit pouvoir ramener ces tragédies?—Sont-elles fausses, erronées?

En définissant les notions de «vision du monde» et de «structure significative», Goldmann passe sous silence le rapport entre le texte et le métatexte. La vision du monde janséniste, telle qu'il la définit dans *Le Dieu caché*, est autant une construction métatextuelle, un produit du discours goldmannien, que l'interprétation du théâtre de Racine dans le cadre du «structuralisme génétique». Lorsqu'il affirme que ce théâtre témoigne de certaines phases dans le développement du jansénisme, il opère (sur le plan discursif) une adéquation entre sa définition de la théologie janséniste d'une certaine époque et sa définition sémantique des tragédies raciniennes.

Ce procédé inévitable est sous-jacent à toute construction d'objet dans les sciences sociales et ne devrait pas être critiqué au nom d'un agnosticisme stérile. C'est le refus de Goldmann de réfléchir sur ses propres mécanismes discursifs qui paraît être

discutable. En réfléchissant sur le «faire» discursif du «structuralisme génétique», il aurait pu découvrir que sa définition de l'objet (du jansénisme, de la tragédie) n'est pas identique avec l'objet et que, par conséquent, le texte polysémique de *Phèdre* ou d'*Iphigénie* admet d'autres métatextes, d'autres interprétations. Le «refus intramondain» (ou *refus* tout court) ne constitue qu'une des isotopies sémémiques du texte, dont l'hétérogénéité est à l'arrière-plan des lectures innombrables de Racine. (Il s'agit ici du problème — hégélien par excellence — de l'identité entre Sujet et Objet).

Le concept de «vision du monde» présuppose la *cohérence* sémantique du texte littéraire et la recherche d'une «structure significative» vise la mise en système de la fiction. Que faire de tous les textes d'avant-garde, dont les auteurs refusent consciemment l'idée classique (voire classiciste) de la cohérence: l'idée que l'œuvre est une totalité harmonieuse?—Lorsque Goldmann affirme, au cours d'une discussion avec Adorno⁴, qu'il pourrait réduire l'œuvre de Beckett en système, pour en définir la vision du monde, il semble ignorer que la négation du système peut être une valeur sociale critique (négative) issue de la crise du système social. Ne faudrait-il pas tâcher de concevoir la sociologie du texte comme une sociologie de la contradiction irréductible?

2. Vision du monde, idéologie et polysémie

A la différence de Goldmann, qui distingue la «vision du monde» cohérente (qui n'existe pas dans la réalité et correspond au «maximum de conscience possible» d'un groupe) du fait idéologique empirique, relativement incohérent, Mukařovský propose une définition à la fois moins précise et plus prudente.

Dans son essai «L'Art et la vision du monde» («Umění a světový názor»), Mukařovský établit avant toute chose un rapport entre la notion de «vision du monde» et celle de système conceptuel. La «vision du monde», telle qu'elle a été définie par la philosophie idéaliste, a, selon Mukařovský, trois aspects. Elle peut être conçue

⁴ Voir: GOLDMANN (L.), ADORNO (Th. W.), Discussion extraite des actes du second colloque international sur la sociologie de la littérature tenu à Royumont, in: *Revue de l'Institut de Sociologie*, Université Libre de Bruxelles, 1973-3-4, p. 540.

comme la «base noétique» d'une société, comme l'«idéologie» d'un groupe ou d'une classe, et comme «système philosophique»: «[...] En ce qui concerne le système philosophique, il est évident que la différence entre lui et la vision du monde comme idéologie ne consiste, en fin de compte, que dans la plus grande systématisation et dans l'élaboration plus détaillée de ce que nous appelons un système philosophique»⁵.

Ces trois variantes de la «vision du monde» présentées par Mukařovský ont un commun dénominateur: d'une manière générale, chacune d'entre elles peut être définie comme un système de signifiés. A la différence de Goldmann, Mukařovský est conscient de l'impossibilité de ramener l'œuvre d'art au système conceptuel ou de l'expliquer exclusivement par rapport à lui.

Adoptant le point de vue de la *réception*, de la *lecture* toujours inachevée, il insiste sur le danger (que Goldmann semble ignorer) que comporte toute tentative pour établir une homologie entre la structure d'un texte fictionnel et une vision du monde sociale. Une telle tentative court le risque du subjectivisme dans lequel «les réflexions sur la soi-disant philosophie de certaines œuvres littéraires tendent à devenir des explications de la philosophie du théoricien illustrée par des citations provenant du poète analysé»⁶.

La recherche de la «communauté humaine» dans les romans de Malraux, dans le théâtre de Gombrowicz, Genet et Sartre, n'est-elle pas un élément de ces textes que le discours goldmannien privilégie pour sauvegarder et développer sa propre cohérence?

Mukařovský ne nie pas les déterminantes sociales de la production textuelle. Mais conscient du caractère polysémique (pluri-isotope) des textes littéraires, il renoue avec les formalistes russes et cherche à développer une sociologie du «comment», du plan signifiant des textes. Dans ses «Remarques sur la sociologie du langage poétique» («Poznámky k sociologii básnického jazyka»), il insiste sur le rôle du langage en tant que médiateur entre la société et la fiction en écrivant que «c'est moyennant le langage que l'œuvre littéraire est rattachée à la société»⁷.

⁵ MUKAŘOVSKÝ, «Umění a světový názor», in: J. Mukařovský, *Studie z estetiky*, Odeon, 1966, p. 246.

⁶ Ibid., p. 246.

⁷ MUKAŘOVSKÝ (J.), «Poznámky k sociologii básnického jazyka», in: Jan Mukařovský, *Kapitoly z české poetiky*, Melantrich, 1941, t. I, p. 224.

En développant la perspective théorique ouverte par Mukařovský on pourrait imaginer une sociologie du *texte* dont l'objet n'est pas le signifié derrière le monde fictionnel, mais le *caractère social d'une production textuelle polysémique*. Une telle sociologie devrait distinguer le sens social du processus de production (de la «genèse», dirait Goldmann) et celui de la réception en tant que *reproduction* (transformation) du texte originel. En même temps, l'analyse sociologique de la production devrait s'efforcer de rendre compte du développement de la réception (du métatexte) par rapport aux conditions socio-linguistiques de production.

Ainsi l'idée phénoménologique de G. Poulet que la «Recherche» proustienne tend à transformer le temps en espace, s'explique dans le contexte socio-linguistique de la production. L'ambivalence sociale (issue de la médiation par la valeur d'échange) se manifeste dans le roman comme *ambivalence* sémantique qui entraîne la désintégration du syntagme narratif. Or, celui-ci est responsable de ce que Barthes appelle «l'illusion chronologique»: du *temps* romanesque.

3. Vision du monde, discours et polyphonie

Ma première objection à la théorie goldmannienne de la «vision du monde», à savoir l'idée que le texte polysémique est irréductible à une structure de signifiés univoque, a été esquissée par Mukařovský. Ma deuxième objection, selon laquelle un grand nombre de textes littéraires mettent en doute l'idéal classique de la cohérence esthétique et noétique, est au moins implicite dans la définition que donne Bakhtine de la «vision du monde».

En un sens M. Bakhtine va plus loin que Goldmann et Mukařovský (plus loin sur la voie empruntée par la sociologie du texte). Il cherche à relier le concept de «vision du monde» à celui de «discours». Dans un roman comme *Eugène Onéguine*, plusieurs discours hétérogènes peuvent coexister et chacun d'entre eux représente une vision du monde. Dans son essai intitulé «L'Énoncé dans le roman», Bakhtine représente les discours-vision du monde dans le roman et nous fait remarquer les rapports de concurrence qui subsistent entre eux: «Cette sorte de discours-conception du

monde d'un autre, qui représente en même temps qu'elle est représentée, est particulièrement caractéristique du roman»⁸.

A l'inverse de Mukařovský et Goldmann, qui partent de l'idée qu'une vision du monde est ou peut être associée au texte littéraire, Bakhtine attire notre attention sur la possibilité que plusieurs visions du monde coexistent dans un seul texte, dans un roman par exemple. (On se rappellera que la théorie bakhtinienne privilégie le roman et que son application à d'autres sortes de textes n'est pas toujours fertile)⁹.

L'idée d'une coexistence, souvent polémique, ironique ou parodique, de plusieurs discours-visions du monde a l'avantage d'expliquer deux aspects essentiels du roman: 1) le rapport entre l'auteur et le héros (le Narrateur) et 2) le caractère contradictoire du texte romanesque. Loin de constituer un tout homogène, ce texte reproduit (en projetant des problèmes sociaux sur les plans sémantique et syntaxique) les contradictions socio-linguistiques d'une société et d'un groupe particulier dans cette société.

Dans son essai sur «Le Problème de l'auteur» («Problema avtora»), Bakhtine voit clairement que la prise de position de l'auteur devant son héros est une prise de position devant l'Autre et devant un système de valeurs étranger au «Moi». Le héros n'est donc jamais que le porte-parole de l'auteur, même là où l'auteur se transforme (apparemment) lui-même en héros: «Il est impossible de se mettre soi-même en rapport avec la forme; en le faisant nous devenons l'Autre pour nous mêmes... («my stanovymia drugim dlia sebja») [...]»¹⁰.

L'univers fictionnel du roman que Bakhtine représente comme polyphonique, «pluri-discursif», n'est donc jamais homogène du point de vue idéologique. Toute tentative pour réduire les rapports concurrentiels de plusieurs visions du monde à un système univoque fait problème. Goldmann aurait-il senti cette difficulté en renonçant au concept de vision du monde dans *Pour une sociologie du roman*?

⁸ BAKHTINE (M.), «L'Énoncé dans le roman», *Langages*, déc., 1968, p. 128.

⁹ Voir: MORSON (G.S.), «The Heresiarch of META», in: PTL 3, 1978, p. 417.

¹⁰ BAKHTINE (M.), «Problema avtora», in: *Voprosy filosofii* 30, 1977 N° 7, p. 156.

4. Remarques critiques

Les visions du monde et les idéologies jouent, en tant que systèmes de signifiés, un rôle important dans les textes littéraires. Mais la plupart des ces textes ne sauraient être déclarés «homologues» ou «analogues» à des structures conceptuelles. Le niveau sémantique du texte est marqué par la pluralité de sens (Mukařovský) et par la pluralité de discours (Bakhtine). La «vision du monde» et l'«idéologie» sont des concepts sémantiques et en tant que tels ils devraient être complétés par une théorie sociologique de la syntaxe.

Dans un travail récent sur *L'Étranger* de Camus¹¹, je cherche à montrer comment l'idéologie chrétienne-humaniste de l'avocat général prend une forme narrative. C'est en établissant une certaine causalité et en racontant les événements d'une certaine façon (qu'il ne met jamais en question) que l'avocat général peut condamner Meursault comme un criminel: le condamner dans le cadre d'un récit manichéen (dualiste) qui n'admet ni l'indifférence du protagoniste, ni celle du hasard naturel qui mène à l'assassinat de l'Arabe. Le roman de Camus révèle très clairement le caractère narratif (syntagmatique) de l'idéologie qui ne devrait pas être réduite à sa base sémantique (à ses oppositions fondamentales).

En même temps, le roman de Camus montre que le texte littéraire moderne devrait être lu comme une critique de l'idéologie plutôt que dans la perspective goldmannienne où il apparaît comme l'expression univoque d'une «vision du monde» particulière. Les romans de Camus, Sartre ou Robbe-Grillet n'expriment pas des idéologies monolithiques; ils articulent plutôt les contradictions sociales et historiques au niveau du langage, au niveau du récit.

Ainsi *La Nausée* de Sartre pourrait être lue comme une polémique contre l'individualisme rationaliste (celui de l'Autodidacte) et comme une confirmation esthétique de cet individualisme (de celui de Roquentin qui découvre dans l'art autonome, dans l'imaginaire, une sphère située au-delà de l'existence bourgeoise déchu). Or, l'autonomie de l'art est une «invention» bourgeoise et individualiste par excellence. Sartre lui-même a clairement reconnu ce fait dans *Les Mots* où il prend ses distances avec Roquentin et sa solution esthétique, artistique.

¹¹ Voir: *L'Indifférence romanesque. Sartre, Moravia, Camus*, Le Sycomore, 1982.

Loin d'exprimer une idéologie (ou une vision du monde) homogène, *La Nausée* témoigne donc des *contradictions* et des apories d'un individualisme rationaliste (cartésien) au niveau du récit. Le roman désavoue son propre rationalisme (celui de Sartre et de Roquentin) en montrant comment la réalité échappe au discours de l'individu (du Narrateur), comment elle résiste à ses efforts pour la *définir*, la *nommer*, la *classer* et la *raconter*.

Sans avoir l'illusion de pouvoir conclure ici le débat sur les rapports entre littérature et société, j'aimerais avancer l'hypothèse que la littérature moderne est contradictoire, qu'elle est liée à la société en articulant les contradictions de celle-ci sur le plan linguistique (sémantique et narratif) et qu'elle est irréductible à un système de signifiés univoque.

THE SUBVERSION OF THE RITUAL DISCOURSE: AN INTERTEXTUAL READING OF THE *LAZARILLO DE TORMES**

Antonio Gómez Moriana

With the hypothesis that only the existence of a discursive correlation at that time and in Spain, was able to explain the irruption in the *Lazarillo* of the autobiographical fiction which constitutes the characteristic narrative form of the picaresque discourse, and given that the communication circuit that frames this discourse, its very nature, its lexical chart and its narrative program, all point to the confessional practice (whose addressee is God, the confessor or spiritual director, or a tribunal perhaps that of the Inquisition), a few years ago, we started to look for autobiographical texts that might document the forementioned practice¹. Our hypothesis was confirmed by the discovery of three autobiographical discourses merging —this is our thesis— in the composition of the *Lazarillo* (although the manner in which the *Lazarillo* uses these discursive practices, almost rituals in Spain at the time, is totally subversive): the so-called «soliloquy» whose addressee is God (or Jesus Christ), discursive practice in which the tranksgiving prayer predominates:

* Translated from Spanish by Alice Monty-Diry.

¹ At the VIII Congress of the Canadian Association of Hispanists (McGill University, June 1972), we put forward this working hypothesis in a communication whose summary was published in the *Boletín de Filología Española*, 42-45 (1972) 54-56. The Canada Art Council subsequently gave us a grant that allowed us to consult various collections in archives and libraries, particularly the deeds of the Inquisition which are kept in the *Archivo Histórico Nacional* of Madrid.

the autobiographical confession intended for the confessor and written upon his request, in which approach to the literary text should be called *achronic* for placing the text outside the realm of time and for not taking into account other contemporary signification systems related to it. In its first stages, literary structuralism followed the same path as linguistic structuralism. The latter also started by rejecting all diachrony which it confuses with historical phonetics or the study of the evolution of sounds —phonetic rules—, in favor of phonology or synchronic study of the system in which these sounds are registered and function as basic units, or phonemes.

In the second place, it is clear that our search is also in opposition to this kind of approach to the text, characteristic of the structuralism we have called *achronic*. We think that capturing simultaneously the function of each element of a text in its new unit on the one hand, and in the unit or units in which they originally organized themselves on the other, allows —by a kind of cross-referentiality— a better understanding of the signification process. There is no question here of the satisfaction that is produced when erudition lets us discover the origin of something. It is rather a question of keeping in mind, while studying the text, the «marking» or semantic load that its components carry —as do all signs— by the mere fact of having been integrated in other systems during their cultural past. Their integration in the new system, the text we are studying —as original as the new purpose and functions assigned to them may be— will not let us ignore what might be called *usage's sanction* which weighs —as does all tradition— upon those elements, components of the text.

All signs are defined by the *selection restrictions* or *rules of grammaticality* that limit their use, opposing them at the same time to other signs of the same system. This is a convention that acts upon any writing by reducing the combinatorial possibilities of the elements that —in the paradigmatic axis— make up the available resources, the code shared by the transmitter and the receiver of that writing. Evidently, not all writing limits itself to accurately reproducing that convention. It is also evident that one cannot ignore such a convention, not even (and perhaps even less so) when it is a question of its subversive use to lead the code into delirium. It is for this reason that reading must also take into account the element's «marking» so as to be able to recognize possible mutations or even alienating violations to which the new text sometimes

submits those elements (motifs, actions, sayings, situations, etc.) taken from another text or from a textual tradition. Apart from enhancing our knowledge of the historical evolution of the phrase or element in question, taking into consideration this multiple referentiality (to its «marking» and to its new unit; to the paradigm to which it belongs and to the syntagm in which it is anchored by being part of the text) leads the way to an understanding of the text itself. It is this signifying dynamics or sense-producing process that arranges it historically more as a merger of texts put into dialogue than as only the finished product of an author. For this reason, Kristeva, following Bakhtin, speaks of the text as an «*espace dialogique*»². The element integrated into a text becomes with it, a connotative sign because of its multiple referents (in opposition to the purely denotative character of the monologue). The text itself, being capable of functioning in various isotopies, —connotated simultaneously by its polysemous components— may generate different readings, including conflicting ones. Therefore, the *comprehension* of such a text requires an *intertextual reading* that takes into consideration this cross-referentiality transforms it into a manner of junction of the roads where «allusions» join (or branch off). These allusions breach the syntagmatic linearity of the text-reading by virtually presenting, without the need of an explicit development, the stories, ideas, myths that their components bring to the mind of the reader as a result of the semantic load of their cultural past. Thus, these components function as *anaphoric elements* —not in the transphrastic sense, but in the transtextual one— and therefore transform the reference text into a *co-text* indispensable for the understanding of the text in question. If the study of the co-text uncovers in the «marking» of its cultural past the selection restrictions or *rules of grammaticality* that restrict its use, we shall then be able to evaluate the degree of faithfulness or unfaithfulness to the convention on the part of the new text, whose purpose may range from simple reproduction to distance-creating irony, to parody or to total subversion.

Let us take as an example the anecdote that is told to illustrate both the sexual ambiguity and the wit that scholarly literary criticism has attributed to Don Jacinto Benavente. It is said that, upon meeting him in a fiesta, Doña Emilia Pardo Bazán greeted him with

² Julia Kristeva, «Le mot, le dialogue et le roman», in *Séméiotikè. Recherches pour une sémanalyse* (Paris, 1969), pp. 143-173.

these words: «Your head is lovely, but sexless»^{*}; to which Don Jacinto answered: «Said the fox to the bust after sniffing at it». Let us consider for a moment the two sentences uttered by Doña Emilia and Don Jacinto in this anecdote. Both are almost replicas of passages from a text —the fable of the fox and the bust—^{**} which is not only the inspirational source but also the code shared by both speakers that renders communication between them possible. The substitution of the phoneme /ks/ in lieu of /s/ in the passage reproduced by Doña Emilia Pardo Bazán alters substantially the original text without effectively erasing its identification marks —its belonging to the fable. The new referentiality created by the communicative circuit in which Doña Emilia utters her textual sequence, on addressing Don Jacinto allocutionally also promotes an important change in the referent of the possessive adjective: it is Don Jacinto who becomes the possessor in lieu of the bust. The substitution of a phoneme and of the possessive adjective's referent, even as it reminds the listener of the fable and respects the fragmentary nature of the sequence, has the latter say something that was not registered in its former tradition. These are alienations that generate meaning and thus, what in a first reading might seem a mere «rhetorical recital» has been transformed into an ambiguous play of words, offsetting the insult. It is the ambiguity created by the alienating use of the fable's passage and Don Jacinto's immediate recognition of the co-text that afford him a brilliant exit line. Thanks to the explicitly atemporal character of the statement as it appears in the fable, Don Jacinto distorts Doña Emilia's change of referent. This is the first result of Don Jacinto's citation of the passage corresponding to the narrator's presentation: «Said the fox to the bust». However, we are very soon conscious of the ambiguity of that sentence. Although the verb «said» in itself directs attention to the atemporal enunciation of the fable, it also connotes the utterance that Doña Emilia has just made, so that «fox» and «bust» are understood as interchangeable with «Doña Emilia» and «Don Jacinto».

The short analysis we have made of the anecdote must be completed by considering its function when it is told today. One has to suppose that the listener knows the fable recalled by the text as a co-text. One also has to suppose that the listener knows of

* In Spanish: «Tu cabeza es hermosa, pero sin sexo».

** La Fontaine, *Le renard et le buste*. «belle tête, dit-il, mais de cervelle, point».

Don Jacinto Benavente's sexual inclination as presented by scholarly literary criticism, which explains in this way the sensitiveness to the feminine soul that is deemed present in Benavente's dramatic work. The anecdote is therefore a transtextual anaphora, a text which is only understandable by means of a transtextual recourse to the fable of the fox and the bust and to the scholarly criticism of Benavente's work. These co-texts are acting components of the anecdote's text by virtue of the cross-referentiality we mentioned earlier, itself formed by the presupposed information without which communication would remain blocked by the absence of a code shared by the narrating transmitter and the listening receiver.

In the *Lazarillo*, we encounter this type of ambiguity in the alienating use of an intertextual referent. Thus, for example, when Lázaro says (in the first tractado) of his father that he «confessed and did not deny», the same two verbs with which the Gospel describes Jesus' attitude upon being interrogated by the High Priest on his messianic calling, are used to refer to «certain awkward slashes in the sacks» (that is to say, larceny) of which the miller of Tormes was accused. The text immediately adds yet another citation taken from the Scriptures (as if the first one were not sufficiently suggestive): «and he suffered persecution *por justicia*». With this reminder of the Sermon on the Mount, Lázaro comes to the conclusion that his father must be in heaven, the co-text explicitly declaring: «for the Gospel calls them blessed» (those who suffer that particular persecution). Nonetheless, the sentence is ambiguous. «Justice», in the interpretation of the Beatitudes sanctioned by catechisms, is a cardinal virtue. In the text of the *Lazarillo*, on the contrary, this sentence —by appearing in the sequence of events as the subsequent step and logical conclusion of admitting larceny— means that this father was juridically condemned (precisely for acts contrary to the virtue of justice). It is the preposition «por»^{*} with its double function of passive phrase formant and final cause indicator, joined with the polysemy of the word «justice», that allows the ambiguity of the sentence whose meaning will be clarified later by Lázaro when he describes in the last tractado, his profession of town-crier. This profession consists in, amongst other things, «escorting those who suffer persecution for/by justice and calling out their offences».

* In Spanish, *por* means «for» and «by».

At other times, Lázaro uses lexical items or set phrases, sanctioned by use as belonging to the spiritual lexicon (ascetic and mystic), to express his most elemental material needs. Let us take as an example, a passage from the second tractado.

In the middle of the stratagems that, being in the service of the cleric from Maquedo, Lázaro has to resort to in order to penetrate the bread chest, he tells of the comfort he experiences by looking at it when hunger gnaws at him most, with borrowings from the spiritual literature:

I, to comfort myself, open the chest and as I saw the bread, commenced to adore it, not daring to receive it.²

To interpret this example, we now have to pass from the paradigmatic axis —the selection axis— to the syntagmatic axis —the combination axis—, in order to clarify a new dimension in our study of texts which we shall call *interdiscursivity*.

Up until now, we have been able to see how, in a textual analysis, we may single out elements that one text borrows from others, by insisting on the mechanism for the production of meaning of those elements which are in a dialectic tension between their original «marking» and their function in the new phrase that incorporates them. By generalizing, we think we may declare that *all texts* are constructed as a kind of mosaic where very disparate elements taken from the cultural legacy of a social group or cultural community, are organized. Evidently, each new writing submits these elements to a new purpose but it cannot ignore their origin. We will give this phenomena the name of *borrowing*, using the terminology commonly accepted in historical linguistic and in the study of interlinguistic contacts. To distinguish it from the *lexical borrowing* of one language from another, object of linguistic studies, we shall add the qualifier *textual*. With this term, we indicate at the same time, the nature of the interchange —the intertextuality— and the object of the change, the unit which is called *text* because it is a whole unto itself. This unit, however, can consist of a lexeme or a set phrase; a sentence or group of sentences; a situation or motif more or less elaborated or subtly recalled by simple allusion. We call *intertextual reading* the identification of

the *textual borrowing* in the new unit or text that assimilates it, the study of the possible interferences of the semantic load or «marking» of its cultural past in the new function, as well as the mutations, including violations of said borrowing that the adoption of the new function may bring forth in the new unit.

In addition to incorporating elements of the surrounding cultural patrimony, a text will use the combinatorial rules or discursive practices in force in the cultural community in which it is produced. Only in this manner can it be elaborated and accepted as such by the addressee that all textual production presupposes. Evidently, *interdiscursivity* does not consist only in obeying the discursive rules of a given model. Along with the realization of the model, we find its modification and transgression, its mixing with other models, its alienation and parody, its total subversion. We only wish to note its presence, whether in the form of the most slavish copy or in the form of the most radical dialectic opposition. Indeed, even when it is a matter of the code of a specific discursive practice being led into delirium by the subversion of such a practice —as we believe is the case in the *Lazarillo*—, the object of the parodical manipulation, or of the subversive counter-manipulation, is to be found in the laws or precepts that define that discursive code: it is the exaggerated faithfulness to such precepts or their de-motivation that ridicule a discursive practice, just as the de-construction or the transcodification of the practice consists in a disarticulation of those precepts which will then serve as the basis for the formation of a new type of discourse.

The *intertextual reading* must also put in evidence the reality of the intersecting of codes or discursive practices in a text, its *interdiscursivity*, by means of the identification of what we shall call *discursive calque*, completing the analogy to *textual borrowing*. We also take the term *calque* from interlinguistics which speaks of the *semantic calque* to indicate the type of lexical construction that one language adopts from another by translating its components. The Spanish words *balonpié* or *baloncesto* are semantic calques of the corresponding English words *football* and *basketball* respectively. By analogy, we call *discursive calque* the adoption by a text of one or various forms of discourse in the strategic ordering of its components.

Let us return to the quotation from the second tractado of the *Lazarillo* which we have promised to clarify above:

² p. 29 in: The pleasant history of Lazarillo de Tormes. Drawn out of Spanish by David Rouland of Anglesey, 1586. (Repr.: Oxford, Blackwell, 1924). From now on, we will quote from this edition, indicating between parenthesis the page of this text.

I, to comfort myself, open the chest, and as I saw the bread, commenced to adore it, not daring to receive it.

To find comfort through adoration when, for considering one's self unworthy—whether due to a disposition to scrupulousness or to the fact of being in a state of sin—one does not dare receive the Eucharist, is one of the recommendations very frequently found in Counter-Reform spiritual treatises. What is at stake here is putting in evidence the multiple effects of the *true, real and substantial* presence of Christ in the Eucharistic species and the legitimacy of adoring the reserve of Eucharistic bread kept in the tabernacle, two practices challenged by the Protestant Reform. Thus we identify the text as a borrowing from ascetic and mystic literature.

However, the *Lazarillo's* use of this textual borrowing goes much further than merely quoting or appropriating lexical elements. By using the first person, Lazaro incorporates these verbs into a personal experience which he describes, adopting the code pertaining to the discursive practice of the confession. The *discursive calque* reinforces so much the lexical «marking» of the Eucharistic spirituality with the words *chest* and *bread* in relation with *open, adore, receive*, all framed by the verb *comfort*—with its counterpoint—*not dare receive*, that, on taking the text out of its real context, we forget the sequence of events in which it appears in the *Lazarillo*: after having noticed the disappearance of some bread rolls from his chest, to which Lázaro has obtained a key, the cleric from Maqueda counts them and takes good note of his reserves; Lázaro, famished, has no other recourse but to open the chest and comfort himself by looking at the bread; he does not dare eat it for fear his master will notice the shortage. The text's ambiguity is perfect as both isotopies can organize all their component elements. But the opposition between both readings is such that one cannot understand the use of the discursive practice of confession as anything but a rupture of the syntagmatic linearity in which the events are ordered chronologically, thus highlighting the discourse itself rather than the events that are narrated. In view of this highlighting by the *discursive calque*, if we reread the tractado in its entirety, we will discover in it the merging of a series of indicators. The tractado becomes a discursive transposition converting the festive and jovial tone of the narrative of the folkloric anecdotes of the Lázaro-blindman pair (object of the first tractado) into a

kind a mystic delirium in which the hunger-related stratagems are arranged into a confessional discourse giving testimony to a series of inner incidents, spiritual states and crisis, in relation to which the external events appear to be placed on a double level: providential and ill-fated.

At such times I found ease in nothing but in death... And being in such affliction (God of his grace deliver every faithful Christian from the like) not knowing how to counsell my selfe, my misery dayly increasing, upon a day... there arived by chance to the dore a tinker, which I believe was an Angel disguised, sente from God... (by divine inspiration) I saide unto him... the heavenly tinker began to assay, nowe one key, now another, of his great bunch, and I helped him with my prayers, so that immediately before I was aware, he opened it: whereof I was so gladd, that mee thought I did see in figure, (as they say) the face of God, when I beheld the bread within it... Incontinently after, who commeth in, but my unhappy master, and as God would, he never tooke heed of the loafe, which the heavenly tinker had borrowed. The next day after, as soone as he went abroad, I began to open my paradise of bread, and what betwene my hands and teeth, with the twinkling of an eye I made a loafe invisible, forgetting in no wise to lock the chest againe: then I began cheerefully to sweepe the house, judging that by such remedy I might ease my sorowfull life. So I passed that day and the nexte... But my contrary Fortune went aboute to hinder mee to enjoye suche pleasure long... (p. 28-29)

Here we have seen some of the indicators preparing the text we comment. After this text, we also read:

I was almost dead... wherefore being along, I did nothing but open and locke againe the coffer, beholding alwayes the bread as God. And God himself which succoureth those that are afflicted, seeing me in such necessitie, brought a little remedie to my memorie... (p. 29)

The well-known «little remedy»—to feign that mice are entering the chest and gnawing at the bread—lasts very little, given the cleric's diligence in blocking all entry to the presumed mice. In view of such diligence, Lázaro exclaims:

Lord God, unto howe many perils and calamities of Fortune are humaine creatures subject? how short a time doe the pleasures of our troublesome life last? lo where I am now, whiche trusted

by this my poore remedie, to ease my miserie, being in beste hope of good adventure, my evill lucke would not consent, but opened the sighte of my covetous maisters understanding, causing him to have more subtile wit than he had given him by nature, although such wretches are commonly subtile enough. When he had dummed up the holes, I thought his chest shoulde bee shutte to my comforte, and opened to my paine (p. 30-31).

Lázaro will try one more to maintain the illusion of mice penetrating into the chest by perforating the chest himself, using a knife as a tool. Lázaro's commentary on the opening of the «wound on the side» wavers between the erotic insinuation—as does the entire motif of the mice—and the conjuring-up of Christ's Passion whose recollection is brought about precisely by the (symbolic) meaning of «breaking the bread» in the Eucharistic celebration:

I gave the assault with my rustie knife, which served my tourne wel for a wimble: but the chest by reason of good yeeres, beeing weake, without strength, very softe and tender, did straight wayes render and consent that I should make for my commoditie a good hole in the side of it, and that done, opening the wounded chest, and knowing everye loafe severally by the touch, I did as I had done before, and by that meanes beeing somewhat comforted, having locked the chest againe, I returned to my pallet, whereupon I slept little (p. 31-32).

In the majority of cases, the intertextual reading reveals a correspondance between the conveyed elements and the type of discourse which conveys them. The textual borrowing and the discursive calque usually go hand in hand in a coherent complementarity. But it is not always so. The subversion of one or the other (or both at the same time) can rest precisely on the non-conformity between the text's two levels. It is this non-conformity, for example, that makes Fray Gerundio's sermons grotesque, as there is no correspondance between the ritual discursive practice of predication and the information given in said predication. If, in the example we have taken from the *Lazarillo*, the series of indicators brought forth as signs upholding the spiritual tone in Lázaro's confessional discourse might give the impression of perfect coherency, it will suffice to bring forth now the series of allusions to very mundane things intermingling in the text with borrowings from the spiritual lexicon in order to realize that they serve as counterpoints and create a double tension in the text: on one hand between the components

themselves, and on the other, between these components and the discourse which assumes them. It is a matter, then, of filling in the suspension points with which we cut the quoted text. This reveals that the «death» in which Lázaro finds respite is none other than the death of his neighbours in the village (death that Lázaro beseeches of God, turning himself into an «enemy of human nature» because, «in the mortuary house, we ate well and I had my fill»); the contemplation of the bread consoles Lázaro of the «past diet» which had made hunger start to gnaw at his stomach. We have already seen, in the mice's skirmishes, the tension produced by the play between the erotic and the sacred. All these tensions, forging a kind of «*contradictio in terminis*», undermine the sacred nature of the textual borrowings from the spiritual lexicon and completely alienate the discursive calque, showing thus, an ungrammatical (ab)use of it.

Edmond Cros has dedicated an interesting chapter in his book, *L'aristocrate et le carnaval des gueux. Etude sur le «Buscón» de Quevedo*, to what he calls «le discours usurpé»⁴. Basing himself on Bakhtin's study of Rabelais⁵, Cros distinguishes two discourses in the *Buscón* («discours qui masque» and «[discours] qui démasque») laying with this distinction, the foundations of the basic thesis of his work: the *Buscón* consists of two texts which «dans certains cas se juxtaposent et, dans d'autres, se recourent». As a first example of the superposition of the two texts, Cros singles out the parodical glosses introduced by copulative conjunctions, whose function is to explicit the preceding proposition's polysemy: «In my youth, I always went to church, and not only as a good christian»—says Pablos of himself; «They say he was from good stock and from the amount he drank, it had to be true»—says Pablos of his father. In his commentary on those texts, Cros takes the viewpoint of Francisco Rico who considers the glosses psychologically implausible because he thinks that the statement made in the second element of these sentences could not have originated precisely with one who tries to deny his blood ties. Rico compares Pablos' «jokes» with Lázaro's «subtilities» in these terms:

Lázaro would have simply insinuated: «they say he was of good stock». But Pablos does not appreciate the kind of subtility which

⁴ Montpellier, 1975, chapter IV, pp. 63-73.

⁵ *La obra de Rabelais y la cultura popular de la Edad Media y del Renacimiento* (Moscow, 1965).

makes the *Lazarillo* a masterpiece of ironic truth: he cannot abide that the least thing escape us and he hurries to gloss the joke with an addition that makes it transparent, even at the cost of rubbing out all plausibility from his stated intention of «denying his blood ties». This happens to him as writer and as personage. A crying example. When, dressed as the King of Roosters with a feathered hat, the stallholders and the youngsters assail him with «carobs, turnips, eggplants and other vegetables», as would have happened to a publicly shamed sorceress, Pablos starts yelling: «Sisters, although I wear feathers, I am not Aldonza de San Pedro, my mother». Absurd. More or less amusing, but incredible. Nobody would say such a thing under such circumstances, and Pablos, least of all. Here, one hears but his master's voice⁶.

By «master's voice», Rico means the voice of the author, Francisco de Quevedo, as he says explicitly some lines after the quoted passage, repeating once more that these words coming «from the *Buscón*'s mouth are impossible».

Basing himself on Rico's observations, Cros exposes the nerve center or «center of gravity» (as he calls it) of the *Buscón* by bringing to the fore the fact that all the superpositions in both texts function around lexicalized expressions (*to go to church, to be of good stock*) that on a first reading denote social values, as are piety and nobility, but on being integrated into the textual flow, «dans le réseau sémantique allusif du second texte», each one of these set phrases or lexicalised expressions «éclate et se délexicalise».

What Rico criticizes then, in the *Buscón*'s text, is, —using the terminology we propose— the fact that the sentences coordinated with, and following the textual borrowings, bring about the destruction of the borrowing's marking in its traditional and popular usage, cultural repertory from which they have been taken. According to Rico, an attentive reader would be capable of inferring such a destruction by himself. In replying to Rico, Cros refers to the problem's discursive dimension, establishing the discourse as the object of that characteristic de-mystification to which the carnivalesque system operating in the *Buscón* must be submitted:

⁶ Francisco Rico, *La novela picaresca y el punto de vista* (Barcelona, 1970), p. 127.

Mais en réalité l'expression lexicalisée est elle-même conçue comme élément d'un discours mystificateur dont la dénonciation doit être explicite⁷.

As for us, we shall have to add that we do not agree with what Rico says of the *Lazarillo*. We have already seen how the *Lazarillo* creates explicitly and in the same lexical flow, the neutralization of borrowed elements by means of a contextual alienation that denounces at the same time the disproportion between the text's components and the discourse that conveys them. We also think we should point out that Rico's reading seems to be a typical example of the superficial reading of a literary work's ideological dimension. He looks at social elements that surface materially in the text —the purity of caste in the *Buscón*, the case of dishonour in the *Lazarillo*— to which he applies a criterion of plausibility that is not necessarily the speaker's but our own, in the monologism that Bakhtin so rightly describes, opposing it to the dialogism, specific to the polyphonic novel⁸. Rico does not take notice of the discursive calque, of the actualization or possible denunciation of the very discourse that is used. As Michel Foucault noted in his inaugural class in the *Collège de France*⁹, apart from being the medium which discloses (or hides) the desire for power as well as being the exponent of the struggle for, or system of, dominance; the discourse is precisely the very object of the wish for, and the practice of power. This is why we consider, for our part, much more important than the anecdotes (outlines of customs, representation of the social strata by the characters, etc.) that surface in any work of art, the discourse itself that is used and its «marking», as well as the degree of submission or subversion to which it is subjected by the text, object of study. As we saw, not only the textual elements that a text borrows have a marking. The discourse that is used also has its own. This marking consists of the ideology that upholds the discursive practice as it imposes restrictions that regulate its use. This is a sociocultural variable that must absolutely be taken into account when interpreting a discursive calque.

Foucault states: Dans toute société la production du discours est à la fois contrôlée, sélectionnée, organisée et redistribuée par un certain nombre de procédures qui ont pour rôle d'en conjurer

⁷ Edmond Cros, op. cit., pp. 65-66.

⁸ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problemas de la poética de Dostojevski* (Moscow, 1953).

⁹ Michael Foucault, *L'ordre du discours* (Paris, 1966), pp. 72-73.

les pouvoirs et les dangers, d'en maîtriser l'événement aléatoire, d'en esquisser la lourde, la redoutable matérialité». With these words, Foucault resumes in the work we have already mentioned, the discursive-social relationship, a question we will examine briefly to facilitate a better comprehension of what we understand by «subversion of the ritual discourse». The control that any society exercises over the discursive production within itself —whatever type of discourse it may be— can be studied in a double dimension:

I. Society dictates precepts —an apparently positive aspect— which, in reality, are restrictions on usage, in that they specify each discourse's legitimate subject, object and circumstances. Foucault speaks for this reason of a triple prohibition or exclusion and mentions the «taboo of the object», the «ritual of circumstances» and the «privileged or exclusive right of the subject» as external boundaries of the discourse.

II. Society, in the name of what Foucault calls the «wish for truth» rejects the «false» discourse, creating the internal boundary or operating law of each type of discourse.

Within these two coordinates, in which each component functions as a variable dependent of the «épistème» in force, as Foucault states in *Les mots et les choses*¹⁰, the changing criteria of verisimilitude in the occidental literary discourse (in its many forms) are explained by laws specific to each literary genre and according to the «illusion of truth» with which its addressee (the public or the reader) goes along. The scientific discourse also has its laws with the result that in it, it is more a question of «being true» to the science than of telling the truth. Even the economic and juridical discourses, by imposing norms, try to legitimize their procedures (the first with a wealth and production theory, the second with a theory of law and of sociological and medical sciences) as «criteria of truth». The rhetorical precepts, the «decorum» or observation of poetic value and censorship, the justification of the speaking subject and his relation to the object of his utterance and to the circumstances of its enunciation, of the act of communication itself, all these follow a kind of *ritual* that distinguishes the truthful discourse from the false one in all societies.

If we consider all these restrictions that society imposes regarding the use of a specific type of discourse as criteria of its suitability, the *grammaticality* or *ungrammaticality* of the discourse will

¹⁰ (Paris, 1966).

be the consequence of the concurrence or the non-concurrence in a specific discourse and in given contextual circumstances, of the conditions imposed by the society in which it is registered. This is what we will call the *discursive norm*. In the light of this norm, we shall have to interpret the use or (ab)use that the discursive calque in question makes of the chosen discursive model.

It is evident that when we speak here of the adoption by a text of operating discursive models —and although the theory we are trying to elaborate has as its primary objective the understanding of the literary text's functioning— we are not referring necessarily to models condoned by rhetoric, or to literary genres. On the contrary, we can observe that all literary texts use and abuse discursive models taken from the natural, colloquial, scientific or technical language by having both the basic speaker and other characters produce theological, judicial, economic or administrative, etc. discourses. More still, we believe that the genetic explanation of all literary genres —if we study in depth their linguistic roots will perforce be found in the expansion potential virtually inherent in the communication structures or units that are syntactically simpler and that belong to the everyday expressions of the natural language. Thus, the transformation made possible by what Greimas calls the «principe de l'expansion sémantique»¹¹ must account for the formation of more complex structures from simpler communication structures. Aristotles had already inferred the major literary genres (Epos and Drama) from the inclusion of new episodes in the narrative scheme of a simple story or anecdote, distinguishing the epic procedure from the dramatic one according to whether the different stories integrated themselves or not in a unique common axis.

In the study of the subsequent evolution of an already established literary genre, one also has to keep in mind the boundaries drawn by the precepts that define it on one hand, without forgetting on the other, the potential for expansion inherent in the dynamic structure of the genre in evolution, along with its power to generate an infinite number of combinatorial possibilities from these precepts while taking into account the restrictions they impose.

Following what we have said, an adequate explanation of the literary genre's genesis, as well as an authentically historical and literary explanation of its subsequent evolution, require a profound reformulation of the precepts and their interpretation as transform-

¹¹ A.J. Greimas, *Sémantique structurale* (Paris, 1966), pp. 72-73.

ation rules that define and condition the generating mechanism of the text. The text's acceptability of grammaticality, as we have said, will depend on the correct use of the rules and on respecting the selection restrictions of the integrated elements. Its ungrammaticality, on the contrary, will point to the subversion of the rules or transgression of the selection restrictions that characterize the text's components. This ungrammaticality, far from meaning the rejection of the result arrived at, can, on the contrary, become a sign of ideological subversion or rebellion against conditions imposed by the society in which this phenomena is produced. Perhaps this might be one of the characteristics of literary form or of the specificity of literary discourse as opposed to the discourse of everyday communication. It is in this context that we think we should interpret the «originalidad artística» that María Rosa Lida de Malkiel would discover in the *Celestina*. The *Celestina*'s rupture with the noble tradition, by raising to the level of poetic object ruffians and whores integrated into the text and treated with the depth and seriousness that the poetic norm usually reserved for noble heroes and their «lofty deeds» (Aristotle's expression in his *Poetics*), is like a *creative ungrammaticality* which opens new vistas to literary expression by breaking the taboos we described some pages ago, following Michel Foucault.

Our interpretation of the *Lazarillo* also follows that line, although it encompasses at the same time the poetic object, the narrator-subject himself and, especially, the «ritual of circumstances» and the «wish for truth» of its autobiographical confessional discourse. It is this we call «subversion of the ritual discourse».

Before attempting the detailed study of each of the circumstances of the *discursive calque*'s «ungrammaticality» as it appears in the *Lazarillo*, we still have to explain the method of reading the interaction we have already pointed out between the discursive practice and the *ideology* or socio-cultural variable that sustains said practice and dictates the norms of its use. The Russian formalists had already seen in the analysis of the literary work as an immanent system, only a point of departure for the detailed study of such work. Their study had to take into account, apart from the internal system of the functioning and interrelation of the work's components, the relation of these components to the work in its entirety and the relation of the work to the national literature, to the genre and to the global system with which any genre is correlated. Just as the fact of isolating one element while analyzing the

work —necessarily brought about by the inequality of the components— is nothing more than a working procedure, as, in reality, one has to look for the meaning of each element in its relationship with other constituents; so the fact of isolating a work, while studying its components, is nothing more than the first step towards the subsequent understanding of its relationship with other systems including other series of systems of signification. Only in this way will we understand it as a «differential sign», as Tynjanov defines it¹². On the basis of this reality, Julia Kristeva proposes the substitution of the old classic rhetoric's classification of literary genres by a «typologie des textes». By this typology, Kristeva means the definition of the specificity of the different textual organizations which places them in the culture's general text, of which they are part and which, in its turn, is part of them. This mutual relation between text and historic-social coordinates, that intertextuality should uncover «matérialisé aux différents niveaux de la structure de chaque texte», is called «idéologème» by Kristeva. She takes the term from the Russian postformalist critic, Medvedev and defines it as:

le foyer dans lequel la rationalité connaissante saisit la transformation des énoncés (auxquels le texte est irréductible) en un tout (le texte), de même que les insertions de cette totalité dans le texte historique et social¹³.

We think we are able to read this convergence in the different modalities of what we have called the *discursive calque*, level at which we would situate the text's ideologème. This is because we consider the discursive level as the privileged setting in which the text's laws (any law is the expression of an ideology) converge with the symbols which every society gives itself (visualization of the ideology itself). The *discursive calque* is always a «reading» of these laws and symbols which it reproduces, by more or less consciously paying a tribute to the ideology, or opposes, by rejecting it. It is for this reason that all societies take such care in controlling the discursive production, as we have seen with Foucault. It is also for

¹² J. Tynjanov, *Sobre la evolución literaria* (Leningrad, 1929), French translation in *Théorie de la littérature. Textes des formalistes russes réunis, présentés et traduits par Tzvetan Todorov* (Paris, 1965). See also Tzvetan Todorov, «L'héritage méthodologique du Formalisme», in *Poétique de la prose* (Paris, 1971), pp. 9-31.

¹³ Julia Kristeva, *Le texte du roman. Approche sémiologique d'une structure discursive transformationnelle* (The Hague, 1970).

this reason that all social subversion starts with questioning the laws and the symbols of its discursive practices. Because, insofar as the most elemental structure of human communication takes shape by finding its expression in the discourse—necessary step of any deep structure which only manifests itself through the superficial textual or prosal structure—it is already implicated in a concrete social and cultural reality. This dimension of the discursive production has not always been kept in mind by the generative school. Nevertheless, to us, its importance appears to be decisive, not only for literary production but for all discursive uses. Here we have the root of the concern shown by those generativists who, trying to cope with the socio-cultural reality when defining linguistic competence, have formed the concept of «communicative competence» or «pragmatics». This is the generative grammar's component which, by taking into account psycho-linguistic and socio-linguistic aspects of the relationship between competence and performance—and beyond the rules of grammaticality dictated by syntax, morphophonology and semantics—, proposes to account for those underlying systems in the *use and acceptance of pertinent elements and discursive practices at the right time and in the appropriate situation*¹⁴. By taking into account this component—transferring the generative grammar's phrasal terminology to the textual production—, we have insisted on the socio-cultural variable which determines the selection restrictions or discursive markings in what we have called the *discursive norm*. Trying to go a step further in this direction, we have presumed to include those components essential in all discourses into the *grammaticality* of the latter. Indeed, the grammaticality of the discourse cannot be systematized by using only the linguistic categories mentioned above: the pertinence of a discourse depends in any society primarily and essentially on the «ritual of circumstances» in which it is produced, that is, on its appropriateness to the given time and situation.

Any application of the generative grammar will thus have to bear in mind the various socio-cultural situations liable to explain the appearance of certain particular types of discourses at a given time, their success, disappearance or reappearance at a certain moment; and also, the circumstances of their modification by way of reduction or elimination of elements that formed them previ-

¹⁴ We are referring above all to Bielefeld's school in Germany and to the pragmatists in general.

ously, by way of expansion or insertion of new elements, by way of substitution or permutation of others.

As an example of a practical and global application of the principles we are expounding, let us look at the inclusion in the *Lazarillo* of the folkloric motif of the blindman-youth pair. By being integrated into a syntagmatic axis—the narration of Lázaro de Tormes' life of which «they are part»—those elements from the folkloric tradition become purely functional entities, syntactic elements with no other meaning but their relation to the development and finality of the story in its entirety. They have become the arbitrary props of a «function», defined by Propp as:

l'action d'un personnage définie du point de vue de sa signification dans le déroulement de l'intrigue¹⁵.

The perception as such of the inserted motif nevertheless forces upon us an intertextual reading that, by identifying the motif, accounts for its different uses and meanings, for the tradition to which it belongs on the diachronic axis and for the cultural marking or «myth» that the pair bring to mind. The new appearance of the theme will not only enrich or sustain its tradition of signifiés just as recognizing it in the *Lazarillo* will not only give us scholarly data on those elements that form part of it. By bearing in mind in our reading the double referentiality mentioned above, we cannot but perceive a dialectic tension between both poles.

As Edmond Cros has demonstrated in his paper «Le folklore dans le *Lazarillo* de Tormes: nouvel examen. Problèmes méthodologiques»¹⁶, a comparison between the medieval farces and illustrations in the *Decretales* of the youth-blindman pair, which Foulché Delbosc discovered at the end of the last century, and the same couple in the *Lazarillo*, makes obvious the evolution of christianity's view of poverty, of begging and of giving alms through the intervening centuries. If the medieval church, by exalting the scorn for worldly goods, makes of the poor a living image of Christ, and of poverty, the highest of virtues; at the beginning of the XVIth century, the poor appears—above all for Protestantism—on par with the fool and the demoniac. To give alms is not to give succor to God anymore, but to feed the devil. Cros explains this evolution, which makes of poverty a social malady instead of a virtue, by the

¹⁵ V. Propp, *Morphologie du conte*, French translation (Paris, 1970), p. 31.

¹⁶ In *Picaresque européenne. Actes* (Montpellier, 1976), pp. 9-24.

appearance of new social and economic structures. Above all, the need to procure and abundant labor pool for the pre-capitalistic type of production, together with the wish to do in vagrancy, is what determines the change in attitude towards the poor, including the underprivileged. Vives states in his treatise:

Ni aún se ha de consentir que los ciegos estén o anden ociosos; son muchas las faenas en que pueden ejercitarse.¹⁷

With this change in perspective, Cros explains the appearance of the blindman in the *Lazarillo* as a diabolic character and Lázaro's passage from a state of innocence to knowing «a bit more than the devil» (as he demonstrates when he takes leave of the blindman with a final blow to the head). Indeed, the blindman-Lázaro interrelation is presented in the text by means of a whole range of diabolical connotations, as observes Cros. It is above all the escalating duel, that opposes both characters throughout all of the first chapter or tractado, which constitutes, in Cros' words, «un duel de personnages diaboliques, comme l'indique explicitement la convergence des expressions qui servent à qualifier les agressions respectives des deux antagonistes»¹⁸.

If the change of social, economic and religious perspective explains the insertion of the motif into a determined tradition and the time-frame of this tradition which the *Lazarillo* echoes, passing now to the discursive level will enable us to deepen our understanding of the function that those borrowings taken from the folkloric tradition play in the development of the *Lazarillo* story, by being part of the life experiences narrated by Lázaro.

We will also better understand the tension created between the type of discourse selected to narrate these experiences and the changing signifié of the folkloric short stories; that is, between the discursive calque and the textual borrowing that constitute the text we are dealing with.

If there is a point on which modern criticism of the *Lazarillo* is in complete agreement, it is in considering this work as an *autobiographical fiction*, acknowledging in its unknown author —beyond the reservations voiced by critics such as Camille Pitollot, Marcel

Bataillon, Valbuena Prat and others—¹⁹ what Francisco Rico calls:

the gift to gather together intemporal themes and pretenses, valid in any circumstance, in a construction so skillfully situated in time and in space, that they gave the impression of being indissolubly linked to it.²⁰

Such are —in Rico's words— the «subtlety and cleverness with which the *Lazarillo* reelaborates extraneous motifs» which «have become ... the narrative's flesh and blood, integrated into a living organism whose members are mutually implicated, and where setting aside any one of them would lead to a disastrous mutilation». Rico explains in this way the critics' delay in acknowledging the independence of the folkloric motifs borrowed by the *Lazarillo*. And from this, Rico infers, as had before Américo Castro, Claudio Guillén and Lázaro Carreter²¹ what he calls the *Lazarillo de Tormes* 'singular transcendence in the history of the modern novel' which consists precisely in:

the art of selecting and conjoining pieces of various origins, in order to give them a cohesion and meaning in the dependency of the central figure brilliantly depicted and —above all— individualized.²²

Can there be more perfect harmony? From entertaining serious doubts about the integrity of the text that has reached us, critics have come to recognize the *Lazarillo*'s exemplary architecture. Let us return for a moment to Cros' thesis on the evolution of the blindman's signifié which converts him into a diabolic personage. The change in the economic, social and religious opinion, brought about during the *Lazarillo*'s composition, allows per se, its inclusion

¹⁹ On the problem of the composition or lack of it in the *Lazarillo* and on the different opinions on the subject, see Oldrich Belic «Los principios de composición en la novela picaresca» in *Análisis estructural de textos hispanos* (Madrid, 1969), pp. 19-60.

²⁰ Prologue to the Biblioteca Básica Salvat's edition of the *Lazarillo de Tormes*, p. 13. Our translation.

²¹ Américo Castro, «Perspectiva de la novela picaresca», 1935, article incorporated in *Hacia Cervantes*, and prologue to Hesse and Williams' edition of the *Lazarillo* (1948), also incorporated in *Hacia Cervantes*; Claudio Guillén, «La disposición temporal del *Lazarillo de Tormes*» in *Hispanic Review*, XXV (1957), pp. 264-279; Fernando Lázaro Carreter, various articles incorporated in his book «*Lazarillo de Tormes* en la picaresca» (Barcelona, 1972).

²² Francisco Rico, *Lazarillo de Tormes*, p. 13. Our translation.

¹⁷ Quoted by E. Cros, p. 21 from the edition of *Obras completas* of Vives (Madrid, 1947), I, p. 1.395.

¹⁸ E. Cros, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

in an autobiography that wishes to give an account of the school in which its narrator —naïf-rusé— «made his way in life». Counter to Baader's scruples²³ about the narration's ethical contents which, according to him, require the use of the first person because an external observer would have to condemn such infamies, this new social attitude permits Lázaro's treatment of the blindman and removes much of the cruelty from the final vengeance: the victim of the vengeance is, in the last analysis, the devil himself. Acceptance of the ideology on the part of the *Lazarillo*?

We are in the presence of a double-edged blade. If we maintain that the *Lazarillo* really accepts the ideology of the diabolic character of poverty, which would ethically justify Lázaro's attitude towards the blindman, when the time comes to solve the problem of his ethical verisimilitude, we shall come to realize that Lázaro, being a beggar also, could not be an esthetic object according to that ideology. This is where Américo Castro found the explanation for the use of the autobiographical discourse. But this solution complicates the problem even more, as, along with the object, we would also have to justify the speaking subject himself. Lázaro Carrerter would perhaps answer that Vuestra Merced's making Lázaro the butt of a joke by asking him an account of his case, is precisely the explanation of why this poor devil speaks out or puts pen to paper. But such a clever device is not without its problems. From our study of the deeds kept in the *Archivo Histórico Nacional* of Madrid, we believe we can state that, demanding of one who stands of the fringe of society —by means of monitions— an account of his life and thus wringing from him a confession, occurred frequently enough in the Spain in which the *Lazarillo* was produced, but was much too serious a matter by reason of its ritual character, given the «circumstances» in which it happened —in the juridical and religious confines of the Inquisition— to be the object of a simple joke.

Therefore, the only possibility of fulfilling the three requirements of the type of discourse which is the object of the calque in the *Lazarillo*, would be to map it on the true biographical act of confession. The subject who speaks —unacceptably within the frame of a literary autobiography of that era, because not fulfilling the requirements of *decorum* then in force— would be justified

²³ Horst Baader, «Noch einmal zur Ich-Form im *Lazarillo de Tormes*», in *Romanische Forschungen*, 76 (1964), pp. 437-443.

by the judge who interrogates him. In the same manner, the object, not very edifying from an ethical stand-point and excessively non-heroic in terms of the epic norm inherited by the Spanish Renaissance novel —thus an unethical and non-rhetorical object— would be justified by becoming the object of a confession. In this hypothesis, the ritual of circumstances amply justifies both the subject of the enunciation and the enunciated object of Lázaro's confessional discourse. It is here precisely that the folkloric anecdotes appear, within the frame of our hypothesis, with a completely new signifié, as evidence of the *non-veracity* of a ritual discourse —the confession— whose major quality has to be its truthfulness before God and man. Any biographical discourse would be revealed as spurious —as fiction— by the mere fact of including the narration of folkloric, that is to say, well-known anecdotes which irremediably destroy the individual, unique and non-repeatable character, specific to, and defining the type of experiences which are the object of the autobiographical narrative. Fiction here simply means «literature», and the autobiographical fiction enjoys citizenship status in European Renaissance literature. Except that, as we have already shown, neither the subject nor the object conform to the norms of such a fiction. Furthermore, if we add the fact that we are dealing with an autobiography of a confessional nature —and we believe that the passages taken from the second tractado of the *Lazarillo* and commented rather extensively as examples of what we call interdiscursivity, are eloquent enough as evidence in that sense—, the folkloric anecdotes are not a sign of the autobiographical discourse's alienation in the sense of calling it fictitious or literary, but are rather a radical subversion of the autobiographical confession as a discursive practice.

If we consider, then, the *Lazarillo* as a «reading» (for being a discursive calque) of the ritual discursive practice that was the autobiographical confession spoken before (or written for) the Inquisition tribunal, given all the contradictions and problems of *ungrammaticality* this calque presents, we cannot but maintain that such a «reading» consists precisely in the *disarticulation of its autobiographical value*, of its truthfulness, by means of a subversive use that makes conspicuous the non-authenticity of such ritual discursive practices, and perhaps, the very value of all biographies. Intimate discourse confidentially intended for a single person, but whose coming to the «attention of many» is not feared; furthermore, with hopes of being rewarded by being read and praised

because «if it were not so, very few would write for one only» as «it is not done without trouble...». In a word, ambiguity of the addressee underlined by the ambiguity of the instituting subject. Even the name of Lázaro is, by itself, the condensation of a complete narrative program, not only because in the Gospels, it embodies the poverty of the beggar at the door of the wealthy Epulon, but also because of the artistic tradition that echoes this motif and that has its linguistic correlation in the words so frequently used in the *Lazarillo*: «lacerated», «lacerate», «laceration»*, all pertaining to the lexicon of misery. The selection of this name for the subject who institutes an autobiographical discourse is thus at the same time a negation of the discourse and the prefiguration of the character's fortune, given the expectations it creates in the reader. The signifié that Cros discovers in the folkloric anecdotes is very well connected with the name Lázaro as a correlative.

Nevertheless, the two correlatives are the reverse of the historic individuality and of the identity that autobiography requires between author and narrator, as it does between the grammatical subject and the speaking subject.

For this reason, their function is none other than to unmask the farce: the «events so outstanding, and perchance, never heard nor seen» that are about to be narrated are short stories known in the folklore. The «I» that assumes them has declared himself non-authentic by the very fact of assuming them and by having an equally well known name — a kind of *mise en abyme* that creates and destroys at the same time the every artful device of the illusion of identity between author, narrator and personage which characterizes the *Lazarillo* in its anonymity. Perfect device and perfect strategy, in which the force that serves to convince, also serves to reveal as such, the devices and strategies. At the same time they create the illusion of movement, they reveal the puppet strings behind the farce and the external hand (the implied author) that is manipulating them.

The truth here is thus, pure verisimilitude. In case someone should be misled, the «*contradictio in terminis*» confronted by the three elements of this discourse (subject-object-circumstances) will soon let the reader who will go deeper into the matter (those who «will not go as deep» will have to content themselves with the

* In Spanish: *lacerado*, *lacerar*, *laceria*. In Spanish, the meaning of these words extends to all manners of misery.

«amusement»), see that a ritual discourse, marked by the rules of its rhetoric convention, cannot be a true autobiography just as an authentic confession does not blend well with a juridical tribunal as hearer. The sophists well understood the real function —already lamented by Plato— of rhetoric, and its means of persuasion, whose weight before the judicial courts is much more important than the very innocence of the accused. Indeed, to establish the truth in legal proceedings is pure chimera. It is, in reality, a question of the illusion of truth, of verisimilitude. It is this subversion we believe that the *Lazarillo* carries out by disrupting a ritual discursive practice and, with it, the ideology which is its foundation.

II. INSTITUTIONS AND MEDIA

SAVOIR LIRE OR SOME SOCIO-HISTORICAL MODALITIES OF READING *

Jacques Leenhardt

The debate about reading which has developed over a decade and more, and which has again made of it one of the central problems of literary theory, has until now given but little importance to the social and intellectual frameworks within which the activity of reading must per force develop.

Thus when, after a long period of almost exclusive attention to the linguistic and semiotic aspects of literature, scholars again chose to give reading a place, they very naturally tried, in the methodological tradition of the past, to construct what could only be an aesthetics of the *effect* in literature. The studies illustrating this research orientation showed how the text, as a rhetorical instrument, would be directed at the reader and would organize its effects in order to touch him, to instruct him and convince him, or to deceive him¹. After considering the text as a structure closed on itself, they then recognized in it an opening linked to what criticism could reconstruct of the manipulative *intentions* of the writer.

H.R. Jauss, for example, gave a dialogic dimension to this attention to the communicational aspects of the literary work by proposing to study the reading activity as an «answer» to be given

* Translated from French by Daniel Russell.

¹ Cf. W. Iser, *Der Akt des Lesens* (Munich, 1976), pp. 175ff.

to a «question» formulated as a text². The question/answer paradigm certainly presents the double advantage of postulating the existence of communication between the writer and the reader while not requiring immediacy of contact between the actors in this communication. The «question» can consequently wait several centuries for an answer; it can also inspire many «answers» down through the centuries. Thus an essential mode of the functioning of literature is demonstrated without presupposing an immediate and univocal relationship between the work and the milieu of its production. The nature of this relationship remains, on the other hand, a delicate problem for any theory of literature.

In *What is Literature?*³ just as in much research coming out of Marxism⁴, Sartre has a tendency to stress the conscious and voluntary character of this relationship between the author and his public, which would take place, according to Sartre, within a philosophy and axiology of the project. However, in *The Idiot of the Family*, this relationship, even though it is still important, is mediated by instances of a socio-historical character of which the main one is represented by the family. The perhaps excessive importance that Sartre attributes to the family as a mediating structure leads him to give preference to the retrospective in the elaboration of the «project», and this causes the presence in the contemporary social world of the actors on the literary stage to be canceled out⁵.

The difficulties constantly encountered by literary theory when it confronts the problem of reading certainly results from the fact that, in order to approach this object, it is constrained to abandon its basic methodological rule: the prevalence of the text. Now, if it does not wish to renounce the communicational dimension of literature *a priori*, it cannot avoid having recourse to methods and theoretical problems developed by the sociology of communication and knowledge.

It is in this spirit that we have undertaken empirical research on reading; its methodological foundation derives from the classical sociological techniques of the interview and the questionnaire.

² Cf. H.-R. Jauss, *Literaturgeschichte als Provokation* (Frankfurt, 1970).

³ J.-P. Sartre, *Que'est-ce que la littérature?* (Paris, 1947).

⁴ Cf. M. Naumann et al., *Gesellschaft, Literatur, Lesen* (Weimar, 1975).

⁵ Cf. J.-P. Sartre, *L'Idiot de la famille*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1971-1972). Cf. J. Leenhardt, «El hombre y/o la obra. Comentarios sobre la función de lo 'social' en *L'Idiot de la famille*», *Sin Nombre*, XIX, N° 4 (San Juan, Puerto Rico, 1981), 40-51.

combined with statistical treatment. The sociologist is aware of the limitations of these methods; the theoretician of literature must not ignore them. Nevertheless, the questions that these methods, however imperfect they may be, permit him to pose, could never be suggested by any intuition or empathy. The reader should consult Chapters I and III of our study *Lire la lecture. Essai de sociologie de la lecture*⁶ for a critical examination of these questions. Here, starting from some of the results set out in that study, we will only consider the question of the socio-historical dimension of the intellectual act of reading, first from the point of view of the attitudes that the reader is capable of taking in relation to the text, and then from the point of view of the social institutions which organize these attitudes into *competencies*.

I. MODALITIES OF READING

The diversity of possible readings of a text is not a fact; it is merely obvious. The real difficulty with the theory of literature consists in transforming this obviousness into a possible object of knowledge. To this end, we have asked more than 500 readers to read two novels, and they have agreed to comment on their reading of them⁷.

During this inquiry, it appeared that, apart from any ideological or axiological divergence, the readers used different approaches in reading the proposed texts. These approaches concern the *intellectual attitude* which governs the relation to the text. Although we were dealing with six socio-professional categories and two countries that are culturally very different —Hungary and France— it became clear that this great diversity did not have a proportional effect in determining the approaches. In fact, and this can serve as a first approximation, we have noted three principal modalities of perspective on the literary text. It goes without saying that these

⁶ J. Leenhardt & P. Jozsa, in collaboration with M. Burgos, *Lire la lecture. Essai de sociologie de la lecture* (Paris, 1982).

⁷ The investigation was based on the reading of Georges Perec's novel, *Les Choses* (Paris; Julliard, 1965), which was awarded the Prix Renaudot for that year, and of Endre Fejes' novel, *Le Cimetière de rouille* (Fr. trans.: Paris: Denoël, 1966). The two works were read in the original and in translation in Paris and Budapest.

modalities concern the reading of individuals reading «for pleasure», and consequently, the norms of competence required by the academic establishment do not dominate⁸.

We are qualifying these modalities as «cognitive» to the extent that they designate the relationship that the reader establishes between himself as knowing subject and the book (respectively the story, the text, etc.) considered as object of the cognitive act. These modalities then represent the foundation of any act of reading and are accessible to us through the analysis of the readers' commentaries on their reading.

The three principal cognitive modalities are:

- a) the phenomenal, descriptive modality;
- b) the emotional and identifying modality;
- c) the intellective modality.

a) *The phenomenal, descriptive modality.*

This modality of reading aims to separate the reading subject cleanly from the object read, giving the latter all the importance of a fact, but also the indifference normally shown for an alien fact. In this case, the reader keeps himself at a distance; he does not feel summoned and does not believe he has to take a position on any of the elements of the story. The book is an object, perhaps an object of pleasure, but certainly, it is not linked to the reading subject by relations of intimacy or complicity.

b) *The emotional and identifying modality.*

In this case, the cognitive operation of reading is first manifested as the activity of a Subject. All the circumstances of the story, all the values represented by the characters are immediately evaluated, judged by the reader as if they were supposed to have a necessary relation with him. The cognitive subject then participates in the reading through the mode of implication, which gives an eminent status to identification and its psychological effects (en-

⁸ Cf. *infra*, *Writing as text*.

thusiasm, catharsis, etc.). The distance between subject and object is reduced as a result, and constant transfers can be noted.

From the point of view of the reader's discourse concerning the work, we can perceive a pronounced tendency to focus the commentaries on the characters rather than on the situations. The subject implicates itself personally in the reading, but at the level of reading, that has as a consequence that it understands itself to be dealing in the fiction with «real people».

c) *The intellective modality.*

If the phenomenal modality accords a certain primacy to the object, and the emotional modality an inverse primacy to the subject, the intellective modality is characterized by a relative balance between these two situations. In many cases, we even notice, in the discourse, a manner of objectifying the relationship between the reading subject and its object that is peculiar to this modality. The commentaries adopt a detached point of view whose focal point is the relationship itself and not the object under consideration. The reading is then constructed as a hermeneutics and presents important meta-discursive aspects.

It could have been expected that modalities of such a great generality would be equally distributed statistically in the population groups we have investigated. But it has appeared that, within different social groups of a single country as well as in the population of each one of the national samples taken as a whole, significant variations were to be noticed in the distribution of these modalities. So this result of our investigation underlines the existence of privileged relationships between a national culture, taken as a whole, and certain modalities, as well as the existence of a predisposition to use one or another of the modalities by members of a given social group.

It would be appropriate then for literary history, on the condition that it also be understood as a history of reading, to consider this socio-historical and cultural dimension. Literature circulates from one culture to another, and we are not always aware of the cognitive conditions present in different readings. Everyone remembers the time not long ago when Latin American and European readings of Borges were singularly different, and our investigation

has shown how divergent the «uses» of Perec and Fejes were in Hungary and France. Besides being able to rekindle the debate on the notion of the text, as it has crystallized in recent decades, these observations invite us to look for the means of a true history of the modalities of reading.

Indeed, the attitude is too widespread which consists of thinking that every reader finds himself in an identical reading situation before the masterpieces of world literature. People thus count simultaneously on a universality of reason and a universality of literary quality that both remain to be demonstrated. Indeed, the empirical study of reading shows that the unity of reason and the unicity of the text play a secondary role in the act of reading. Depending on the place and time, the hierarchization of the categories of perception and evaluation varies in such a way that it proves necessary to consider that the object pursued in the act of reading is reading (*lecture*) itself still more than the text. So it is this «reading» (*lecture*), in its modal diversity and historical multiplicity, that must concern us now.

II. THE ABILITY TO READ

Any theoretical approach to the phenomenon of reading encounters a problem with the extreme diversity of the ways reading manifests itself. This diversity results in particular from the fact that literature and reading have been closely linked to political and religious powers since earliest antiquity, and these powers have exercised constant control and censure over them. The history of the relations of readers to the book and to reading have then been marked all along by these ideological stakes.

It would not however be possible to reduce the history of reading to that of the social casts and groups in control of the ability to read. If the scribes and clerks were the indispensable auxiliaries of political forces, because of their mastery of the principal means of communication, the monopoly in fact which they enjoyed is not sufficient, in its institutional dimension, for the elaboration of a concrete history. Indeed, the ability to read must not only be understood as the exercise of a sovereign and arbitrary authority. Very often, far from monopolizing this ability, policies tended rather

to diffuse competence as widely as possible throughout a society in order to substitute a veritable *hegemony*, making all classes accept the intellectual models guiding their own practice. Thus, rather than simply appropriate the knowledge of reading (*savoir-lire*) by restricting the apprenticeship of reading, certain powers have cleverly preferred an active tactic of generalization (sometimes called democratization) of the models of its competency.

Historically, we thus observe an evolution, which causes the social and political confrontation concerning the disposition of texts to be displaced. After a period when the stakes consist of appropriating the knowledge of reading (*savoir-lire*) and access to the reading of texts, the terrain on which the social actors confront each other becomes that of reading competence itself. After the simple confiscation of the knowledge of reading (*savoir-lire*) has ended, a process of the socialization of reading is engaged in the course of which the stakes are displaced in the direction of the imposition of legitimate models of reading. Theological dogmatics as the legitimate reading of the holy Book, law and jurisprudence as the legitimate reading of the Law, the *explication de texte* as the legitimate reading of literature within the framework of the pedagogical project, all these mechanisms eminently concerned with reading have developed, over the course of the centuries, *competencies* that they disseminate through the various pedagogical organs at their disposal.

These *competencies*, embodied in institutions, orient the reader's relationship to the text; they determine reading's pattern of pertinence, that is the modality through which the text must be called to signify. The process of competence is effected by the imposition and dissemination of norms. By the same logic that declared the reading of the Bible as a fiction or a myth to be heretical, certain currents closer to us in the academic institution have made reading the literary text as a message or symbol «heretical», that is ridiculous or obsolete.

There can be no question of establishing a true history of legitimate competencies here. Yet it is one of the most urgent tasks facing the history of reading as an integral part of literary history. This history will require an indepth study of pedagogical institutions in the broad sense of having a mission to disseminate the legitimate reading norms. Furthermore, it will not be enough to include only the dominant institutions, such as, in France, the Catholic Church and the public school (*Ecole laïque*). Each dominant system of

norms gives rise, in fact, around its edges to rival systems which take on legitimacy through opposition, either in the confrontation of socio-political interests, or in the differences of literary genres and the mode of reading induced by them, or finally, starting from the moment when part of literature has developed as a relatively autonomous practice in relation to other powers, that is, beginning in the second half of the 19th century, in the rivalry between the groups producing literature itself⁹.

Infinitely too complex for the scope of an article, such a history would also require research that still has not been done. After sketching out the broad lines of a typology of personal attitudes to the literary work, we will then content ourselves with outlining the major axes, not of a history, but of a typology of legitimate competencies whose categories will provide an orientation for such a history.

We will distinguish three *competencies*, depending on the institutions, which provide every reader with a framework for legitimate reading. These competencies are then at the same epistemic level as the cognitive modalities studied above and are their rivals. Depending on the circumstances, they can constitute a socialized source to which the cognitive attitude of individual reading subjects can plug in. In that case, there is a veritable obedience from the standpoint of the reader. It can also happen that the subject develops a socially heteronomous reading. A conflict then follows between its cognitive attitude and the model disseminated by the legitimate competency, and its reading appears heterodox.

We will distinguish three categories under which the institutions disseminating a manner of reading envisage the text-object:

- a) writing as absolute;
- b) literary symbolism;
- c) writing as text.

Each concrete reading always manifests itself as a compromise between

1. the spontaneous attitude of the reader, deeply rooted in individual and social psychological peculiarities;
2. the dominant competencies, although we cannot develop this point here;

⁹ Cf. our article «Vers une sociologie des mouvements d'avant-garde», in J. Weisgarber, ed., *Les Avant-Gardes littéraires au XX^e siècle* (Budapest: Academia Kiado, 1984), pp. 1.059-1.072.

3. the dialogic details presented by the text itself.

Any completed reading emerges from the negotiation between these three influences.

In the cognitive perspective we have adopted here, the theoretical question of reading appears as a question of the passage from the other, the object, the text, to the same, the reader, the psychological self. The transcendence of the object, in the theory of knowledge, has caused the cognitive process to be conceived, since earliest antiquity, according to the same categories as theological knowledge. The designation of the object of knowledge, in its otherness, as transcendence in relation to the subject must not, however, lead us to conceive, as Schleiermacher proposes, every theory of knowledge within the categories of a theology just because it conveniently manifests the homology between cognitive discourse and theological discourse. The western idealist tradition has amply elaborated the problem we are considering in religious terms, but it has constantly collided with other philosophical currents. So we will encounter these different orientations in our typology, but we will not, however, be able to give many examples of this in the framework of this study.

a) *Writing as absolute.*

The act of reading can show itself in a posture of reverence in relation to writing. What is written is then *a priori* recognized as truth with all its attributes and especially its efficacy over the reader. What is written must be read, and what is read imposes itself with the transcendent force of the True. There exists in the case of this figure a heavily marked relationship between the sender (*émetteur*) of the text and its addressee (*destinataire*). The latter recognizes in the absoluteness of the writing the absoluteness of the sender itself, whether it be God, the People, or some founding entity who, like the Dictator, has dictated the Law¹⁰.

The application of the writing to its addressee requires him to conform to what, for him, he understands of the text. Indifference, or detachment, are excluded, for the transcendence of writ-

¹⁰ There is a beautiful illustration of this dictatorial prosecution of writing in A. Roa Bastos' admirable novel, *Mot le suprême*.

ing, once recognized, is inescapable, as is clear in the prosopopeia of the Laws in the *Crito*, or as Luther was to experience it when he had discovered in the Bible a message truer and more compelling than that of the Magister and the tradition. A certain idea of the society of Plato's Athens, winds of prophecy and reform in the Church of the 15th century, among many others, have then tended to reinforce the transcendent force of the text, without ever falling into pure mysticism. That is why the category of application is essential here; it presents contradictory aspects with respect to the affirmation of pure transcendence. From that comes the central difficulty of the Protestant theology of Grace.

The dialectic which thus develops between transcendence and application constitutes the principle of transformation of this first type into a second which we will call «symbolic». Indeed, to the extent that the very existence of a transcendent message has become communication, in the text, the exigency, which the otherness of this message carries in itself, has a tendency to become law and to require the reader to receive it as such. Then there is born, at the intersection of these two types of writing, the notion of application. From the moment that writing becomes the Law, it has an inclination toward application. The Law is what is read in the perspective of the evaluation of acts.

Yet, to pass from the absolute transcendence of the message (*parole*) to the application (allegorical or moral), the text as absolute must undergo a process of becoming worldly (*mondanisation*). That is what theologians have accomplished, and especially those situated in the perspective of the law of Moses who have constructed a symbolism for mediation between the divine and human (or worldly) planes. Luther and the Protestant tradition, on the other hand, were to develop an essentially a-symbolic theory of reading¹¹ because they were looking for a source in Abraham's pure act of faith (in opposition to the hermeneutics of the law

represented by Moses, the mediator between God and the people of Israel)¹².

b) Literary symbolism.

«In Leibnitz' methodology of knowledge, 'intuitive knowledge' is sharply distinguished from mere 'symbolic' knowledge. Even for the author of the *characteristica universalis*, all knowledge through mere symbols becomes 'blind knowledge' (*cogitatio caeca*)...¹³.

Cassirer shows clearly how, from Neo-Platonic mysticism to Leibnitz and even to Kant, the gnosiology of the absolute text devalues the symbol by positing an inversely proportionate relationship between symbolic richness and essential content. Indeed, the mystical tradition from the Pseudo-Dionysius to Romanticism presents itself as a mode of knowledge superior to perceptual intuition and intelligence. Moreover, Ingarden underlines this point, and situates himself in the same tradition, recalling that in the literary process, the thing symbolized is *only* symbolized, and this means that it could not accede to auto-representation¹⁴.

The second type of reading then accepts and values the symbolic level that the first type rejects. If the text is destined to signify for the reader, the elaboration of this signification and its conditions are not dependent, for the reader, on an immediate intuitive perception. So he appeals to the institutional mediation which will guarantee him access to knowledge. Symbolic reading passes then through a cultural and institutional mediation. As a result, and without realizing it, it favors the intervention of legitimizing instances of reading.

From the moment that the text is no longer destined to be immediately applied, but only mediately, a hermeneutic distance separates the text's capacity for signifying from its eventual appli-

¹¹ In a perspective that is not, as here, simply typological, but which would develop these remarks on a historical and sociological level, it would be appropriate to stress how much the a-symbolic reading has nurtured sectarian and prophetic movements since Greek antiquity, but especially in the early Middle Ages. See on this point, E. Troeltsch, *Die Soziallehren der christlichen Kirchen und Gruppen* (Tübingen, 1923), pp. 418 ff.

¹² On this opposition of the two spiritualities of Abraham and Moses, see F.-J. Leenhardt, *La Parole et le buisson de feu* (Neuchâtel, 1962).

¹³ E. Cassirer, *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, (trans. Ralph Mannheim, 3 vols. New Haven, Ct.: Yale University Press, 1955), 1, 112.

¹⁴ Cf. R. Ingarden, *L'Oeuvre d'art littéraire* (Fr. trans.: Lausanne, 1983), p. 254.

cation, as a law, to the particular circumstances of the reading subject. Reading then appears as a double activity, which refers on the one hand to the text's autonomy as regards signification (and this makes it resemble type a), and on the other, to the necessity for the reader of constituting for himself a meaning from the semiotic and semantic characteristics of the text. This ambivalence rests on the fact that any symbolic procedure implies that the symbolized belongs to a different world from the symbolizer. It is only this duality of worlds that makes symbolization possible as a cognitive bridge between the *alter* text and the *alter* reader. From the point of view of the cognitive process properly speaking, the symbol consumes itself in its symbolizing function, that is in its function of lision and figuration of the object to be known. However, it has a tendency in symbolic reading to become autonomous. To the extent that the symbolism, as a function, becomes an object in the culture, it then obscures its function and itself becomes the end of the act of knowledge, while it is really only its spokesman.

In symbolic reading, the split between the intelligible and the perceptible disappears, along with the problematics of the idea and the phenomenon which is linked to it, in the interests of a sacralization of the symbolic itself, such as can be found, for example, in Hebbel's theory of art: «but art is not only infinitely more; it is completely different; it is philosophy realized». Art can be this realization of philosophy because it is, as Goethe said, «a synthesis of the world and the mind». It alone then realizes the unity of the perceptible and intelligible worlds; it alone is symbol and alone goes beyond the duality on which all symbolic activity is founded.

c) Writing as text.

Our typology turns on the axis constituted by the process of symbolic activity (*symbolisation*). Reading can fully recognize this process and nurture a practice which, in extreme cases, will make a fetish out of the work of art, with its obligatory cortege of hermeneuts, critics and authorized specialists of meaning. But it can also tend to put symbolic activity in parentheses in order to aim for immediate access to the Word and the Truth. It can also, and on the contrary, tend to obliterate the symbolic function and choose to consider only the presence of the text and its organiz-

ational characteristics. Contrary to the mystical type of reading, we then find a *literal* reading, whose will to de-symbolization is founded on a positivist ethics and the norms of empiricism. Around this notion of *text* (taken here in its full and technical sense), competent institutions have been constituted, the principal one being the academic institution.

This institution is sociologically opposed to institutions which legitimize symbolic reading, as, on the theoretical level, its values and norms (philology, history, semiotics, etc.) are opposed to them. This has permitted it, historically, to introduce a new discourse about the literary work: the discourse of knowledge.

Today people have a tendency to see a radical opposition between reading as conceived by literary history and that practiced by the so-called «formalism». They are in reality contradictory only for someone who is willing to separate what must not be separated, that is the present and, in some ways, accidental form of a text from its history. As G. Genette puts it:

«Since history is the study of what changes, and consequently, of what is lasting, it must be concerned in literature with those durable data that form the great transcendent categories for works: genres, types of discourse, modes of fiction, stable forms, recurrent themes, etc»¹⁵.

The divergent theoretical positions within literary theory are then secondary in practice to the type of reading on which each of them is based. From the text each selects certain instances of historical or formal signification, and makes of them the object of a body of knowledge. Beyond their ideological pertinence, these theoretical oppositions indicate rather, at a sociological level, the existence of that competition between intellectual groups described by Bourdieu¹⁶.

With their overly general categories, the typologies appear to have a tendency to put a distance between themselves and concrete readings, *hic et nunc*. However, such readings are never intelligible without recourse to generalizations: pure diversity remains opaque. In *Lire la lecture*, we tried to unite overly close observation with the overly distant: the necessity of inclusive categories showed itself

¹⁵ «Comment parler de la littérature», exchange between M. Fumaroli and G. Genette, in *Le Débat*, 29 (March, 1984), p. 148.

¹⁶ Cf. P. Bourdieu, «Champ intellectuel et projet créateur», *Le Temps Modernes*, XXII, N° 246 (Nov., 1966).

to be even greater. But if one wishes to take the model we have been developing to its logical conclusion, it will be necessary to take into account a third typological level that we have only mentioned up to now; that of the reading strategy suggested by the text itself. It was not our plan to develop the categories of such a strategy here, especially because that is the best studied area of the theory of reading. The text puts its reader in a *reading position* which is developed through a play of *modalities of communication* set in motion in the rhetorical textual apparatus. As a result, a concrete act of reading, or if you prefer, the experience¹⁷ of reading, will have to be considered under the triple aspect of the legitimate norms (competencies), the cognitive modalities (on the side of the reading subject), and the modalities of communication (on the side of the object of reading). Only by this procedure will we succeed in grasping the specific meaning of each of these singular acts in the surrounding cultural context that defines it.

¹⁷ «if one understands by experience the correlation, in a culture, between realms of knowledge, types of normativity and forms of subjectivity», M. Foucault, *L'Usage des plaisirs* (Paris, 1984), p. 10.

THE SOCIETY OF TEXTS

A meditation on media in 13 points *

Charles Grivel

1. A mass of letters

We are floating in text. In an unbreathable air full of signs. Polluted air. A fluid mass of letters constitutes our natural atmosphere. We feel weighing upon us —especially in our cities— a mountain of strokes and letters: an accelerating typographisation! A textual space where our gestures inscribe themselves, where our words join and loose themselves.

The textual pyramid that entombs us comprehends (I quote at random and without order):

labels,
marks,
instruction manuals,
wrappings and bags,
badges and buttons,
covers,
newspapers, periodicals, and —sure enough! books,
circulars, folders, pamphlets, and catalogues,
recipes and rules,
directories, schedules, time-tables, and other compendia,
names (of proprietors, tenants, shops),
forms to be filled out,
dictionaries and encyclopaediae,
news,

* Translated by Michael Jurich.

science reports,
conference papers,
advertisements,
street signs,
names of streets, public places, monuments,
shop signs,
maps,
tomb inscriptions,
identity cards, passports, and birth certificates,
as well as stamps of all kinds!

In short, everything that reaches me
through the letter-box,
from the news-stand or the book store,
through TV (pages of images, as well as pages of words over-
flow me!),
down from posts and billboards,
entering through the eye:

De la télé au journal, de la publicité à des épiphanies marchandes,
notre société cancérise la vue, mesure toute réalité à sa capacité
de montrer ou de se montrer et mue les communications en vo-
yage de l'oeil. (M. de Certeau 1980, p. 23).

Here I am, by an interposed reading made a passive consumer,
«conditioned as a voyeur (troglodytic or roaming) in a 'society
of spectacle'» (de Certeau 1980, p. 24). *Letters are fixed in and
on all available space of my urban environment: letters - and
images.*

This is what I would like to talk about, what I would like to
take/make (an) account of, what I would like to reflect. I will talk
of a general aggression of the signifier, the signified, the sign, and
the signal: a flood of symbols coming upon us! A neutral space,
harbor of tranquility, be it beach or cemetery, has become a dream
beyond our reach. No more places of quiet, niches for being, where
nothing yet signifies! And if we were to withdraw to another contin-
ent, to another culture: whatever we receive is already marked:
our beaches are billboards, our frontiers mere legends!

«Space is a palimpsest» (de Certeau 1980, p. 337). We are
continually crossing a field of superimposed marks: effaced and
reinscribed. Not only a display of letters, but a display constantly
made, remade, modified: thick layers of paper upon paper and
word upon word.

But there is yet more. There is the social itself, as space and
geography, as city-planning and architecture, with its rules inscribed
in the stone, the brick, the streets; in the gestures of the passers-
by/actors, their clothes, their colors; in the shape even of our
gardens, the shrubs, in our play-grounds and athletic fields; all this
constitutes «text». Henri Lefèbvre has introduced the concept of
«social text»:

Chacun se trouve constamment —quotidiennement— devant un
texte social. Il le parcourt, il le lit. Il communique avec autrui,
avec la société globale d'un côté, avec la nature de l'autre, à
travers ce texte et à travers sa lecture. En même temps chacun
fait partie d'un texte social. Non seulement il lit, mais il est lu,
déchiffré, éclairci (ou non). Chacun y est à la fois objet et sujet
indissolublement (*d'abord objet*, le texte social l'englobe et il doit
s'y voir englobé; *ensuite sujet*, car il le déchiffre et lit le texte
en tant qu'il y est et s'y voit, jamais complètement du dehors)
(...). Comme la quotidienneté, la rue change sans cesse et se
répète toujours. Dans l'incessante modification des heures, des
gens, des objets et des lumières, inlassable, elle se réitère. La rue
est spectacle, presque uniquement spectacle, pas tout à fait, car
on y est, on y marche, on s'arrête, on participe. Celui qui se
hâte ne voit pas le spectacle, et quand même y figure. Presque
spectacle absolu, pas tout à fait, c'est un livre ou plutôt un journal
ouvert: nouvelles, banalités, étonnements, publicité. La rue ou
le journal, analogues ou homologues, s'allient dans notre vie
quotidienne que, simultanément, ils font et représentent. (1968,
p. 307, 310).

«City-panorama», «city-tableau» (de Certeau 1980, p. 173)
with its passive subjects and lookers-on: Main Street, every single
day of the week. All this, as we will see, built around this one
message: «What you see is yours!» An entire city bent on «meta-
phorizing» what it displays, as if to give itself away! (cf. Baudril-
lard 1974, p. 19).

A tory-ville or opy-ville, an accumulation of copies of narra-
tives, of narrative sequences functioning as recommendation, illus-
tration, example, good advice. An orthodox city: «The narratives
of what goes on constitutes our orthodoxy».

La vie sociale multiplie les gestes et les comportements *imprimés*
par des modèles; elle reproduit et empile sans cesse les «copies»
de récits. Notre société est devenue une société *réécrite*, en un triple
sens: elle est définie à la fois par des *récits* (les fables de nos

publicités et de nos informations), par leur *citations* et par leur interminable *récitation*. (de Certeau 1980, p. 312).

Ours is a «narrated society». The noise of a narrative act converges on our ears...

Reality is drowned by the text - this is my simple proposition. It is hidden and buried: a palimpsest. The real is conveyed, encompassed, and directed by language: commentaries are as daily as our bread. And it is rather the commentary than the fact which nourishes him who feeds on it.

There is no reality outside of signification:

Le réel, nous le consommons par anticipation ou rétrospectivement, de toute façon à distance, distance qui est celle du signe. (de Certeau 1974, p. 30).

There exist only «sundries» (a basic category of our mythology, says Baudrillard) —which is to say, transformation into narrative (similarly Klopfer 1977, p. 75). And with it enchantment and an agitated tranquility is engendered (cf. Baudrillard 1974, p. 31/32), as well as an autonomy: we perceive nothing but narratives (cf. Klopfer 1977, p. 80). And it goes without saying that conveying a message via narrative presupposes a reduction of the surrounding multiple chaos (cf. *ibid.* pp. 78, 80). The text filters reality, arranges it, prepares it for me—, and lures me to it.

Do not mistake me to deny reality, but I maintain that it is subject to a *general mechanism of fictionalization*. Fiction is «everywhere» (cf. de Certeau 1980a, p. 34). We can experience only fact fancied by fiction.

The letter —trace and symptom, emergence of fiction, depository of textuality— covers reality with a patina of illusion. I perceive everything as through celluloid, be it wrapping or a film (cf. de Certeau 1980, p. 24). My eyes are veiled, a screen is drawn before them, and I can see nothing but signs, that is to say meaning: protean, reiterated marks —undefatigable as waves— of an intuition, a history, a will displayed to be obeyed.

If I am right, then belief surpasses vision, and the imaginary precedes the real:

Cet imaginaire précède la réalité, la fonde même en un certain sens, car il tend à induire en chacun et dans les groupes sociaux une vision et une construction du réel qui découle de lui. (*Imaginaire social* (E. Allemand) 1981, p. 97).

Meaning permeates all representations, plays, visages. Narrative is at work. The principle of de-realization changes everything to the worse. A blanket of snow covers the landscape I look at, in which I move and sink. Everything becomes a phantom, a phantasma. —Anyhow, without exaggerating one can say that *only meaning*—or at least meaning first—that comes to be apprehended.

I conclude: an entirely represented reality is not conceivable outside of the realm of fiction: the reality of the language-text overlaps and envelops the «ordinary» (cf. de Certeau 1980, p. 47/48). Our life takes place between and in texts; our life, our relations, our differences take place in them, they are what makes us meaningful for each other: «The reproduction of social relations — realizes itself in discourse» (Bouillon 1981, p. 43).

All systems of representing the real have themselves to be counted among the real: the one does not exist without the other, they comprehend each other (cf. Bourdieu 1982, p. 136). The discourse of ideology (as doxa, as meaning of the neverending text that we manipulate) has to be conceived as a *level of reality* (cf. Sichère 1973, p. 96), as a principle of displacing/replacing/centering/recentering the real: reality «stirs» in the text (cf. Sichère 1973, p. 101).

2. Hidden persuasion

I propose that very generally the text, in whatever manifestation, is the *instrument par excellence* of everyday persuasion: it is there that we meet (gathering around which Lord and Master?), where we communicate: «The main point is that every speech (even eulogy) has to make sentence or a fact acceptable». (E.R. Curtius).

From all sides torrents of behavioral commands, incentives to consume. The text says: «Take! Enjoy! It's for you! It's yours!» Throughout the day and the city I am asked to comply.

Text and letter constitute our space as order, offer, and demand. Invitation and solicitation: the ballyhoo of a consumer society. Text is put up to put me on: «The *credibility* of a discourse is foremost its power to make-believe». (de Certeau 1980, p. 255). A text is the will-to-make-us-believe the truths it conveys. The narratives I force myself to read have, as Certeau says, «the double

and strange power to change perception into belief, and to create a mixture of semblance and reality» (cf. Grivel 1973, *passim*). In this perspective and under the direction of the general mediating text, the real is not simply what is the case, but what is *made to be taken for real*. (cf. de Certeau 1980, p. 314/315).

The following anthology can perhaps help us in making this more tangible. (This is merely for demonstration's sake and to aid your memory if necessary!). I have clipped from several weeklies a sheaf of admonitions; the bundle of convictions that page-sized ads try to force upon me (and I moderate myself instead of emphasizing the more or less explicitly brutal appeal of the text-image-relation). This is a sample of what such a procedure yields:

Rothmans: Rothmans King Size really satisfies.

Rothmans — an outstanding tobacco for an outstanding quality of life.

Rolex: Rolex is instant precision.

Rolex is the basis for professional success.

Rolex information enables you at crucial moments to make fast decisions.

Digital: A reliable assistance, where and whenever you need it.

Digital — so you can set your mind free today to imagine for tomorrow.

Thai: Thai Royal Executive Class offers you everything you call for.

Thai Royal Executive Class — a service perfect and without equal — suits exactly the demands of your business trips.

Royal Executive Class in the right choice for you.

Philips: Philips equipment is always also a revolutionary innovation.

Kuwait Airways: Fly at full stretch with Kuwait Airways.

Kuwait Airways — where east meets west.

Heineken: An ounce of performance is worth pounds of promises.

Heineken: there's a great beer for you!

Epson: Great ideas are like perfect pearls — like Epson.

It takes a special kind of knowhow to cultivate the perfect pearl — and the Epson Portable Computer.

Epson is a great idea — and one that works.

Canon: Canon cameras — worldwide winners.

The Canon T₃₀ combines the ultimate in sophistication with simplicity.

The Canon T₅₀ eliminates error.

The Canon T₇₀ makes all the decisions for you: a genuine revolution.

AirLanka: A taste of Paradise.

Be dazzled with the people of Paradise — thanks to AirLanka.

Saab-Scania: Innovation born out of tradition — a Saab.

Hewlett-Packard: The Portable Personal Computer with everything you're looking for.

DSM: Specialists assure you of the trustworthiness of DSM products — they meet the highest standards.

Ericsson: The reliable Swedish firm of 100 years's standing offers you a wide range of products backed by a philosophy of the interface between Man and Machine.

A single producer and a single responsibility for unlimited possibilities.

KLM: KLM and Schiphol offer you the most profitable of combinations.

KLM saves you money.

I generalize the sum total of his neverending text addressed to me: I constantly receive *orders* insinuating themselves to my eyes and ears, orders based on the assumption of generally shared tacit convictions implied in the message. They are orders *because they are founded on things I believe in*, on things of which I am told I believe in them, or which are simply presented to me as evidences of my most private opinion: «Holidays? — There is nothing better! / a car? — Just a matter of power! / Beauty? — A question of chic! / My house and furniture? — A matter of quality checked by the costs! / etc... I agree here entirely with Bourdieu (1980, p. 32):

Il y a des systèmes qui marchent entièrement à la croyance et il n'est pas de système — même de l'économie — qui ne doive pour une part à la croyance de pouvoir marcher.

My gullibility and that of all those dominated by the system. The general «gullibility» is vital for the ritualized consumption of

textualized objects (i.e. objects constituted for consumption in and by texts): «The preexisting gullibility of everybody is a necessary condition for the ritual to be effective». (Bourdieu 1982, p. 133).

To be frank: only as «sacred» have the state and its products been able to come into being, to survive, and to develop (cf. Godelier 1978, p. 27). And more: I live under a rule; a rule that in turn lives by my belief. And it is the text that achieves my belief in the rule.

3. The occupation of the reader

If these premises are correct, then we have quite a bit to read, — and there is no lack of matter to be deciphered! We are less free agents in the system than its readers, decoders, decipherers. The sign surrounding and besetting us exacts our reading it. Thus I cannot help but start from a rather simple statement: *man is rather less a pensive than a reading being!* Each thing entering his vision is read by him and *becomes text*: s/he needs only bow over the great open book of urban space and leaf through its pages full of orders. All his surroundings need: deciphering, decoding, to be understood for what they are: so many incitations and behavioral regulations.

Our life is a continued reading. We communicate with our fellow humans and the whole world in general by way of an interposed reading. Reading, yet ourselves objects of a reading, we as words and names move in a universe of signifiers. This ability to read the social text does come naturally; it is acquired. All our efforts are directed this way. We have always been taught to read, and we spend our life doing it, in and out of school. The entire educational system is directed towards this goal. There are the ego and the world, each being a chiffre for the other. An entire world of institutions is set up to establish and to maintain the reciprocal rules of interpretation necessary to our good understanding and survival. «*I can read*» means: *I know how to behave*.

The ability to read makes us so-called «cultivated beings», but by giving up our «ignorance» we are also forfeiting our «innocence»: to read means to be able to read, and thus to be able to understand. This implies having already acquired part of the belief necessary for this operation. It implies —potentially and partially

at least —having become a subscriber to what is given to read. And this on the simple grounds that I cannot help understanding once I receive messages: to understand is always having already accepted.

Thus *the reader is encroached upon by his/her reading*: we find ourselves, as readers, manipulated in our categories of thought and action. Bourdieu writes

Nous sommes manipulés dans nos catégories de pensée, dans tout ce qui nous permet de penser et de parler du monde. (1980, p. 65).

— and this manipulation originates in the text and the reading, fulfills itself in the very process of reading and «receiving» what one reads.

There we are: veritable Madames Bovarys! This is no new, but it is nevertheless true: «Madame Bovary» —Flaubert's, and all the others of literature and publicity— «that is what we are, with our romantic fantasies of encounters and elopements (...) Since our life has become standardized, the only which make a good story, and be they ever so many trifles». (Finkelkraut, in: Wattier 1981, p. 24).

We are all hungering to decipher, to understand, and —the day's work done— we ingest text after text, message after message, — the veritable sugar'n'spice of our reading mouth, watering at all these invitations, feeding on phantoms of taste: simulacra made of letters and strokes, of paper and color (cf. Beauvois 1981, p. 178f.)

The reader is occupied by texts, his/her ideological stomach overflowing with the beliefs (croyances) they carry along. (For a diagnosis I refer to J. Vallès, *Les Victimes du Livre*, and Grivel 1980, passim). But it is a doubtful occupation, never completed, never perfect: *the social text never fully satisfies the reader's hunger*. The more s/he gets to read (to understand, to desire), the more s/he wants!

Am I occupied by texts? Am I «being thought» by interposed written commandments? But it has been quite a while that the homogenous monadological subject has been jettisoned as so much idealistic dead weight (cf. Kloepper 1982, p. 371): a fragmentary, atomized, aleatoric subject cannot be occupied. Not easily at least.

Am I toiling at the text and devour of it what my comprehension can make digestible? But my reading is not all that passive, and I am the most distracted of interpreters: every teacher, alas! knows this (cf. de Certeau 1980, p. 25). Does the text insist? But its very insistence, the noise and rumor it produces, prevent its

message from freely flowing (cf. the analysis of urban «excessive textuality» in: Lefebvre 1968, p. 307, and carried further in: Serres 1982, *passim*).

Am I sticking to the text? Perhaps. Does it infest me? Certainly. But its very multiplicity braces me against the enigma it conceals. The more I read, the more I desire to know about what is behind the text. We never get to the point where each part of the text fits in with each other until total integration. Thus reading can also *disengage* the reader.

4. The instrumental code

From the text emerge the *directions* for use of our everyday life. Our thoughts and actions take shape against this foil of instructions coded into the text, into the manifold forms it takes. The messages thus conveyed (screened, cut up, digitalized, hence thinned out) and occupying the reader are so many directions for handling the world. What I read are recipes for success.

We are dealing less with a «logic of ideas» transmitted by the ambient textuality, than with a «logic of norms» destined for use/ to be kept alive by the reader's use in his/her environment (cf. Vignaux 1979, pp. 55, 61, 72). The «putting-into-text» —also a «putting-into-heads»— is to be understood as a «putting-into-code» (cf. Klopfer 1977, p. 82). Equally the «putting-into-action» — the habitus (cf. Bourdieu 1980a, p. 99). The operatinality of thought contents is a dominating force: my ideology is a «key» (cf. Chevalier et al. 1980, p. 5), that is to say a «program»: it opens me to the world and determines the limits of my realizing myself in it.

Everyday texts (from the morning paper to the evening thriller) are guides and handbooks for their reader's immediate experience. The reader relies on his/her reading. The ideological code as program is moulded into daily behavior (cf. Friedmann 1978, p. 9. For interesting examples of class-specific taste as programmatic description, see Bourdieu 1976, p. 18 & *passim*; see also Luhmann 1982, p. 23 for the «love code», and Grivel 1978 for the clothes display in window dressing).

We thus consider the —textually mediated— «culture» (in the broad sense of the word) simply as an experimental system of actions proposed to and imposed on the reader:

La culture constitue, dans une société humaine, un ensemble de codes et de systèmes de signes extérieurs à l'individu et qu'il aura à s'approprier par l'éducation (...) (*Imaginaire social* (El Aïlemand) 1981, p. 79).

La culture est moins un ensemble de conduites concrètes, de coutumes, d'usages, de traditions, d'habitudes qu'un mécanisme de «contrôle», un «programme» (...) permettant à l'homme de gouverner son comportement ... (ibid. p. 57/80).

This system of orders; this cultural power inscribed into and sustained by the practice of the individuals, and which is more fundamental than political power and even conditioning it, has to be «internalized»: to be fixed in the subject against his/her will and put to operate in his/her actions without his/her knowing. This regulated working of the inner belief seems to me calling for examination.

5. For a semio-sociology —or socio-analysis— of textualized behavioral signs

I draw a first conclusion on the methodological level: literary criticism, which has too often been carried on exclusively in the field of an interpretation of the text as sign, must incorporate the examination of the sign as engendering social action. Its object then becomes the *imprisonment/ framing/insertion* of the reading subject (itself textualized) into and by the social «tissue», and the eventual resistance it might offer.

Moreover, there must also be taken into account the question of the behavior of the human being in his/her environment (the urban territory, the consumer society), given the paramount *textualization* which I have just reviewed.

In this respect three points must be successively considered: 1) As for the basic *system*, the point is to know how to determine best the (textual) behavior of the reader-consumer. To situate this behavior requires knowing how it works. 2) As for the *user*, the point is to make —to one's best contentment— a good choice among the huge arsenal of objects at one's disposal. To decide correctly here determines one's luck in the outcome. 3) As for the

researcher in the field of socio-analysis (him/herself a user), the point is to select the parameter of the reading behavior in the consumer situation. This scientific knowledge aims for the promotion of a qualified well-being —small expenses, no consumption, and open-mindedness—, which is incompatible with the system.

6. Prevalent order vs. disorder gaining

We are now going to examine the conditions and modalities of existence which institute the textual codification spoken of above. We are going to do this in a socio-analytical way, and keeping the aim in mind which I have just outlined.

Every effort to establish order produces —once a certain point has been reached— a corresponding quantity of disorder (the noise increases, equilibrium becomes less easy to maintain). In the same proportion as order increases its susceptibility, and the more efforts are required to preserve it (bringing in their wake the hypertrophy of services in comparison with production proper). The measure of order is also that of disorder. Resulting is an elephantiasis of control mechanisms: each control necessitates even more textuality (writing and administrative languages have been invented for no other than this reason!).

To this observation I could add an infinity of details (just think of administrations!), but let me only state that a system is the more fragile, the larger it is: «Power is bound by its visibility». (Clausewitz, quoted by de Certeau 1980, p. 87). The state creates institutions to guard itself (laws and archives a.o.), while elsewhere, under liberal governments, the cities — urban space in general as a system of disorder expands, calling for a further extension of integrative tactics (cf. Haussmann's Paris). But in vain; Paris will have its Commune...

Anarchy is growing like cancer and will be answered by a raise of organisational investment. Which means a weakening of production, a multiplication of control posts, thereby incurring discontentment, which is to say disorder, thus exacting more control again, and so forth in a veritable chain reaction. One has to call it by its name: menace. Thus every progress is ambiguous: better, but to the worse.

7. Plurality

I further advance in our analysis of the effects of this situation. The sociocultural system we are dealing with here is not as homogeneous as it pretends to be. Balancing and regulating all these centrifugal pluralities is quite a job. Behavioral homogeneity is limited to certain contexts of immediate environment, and the habitus is observed «within a class of conditions of existence and social conditions» (cf. Bourdieu 1980, p. 97). Each party and group has its *weltanschauung* and philosopher (cf. Bourdieu 1976, p. 7): each his/her own authorities, bibles, popes, tastes! Generations, sexes, professions, classes all think a little in discord with one another. Regarded in detail —as it must be— the variability of individual opinions tempers the general expression of the joint group, which is only an average. The system tends towards the unique, yet everything drags it towards multiplication bordering on marginalization. Standardization advances and retreats at the same time. Neither world-wide distribution nor mass production of texts is yet really achieved. One starts to wonder if they stand any chance at all. And the tighter TV spans the globe, the more it indeed diversifies. 13 channels (as in the US) undoubtedly allow the president/father-figure to be omnipresent, but simultaneously another network already broadcasts a different program. This is what Violette Morin calls (in Friedmann 1978, pp. 189, 201) the «square circle of informational discourse», thus putting the finger on the impossibility of letting discourse and image coincide on the screen.

We are dealing with an intentionally, but not *de facto* totalitarian system, which is necessarily adaptive. Totalization of state truth is not effected (there is always other discourse being produced a rest, noise, contra-diction —produced by the very propagation of the system. Always a double! One has to speak of an obligatory Manichaeism in advanced democracies!) The undefinable other of the city-as-spectacle (cf. de Certeau 1980, p. 174) is a fact. The fixation of contents in(to) code, i.e. the consolidation of values, does badly proceed. Reading varies and modifies its object: it is a sort of *bricolage* (cf. de Certeau 1980, pp. 285, 289; we always have to be wary of a certain amount of fancy on the part of the reader).

The gist of these straightforward remarks is this: in studying systems of textualized behavioral signs we must also trace them in

their pluralism, across their divergencies, and include derivations from the compactness and «monolithicity» of the «central»/normal/standard code; also practices of incoherence, eruptive impulses, and individual fits and fancies, —because they are every— where...

8. Introduction to consumption

The order in question is one of reading and interpreting commandments with the purpose of soliciting actions. The social system on which it is based —which it expresses and protects— is dedicated to the production of objects/commodities which are understood as the potential motives for the individuals' behavior. The system moreover produces the instructions for using these objects, along with the inevitable dissonances which their textualization implies.

Besides, and as by a fatality (described very well by Baudrillard 1974), given its choice the system lives only by a skyrocketing inflation of these goods (100 automobile manufacturers put each year their new models on the market, 100 authors publish their new books — regardless whether, sold/read or not). Consumption is thus a *vital necessity* for the system, a matter of life and death.

From this the following paradox arises: on the one hand it is indispensable to unify and standardize the wants —e.g. by interposing texts— in order to realize optimum production, yet on the other hand the field of wants must be multiplied/modified/«re-made» in order to maintain or even raise the level of production.

To the contrary —and here the interest of the socio-literary researcher that I am shows—, this constant strain on, and acceleration of production supposes constantly reinforced interventions of the basic mechanisms that can *link* the wants of people to objects/commodities. They are *valorization* and «*antiquation*»: something effects our first desiring such and such object, then our getting loath of it. This (remote) control interests me. It originates —this is my claim— in *textualization*. I would like to demonstrate this briefly.

First let me call to your mind that behavior is directed by/towards a desire which is defined as satisfiable only through acquisition of a more or less concrete object. In our society this object is most generally obtained by buying it. Without wanting to elab-

orate on this, let me say that culture and the surrounding social context constitute or introduce the act of purchase (and possession).

The TV tell us how and what to buy (cf. *Imaginaire social* (E. Allemand) 1981, p. 93). On the one side we observe a socio-cultural system replacing a natural/biological order (cf. Baudrillard 1974, p. 111), on the other side the profusion of the cycle valorization/inflation/boredom casts suspicion on the value of the objects: they are *exchangeable*. Toothpaste, cars, countries, holidays they are all arbitrary! All we consume is emptiness, wrapped in colored paper money!

We are *de visu* and in our flesh aware of the headlong flight of an unsatiable desire:

On pourrait dire que cette fuite d'un signifiant à l'autre n'est que la réalité superficielle d'un *désir* qui, lui, est insatiable parce qu'il se fonde sur le manque, et que c'est ce désir à jamais insoluble qui se signifie localement dans les objets et les besoins successifs. (Baudrillard 1974, p. 108).

Thus *the text produces commodities, consumer goods for desire*. The text creates desirable object almost out of nothing. I can only desire something after having seen it somewhere (on a screen).

The «enigma of the consumer-sphinx» (an expression of de Certeau 1980, p. 78) remains unsolved: the system «produces» the consumer, but it must always leave him/her the possibility to choose yet something else as s/he has been programmed to. Because of the insatiability of desire.

9. The aura

With these premises understood, we define «want» as the relation of the subject's desire to the object.

A person's behavior with regard to his/her desire —the decision to commit oneself to such and such object of one's choice to satisfy one's desire— depends not simply and uniquely on previous knowledge about its real qualities and functions. In this universe of abundance, the substance of the object is *secondary* for desire: if I can choose without loss from a multitude of beers or books, then their objective quality cannot be anymore the *primary* factor

determining me. An object must please me in order to suit me (in this same universe). It does not satisfy me by its mere objective mode of being: to while away my time or to make me tipsy; quite another sort of gadget it required. *An object pleases me only because of its aura.* (I do not use this term in the same sense as Walter Benjamin). Only thereby does it really become a sign for me; i.e. only by the imaginary/ideological illumination/rumor the aura associates it with. Ergo: by the desire it rouses in me:

Dans la société des marchandises, il faut en effet que ce qui se vend soit ou se fasse désirer pour être consommé. (*Imaginaire social* (E. Allemand 1981, p. 83).

I make thus less use of a functional thing than of what «aura» it possesses; I use what I believe to be «for me»; not the object itself, but its meaning (I do not buy detergent because of its cleaning power, but because it promises «whiteness»).

Thus it is only the meaning that can be consumed: the object contents itself to be its material base. The object is only fit for consumption if it is endowed with a *favorable* aura. I consume the aura of the object, i.e. its value, its meaning, its ideology if you want to put it that way (cf. Beauvois & Joule 1981, p. 17, ideology here being understood as «the shifter in the decision about an object's usage» (ibid, p. 156). *I consume rather imaginary than real objects:*

On peut dire (...) que ce sont nos phantasmes alors qui viennent se signifier dans l'image et s'y consommer. (Baudrillard 1974, p. 31).

I consume symbols (ibid, p. 107). Values are being emitted (cf. Beauvois 1981, p. 29), and I am hooked on their materializations.

Consumption thus works as a «signifying order»: an order (for the objects) to signify and an order for me to desire the signified of these objects. A language of persuasion is put to play. Discourse/text/ideology inhabits and infests every object.

The aura is *textual*; the text creates it. The object alone is unable to make itself desired. I desire only its mark which is text.

10. Producing the imaginary

A society produces texts, instruction which render the object-bases valuable and desirable, with regard less to their supposed objective qualities than to the *imagination of a (potential) reader-consumer*. Each object's aura is a product of the imagination, transferred from the reader-consumer to the object and grafted upon it *by interposed text*. Concluding, one can perhaps go so far as to say that an affluent society on the one hand produces objects (for profit), while on the other it creates a *corresponding imagination to make the use of them desirable* for the subjects who for this reason are suitably instigated.

The imaginary is extracted from the consuming subject and fixed to the object; it is incited in the consuming subject for exactly this reason (to transfer it to the object. Every consumption is founded on this double fact. So is every other socially relevant text. This enables it to work as a relay.

This analysis owes to the propositions of C. Castoriadis (1982, p. 118):

L'institution de la société est institution des significations imaginaires sociales qui doit, par principe, conférer sens à tout ce qui peut se présenter «dans» la société comme «hors» celle-ci (...) La signification constitue le monde

and the demands of the people of the world!

It refers also to Durkheim's saying: «A society cannot create or re-create itself without simultaneously creating the ideal». (The Elementary Forms of Religion).

Directed towards the object-as-form, consumption thus supposes a parallel production of the imaginary (the «spice», the packaging). This imagination —created by the system in the subject— shows several effects: first, consumption moves the reader-consumer to *negate* reality on the basis of an avid and multiplied reception of its signs (cf. Baudrillard 1974, p. 33). Next, the space in front of the tv screen-text is a deceivingly intimate room where I look in vain, and where the world invades my living-room and kitchen (cf. *Imaginaire social* (E. Allemand) 1981, p. 95) as if concentrated and focussed on me. Last, a psyche shaped like catalogues and shop windows becomes the very form of seeing the objects it endures (cf. Baudrillard 1974, p. 102). *I inhabit the imaginary* (cf. *Imaginaire social* 1981, p. 17). In a signified void, I

consume the imaginary. I float; I perceive myself as if suspended in mid-air. I am occupied by an imaginary, starved by its fasts and its truths of «beyond» that it reveals — the most banal truths, by the way. I consume what it produces: the tiny double film of desirable meaning attached to the object, with my sustained look directed towards it: «me».

The object (its price, its value) is preconceived in an imaginary *prefabricated* to suit the consumer, for whom it is all the more fascinating since s/he sees there sparkling what s/he illuminates, and perceives there entire worlds of beliefs and greed. This imaginary — activated and manifested by the object — is to be understood as a *foreknowledge* in the subject's mind: the object's aura (which drives the consumer to possess and to purchase it), seen as a quality of the object, embeds itself and its constituents in him/her. The objectivation of the subject is the whole secret of the object's charm.

11. *Producing the foreknowledge: the beliefs («creances»)*

If everything said above is true, then the question of the subject's use of textualized commodities is defined on the one hand by what s/he has learned about their objective functional parameters (detergent washes!), on the other by what s/he regards as the value of the object (to wash is to make white, and white stands for beautiful and clean!). That there exists — partial or total — between the elements constituting the object's value, and what already dwells in the mind of the subject, his/her satisfaction and well-being prove it sure enough.

That something is good, beautiful, just, etc. confirms the premises already extant in me — at least those responsible for the evaluation. Preestablished *conformity* is the law of the consumer system. It is also the law of the desire which it is made to satisfy. Of course, there is confusion encouraged by the system: the functional coordinates of the object are overlaid with the estimations of the reader-consumer's imagination; the aura appears to him/her as the objective reality of what s/he perceives as made for consumption (as if «white» were the result of the detergent, as if the desire for cleanness objectivated itself in the white, as if this desire could exist in a «state of nature», etc.).

At this point the question arises of how this effect of conformity comes about between a purchased object and what I lend it of my desire. Inevitably we face the question of the *content* of the imaginary that acts on the object by interposed texts for the greatest contendedness of the consumer.

I will call «beliefs» («*créances*») the *elements of credulity* which an elaborately conditioned and maintained imaginary contains, i.e. the gamut of what somebody believes with respect to the world in order to be able to live conveniently. Having elaborated this point elsewhere (cf. Grivel 1978a, 1980a, 1981, 1981a, 1983) I will restrict myself here to what is indispensable for proceeding with the present essay.

We are dealing with the following threefold relation: a subject (with this imagination aroused), an object (elated by its aura), and a text (achieving the allocation of the first's interest to the latter). Now everything works as if through mediation of the text — the «truths» passed from the first to the second, safeguarded by the third.

These «truths» or «beliefs», simultaneously interiorized by the consumer and materialized in commodities where they are experienced as the agents of pleasure and seduction, must be understood as if the *collective* buries into the individual its generalities, its logic, its commonplaces. The imaginary is furnished with society's reason. In this image store is piled up what creates values.

Put differently, evaluation presupposes the insertion of the collective: I evaluate only by acceptance. I think and commit myself to my appreciation on the ground of an army of basic convictions. My commonplaces very simply allow me to think ... ideas. My mind, in this sense, is merely the market of society's obligations: I know its knowledge, believe its beliefs, and act upon its models.

It is true, then the object, with its aura and as far as a desire is concerned, is only the activator of the norms of collective thought which bind subject and object together.

12. *The power of text*

There is a series of consequences to be drawn from the foregoing. I will outline some of them as a sort of conclusion: the

collective foreknowledge, inscribed as imaginary into the consumer by whom it is reflected as objective determination of the object in the shape of its «truths», is —as was to be expected— the stake of an embittered fight for supremacy between several different powers. Culture as well as propaganda are the expression of a power or force. Ideology is the imaginary of a force, and so is the imaginary of the consumer. Also the appearance or the textualized index of the commodity, because this is why it is sold. Powers distribute the beliefs, play them off against reality, and use to their profit the valorizations they instill. This is the sad truth.

Thus each productive system is joined with a mechanism that controls the textual evaluations in their application to consumption. Control of the beliefs, as well as of their presentation and transfer, is indispensable. *Textual control is a necessity for societies based on power.* Including liberal societies. Since the text in its function as a «switchboard» of the consumer's desire is one of the fundamental levers in the most profitable commerce, it is strongly recommendable to regulate its exercise. The legislation of the text (protection of trade names and brands, regulation of competitive fair-play, etc.) forms a veritable jungle which I do not venture to penetrate, restricting myself to remark that an entire ritual of impositions governs its exercise: a text —in the situation where we perceive it, as signal and symbol of a subject's desire of an object— is *persuasive* only as far as it is backed by authority. The «star» or the «champion» determine the satisfaction of my thirst or the taste of my cigarette. *Evaluation does not take place without authority.* And it goes without saying that authority implies belief in it. Put the other way round: discourse is dedicated to sacralize power of any kind (cf. Lefort 1979, p. 19): power and force, grandeur and luxury, the exclusive and the superlative are overabundant in the slogans and on the labels (Impossible not to feel like a king when smoking «Royals»!); crowns, pseudo-feudal escutcheons, and totem animals are a-plenty; to be brief: the whole attire and regalia of ancient supremacy of the strong over the weak is present. Is it yet necessary to add that the weak are those seduced to desire that which completes their slavery for happiness?

In this way the text is in a double sense an agent of power: it invites consumption, affirms its value, mediates the desire with the objects by virtue of the dominant collective beliefs. It co-directs the consumer and is his/her by no means meek guide. Grafting the beliefs on the object the text renders it fit for consumption and

coerces the reader-consumer to judge it unexpendable for his/her well-being (a text is the principle of a choice). Everything in it conspires to avoid «dissonance»: between itself and the object, between itself and the subject, between subject and object. Textualization of a product rationalizes (if one dares use this term) the want that turns to it: the text points out «reasons» for finding satisfaction in the object which it praises and recommends to the reader-consumer. It «prescribes» and presents it to him/her, as if it were the natural motif for his/her choice.

Whatever the text says of the object is taken from the store of beliefs held by the person regarding it (or from the memory) and is returned to this person *as image*. In this the text is infallible. Massive. Unbeatable. Intimate. I quote Maurice Blanchot:

Tu sais bien que la seule loi, il n'y en a pas d'autre, consiste dans ce discours unique, continu, universel et que chacun, qu'il soit séparé, uni aux autres, qu'il parle ou qu'il se taise, porte et entretient par un accord intime antérieur à toute décision, accord tel que toute tentative pour le répudier, toujours promue et voulue par le vouloir même du discours —*I will return to this point which keeps the entire mechanism going*—, le confirme, de même que toute attente le rend plus sûr et que tout arrêt le fait durer.

Text undertakes to realize the social well-being by directing the individual desires towards the objects which satisfy them. It certainly provides satisfaction, but it also quenches appetites. Text works towards the closure of the subject, a closure *over the inflated images* that it offers it. Petty narcissistic lures of a tampered imaginary! Petty business of images! Petty ill-comforted narcissists!.

13. Textual impotence

Every coin has a flipside —and this one is bright for us: the assignment and circulation of social meaning (based on beliefs) as the imaginary of the consumer-subject,— as psycho-sociological base of the entire social structure since (a large part of) the *consumer conditioning* depends on it — is problematic. Stabilization of the relations between text, consumer-reader, and object has not been

been achieved *and never will be*. What is missing, is an equilibrium of the relations between medium and object, or subject, respectively. The homogeneity of the textual orders and the persuasion of the individual is always in jeopardy. From this follows that *the aura is only loosely linked to the object*, that the imaginary *far more irregularly* attaches and detaches itself to and from it as was to be expected from what was said up to now. Moreover, the required identity between the objective qualities of an object, and its imaginary value for a subject —this identity that is to justify the purchase— always returns to be put into question, and for several reasons. First, because owing to competition among the producers the *same* procedures of textualization, and consequently the *same* conditioning of desire is applied to *different* objects (If you are asked to believe that both Buick and General Motors are the best buy, whom are you going to believe and which car are you going to buy?). The rules of «free» competition and commercial fair-play imply an *equivocation of the persuasive medium*: the words shift, or at least they are no longer so credible; they have lost some of their assurance. How are you going to place belief in a polysemic discourse which serves opposite ends? Doubt arises, and the system starts shaking *as a result of its own dynamics*.

The text is thus the weakest link in the chain —the site of fracture and the point of rupture—, and this jeopardizes the system, because the *reality* of consumer desire depends on it to a very large extent. The consistency of the textual medium evanesces; a text is not a reliable instrument; its trustworthiness is questionable.

Apart from the reason I have just given, which originates in the plurality of competitive usage, there are several more of which I will mention only the more important. First an obvious and momentous fact: once they are pronounced and marked, the words and slogans never efface themselves again; they circulate, inscribe themselves into social memory, and are constantly liable to be used again (cf. *Imaginaire social* (E. Allemand) 1981, p. 16). The application of the words tends to become relatively autonomous. Consequently, their virtual reapplication partially abrades their persuasive power (they grow old-fashioned, they antique, they apply over the time to incompatible objects, etc.). A jungle of phrases doubles the maze of slogans; the medium is put hard to it. The consequence is an ironic reserve, an impression of parody, a droll hyperbolism: how is anybody going to believe what has been said a thousand times for no reason and to no avail? How add even more to an

already now paramount *superlative*? How follow the invitations of a medium that constantly plays up the words it uses? Of a medium that is driven to a desperate attack, that keeps saying the same thing over and over again: «X is better than Y! The advantages are jumping at you! It's the best!».

But this is not all. The text is always applied to an object (it marks the place where it can be bought; it is printed on its wrapping; it figures even as its skin), it refers to it. The proximity of referent and medium (the latter filtering the first and controlling its applicability), though generally tending to blind the reader-consumer, also carries the possibility of enlightening him/her.

The *gap* between the designated object and its reality (which can be understood as its content of ideological normativity, cf. Hamon 1982, p. 110) surreptitiously *undermines* the clichés and upsets the persuasive field: since what is obvious differs from the words that would explain it to me, why give in to them?.

The case is even worse. It is *essential* that the initially given ads —being made of both verbal iconic signs— are open to interpretation. Fatality has it that language *can* indicate its referent, but *only* by submitting to an act of interpretation on the part of the reader, which can never be sufficiently automatic. The (verbal or iconic) «sign» is «arbitrary» as has often been deplored, but this does not mitigate its polysemy: it always also says what the speaker does not want to convey; it evades determination; apart from the persuasive message it always contains other *possible* meanings. A word is more than the total of its letters, it does not equal its meaning. The text-as-medium is embroidered with arbitrariness: I can contrive it to express what I wish others to believe (supposed I have previously assured them of my saying the truth), but I can never succeed to say *only* what I intend to. The text is essentially *multiple*: open to reading and interpretation (cf. Veron, in: Friedmann 1978, p. 12; in the same sens Natali *ibid.* p. 53). It is a *soft* medium! To believe it to be something else would be a (totalitarian) utopia.

This leaves to add that the text functioning in the chain of consumption as the coordinator of desire and object requires the *unconsciousness* of the reader-consumer: only by his/her ignorance of the image projection taking place, of the text's role as relay,

consumer worlds one is never really/definitely safe from an ever so small bit of knowledge! All it takes is an imprudent stroke, a case of unfair competition, or one ill-advised pun: a material or mental addition to the advertisement in order to obstruct consumer access to the object, or at least to upset the fixation, if only for an instant. In a word: everything draws the desire to the object, but nothing insulates them from each other, *because the instrument of this insulation is the text.*

Other elements would have to be included in this consideration: the universal substance (the «beliefs») of which the aura is assembled, is far from conditioning *the whole* of the text (cf. Klopfer 1982, p. 359): a text is always still a little bit ... literary! A play of forms and experience of meaning which is not taken for real, not stable, not standardized. It says *more* than it should. It signifies (says Bourdieu 1982, p. 60) as well by its *how* as by its *what* thus increasing the possibilities of deviation, of deparallelization, of destabilization. *The text is an instrument of escape:* a certain play surfaces in the persuasive chain which is too loose to ensure a fail-proof linkage between the object and the reader's problematical desire. The text is *the place of a possible moving-away from mandatory consumption and from desire:* wherever the text speaks desire skids, slips, and stumbles.

This is only a virtuality, but one I would like to emphasize. Such a virtuality is a menace to the system. Textual impotence is a threat to authority. A text that adds to this short-coming—centered on the (welcome) irritation and (applauded) evasion—qualifies as a *literary text*.

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THE BODY VS. THE PRINTING PRESS: MEDIA IN THE EARLY MODERN PERIOD, MENTALITIES IN THE REIGN OF CASTILE, AND ANOTHER HISTORY OF LITERARY FORMS *

Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht

1. A Remarkable Turning-Point in History and Its Conceptual Horizons in Historiography

Somewhere in the 1490's, one of Kaiser Maximilian I's vassals, a German named Münzer, paid a visit to the Iberian Peninsula in order to get an impression of practical politics there. This seems

* Translated from German by Glen Burns.

In its very first version, this essay goes back to my Inaugural Lecture at Siegen University on 25 January 1984. The theoretical and historical key problems were then discussed at a Colloquium on «The Transition from Script to Print», held at Siegen in February 1984, and with the occasion of several lectures at the Universities of Passau, Trier and Konstanz in November/December of the same year. I would like to thank Jacqueline and Bernard Cerquiglini, Roger Chartier, Klaus Dirscherl, Alois Hahn, Wolfgang Iser, Tom Luckmann, Ursula Peters, Wolfgang Preisendanz, Paul Zumthor and the 'Redaktion des Grundrisses der romanischen Literaturen des Mittelalters' (Claudia Krüts, Gisela Smolka-Koerdt, Peter-Michael Spangenberg, Dagmar Tillmann-Bartylla) for their criticism, their suggestions and, if I understood them well, their encouragement. — For more detailed information on the special period in the history of Spanish literature with which I am dealing, see my forthcoming book «Eine Geschichte der spanischen Literatur» (Frankfurt 1986), esp. chapters III and IV.

Much of the revision of the original text took part during the translation process, which was actively discussed and haggled over between author and translator. The usual problems of getting German into English were present, but one problem

to have been after the epoch-making year of 1492 — after the *Reconquista*, as the *Reyes Católicos* called the expansionist movement that had culminated in the conquest of the Califat of Granada, and after, as it were, the *accidental* discovery by Columbus of a new continent for the Spanish Kings. At a court reception, Isabel of Castile and Fernando of Aragón (their marriage in 1469 had laid the cornerstone for the Spanish national state) were addresses by Münzer:

O High and Mighty Monarchs! The Puissance of your Majesty, famed through-out the Universe, has filled the Princes and Lords of Germany with Astonishment. It passes their understanding, how the Spanish Realm, so recently riven by internal Strife, concealed Malevolence, and the Ambitions of Royal Pretenders, could have so rapidly raised Itself from the most terrible Discord to the Peace and Prosperity that It presently enjoys. Therefore, and bearing the Commission of our Beloved Lord Maximilian and the other German Sovereigns, have I Journeyed from the German Borders to this Kingdom, that, with my own Eyes and with those of my Entourage, I might witness this Wonder of which all have heard¹.

A few years later in 1513, nine years after Isabel's death and four years before Fernando's, Spain's take-off into the modern era was received with the same astonishment by none other than Niccolò Machiavelli. In his *Principe*, Fernando became the incarnation of the new prince who had assumed the role of the modern politician. Like Münzer, Machiavelli was impressed by Isabel and Fernando's success in leading their kingdom out of crisis, but he went on to try and analyze this remarkable phenomenon.

in particular should be singled out here. 'Mentalitätsgeschichte' which is taken over from the French 'l'histoire des mentalités' cannot be brought into English unambiguously, at least not yet. We decided nonetheless to use it in the title and at certain key points in the essay. Our guidelines for this fruitful and fateful French concept has been taken from the following authorities: P.H. Hutton (1981), 'The History of Mentalities', in: *History and Theory*, 20, 237-59, who simply takes over the term into English; Paul Conkin (1977), 'Intellectual History: Past, Present, and Future', in: C.F. Dolzell (ed.), 1977, *The Future of History*, Nashville, 113-133, who would translate it as 'cultural history'; and R. Darnton (1984), *The Great Cat Massacre and Other Episodes in French Cultural History*, New York, who also suggests 'cultural history'. But it seems to us that 'cultural history' is not exactly what is needed, even if we don't have a perfect solution ourselves.

¹ Quote from Fernández Álvarez.

Nothing causes a prince to be so much esteemed as great enterprises and giving proof of prowess. We have in our own day Ferdinand, King of Aragón, the present King of Spain. He may almost be termed a new prince, because from a weak king he has become for fame and glory the first king in Christendom, and if you regard his actions you will find them all very great and some of them extraordinary. At the beginning of his reign he assailed Granada, and that enterprise was the foundation of his state. At first he did it at his leisure and without fear of being interfered with; he kept the minds of the barons of Castile occupied in this enterprise, so that thinking only of that war they did not think of making innovations, and he thus acquired reputation and power over them without their being aware of it. He was able with the money of the Church and the people to maintain his armies, and by that long war to lay the foundations of his military power, which afterwards has made him famous. Besides this, to be able to undertake greater enterprises, and always under the pretext of religion, he had recourse to a pious cruelty, driving out the Moors from his kingdom... He also attacked Africa under the same pretext... so that he has continually contrived great things, which have kept his subjects' mind uncertain and astonished, and occupied in watching their result. And these actions have arisen one out of the other, so that they have left no time for men to settle down and act against him².

Despite this elucidation, Machiavelli and Münzer's basic question has never been answered satisfactorily. Indeed, how was it possible in such a short space of time for the Spanish Kingdom, in 1469 still in a state of chaos, to become the leading nation in the Christian world and, in the modern sense of the term, the first world power? When the problem is posed so today, we come up with a whole repertoire of contemporary answers. For instance, we could look at the economic situation of Castile and Aragón up against a Marxist conceptual horizon; yet surprisingly the economy was the only social sector where the Catholic Kings had no path-breaking innovations to show for themselves. We could, of course, infer genius from the performance of Isabel and Fernando, in which case we could have to write the prosperity they attained off to contingency. Yet when the historian has recourse to contingency,

² Quote from L. Ricci/E.R.P. Vincent (edd.) (1950), *The Prince and the Discourses*, New York, 81 f.

he surely does nothing more (and nothing less) than to interrupt the work of historical understanding.

Therefore I would like to put this very theoretical level in brackets for the moment and pose the following question: what is generally meant by the historical comprehension of a given era and, above all, the comprehension of its transformational processes? Evidently the understanding of an era involves the assemblage of given individual phenomena around a common focal point, the pivot around which the historiographic narrative formulates its account of the conditions for change.³ Our 18th and 19th century predecessors had it easier: they arranged the strata and sectors of temporal change (economic, political, cultural history, etc.) around what they considered *history-in-itself* (whether national or universal) to which they ascribed the status of «a totalized reality». It was felt that this holistic history developed according to «historical laws», which in turn provided the explanatory potential for the sub-histories. For a number of reasons, the absolute and comfortable horizon of this historical belief has become, since the beginning of the 20th century, increasingly problematic, with two uncomfortable consequences for the historian. (1) It is no longer immediately apparent which horizon he should resort to in order to explain specific phenomena and events. (2) And it is just as uncertain how he is supposed to relate the various historical disciplines — economic, cultural, literary, etc. — to one another. At least for literary history, this is a catastrophic situation, for it seems as if it is permanently condemned to be marginalized as one of the «poor relatives» of straight history.

Of course lots of solutions to this dilemma have been proposed, out of which perhaps the sociologist Niklas Luhmann's can be selected as particularly amenable to literary historians, for it is

³ With these basic decisions we inscribe our article into a determinate tendency within the discussion on problems of historiographical representation; it has become identified with the names of A. Danto, F. Furet, R. Koselleck, H. White. As an attempt to continue systematic reflection along these lines, see the two collective volumes: B. Cerquiglini/H.U. Gumbrecht (edd.), (1983), *Der Diskurs der Literatur- und Sprachgeschichte. Wissenschaftsgeschichte als Innovationsvorgabe*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft 411, and H.U. Gumbrecht/U. Link-Heer (edd.) (1985), *Epochenschwellen und Epochenstrukturen im Diskurs der Literatur- und Sprachgeschichte*. Frankfurt: Suhrkamp Taschenbuch Wissenschaft 486, especially the essay at the end of the first book ('Rekurs/Distanznahme/Revision: Klio bei den Philologen') and the discussion at the end of the second ('Gespräch über Epochen am Freitag, dem 13., 1984').

capable of turning the role of literary history as a sub-discipline completely around. Luhmann recommends making *the history of communication-forms and communication-media* the functional replacement for the old *history-in-itself* (with its value of an absolute horizon)⁴. Potential epistemological thresholds in such a history could be located in the origin of writing, the invention of printing, the use of the typewriter, the radio, the stenograph, TV, electronics, etc. Generally speaking, if Luhmann recommends such «a new holistic horizon for history», it is because he assumes that «evolutionary achievements» having once occurred can no longer be returned to and that the historical transformations of communication-forms effect *all* other social sub-systems.

This framework offers us a possibility for comprehending and narrating that shift in the destiny of late 15th century Spain which had so amazed her contemporaries. I will argue that this displacement was surprisingly coincident with the replacement of handwritten manuscripts on parchment by printed books set in type, in itself a displacement belonging to what has been called «the transcription of daily life»⁵.

What does it mean to ascribe such a change in Spanish history to a change in a communication-medium? For one thing, it means that a problematical social situation has provoked the change, the participation of many individuals being requisite for particular media processes; which in turn means that the new medium, the printed book, could become an instrument of the Spanish Kings in solving their problems; and this implies — at the theoretical level we are concerned with here — that each new medium in itself transforms the collective mentality, imprinting itself on the relationship people have to their bodies, consciousness, and actions.

In our case, it is not simply a matter of assuming — on the basis of a deduction agreeable to literary scholarship — that a connection can be made between a performative mode and a mediashift. On the contrary, a number of factors allow us to establish a relationship between the new medium and the policies of the Catholic Kings. One small, admittedly contingent, fact is none-

⁴ Luhmann, N. (1985), 'Das Problem der Epochenbildung und die Evolutionstheorie'. In: Gumbrecht/Link-Heer (1985: esp. 19-24).

⁵ See Giesecke, M. (1980), 'Volksprache' und 'Verschriftlichung des Lebens' im Spätmittelalter — am Beispiel der Genese der gedruckten Fachprosa in Deutschland'. In: H.U. Gumbrecht ed., *Literatur in der Gesellschaft des Spätmittelalters*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag.

theless interesting as a symptom: 1474, the year of Isabel's coronation as Queen of Castile, was also the year in which the first Spanish book was printed⁶. (which may be the reason why almost all early Spanish books are illustrated with either royal portraits or insignia). Now Fernando and Isabel deliberately and programmatically promoted printing. Their promise of tax reductions attracted German printers to Spain. In all cities politically important to them they established publishing houses — first in Fernando's domains, Barcelona, Valencia, and Zaragoza; then, when the export of books to the New World became significant, in Sevilla; directly after the conquest of the Califat, in Granada; long before that in the previous capital, Toledo; and of course also in the old university town, Salamanca, and for the new university founded in the 16th century, Alcalá de Henares. It is worth noting, moreover, that books commissioned by Isabel and Fernando were always published in surprisingly large editions; for example, Antonio de Nebrija's Castilian grammar in 1492 (the first systematic grammar for any vernacular romance language), or the quadrilingual bible of Alcalá (now mainly important for historical linguists) which was commissioned by Cardinal Cisneros, Fernando's chancellor in the early 16th century and founder of the university of Alcalá. However there is also negative evidence for this interplay between the politics of the Catholic Kings and the new medium: from the third decade of the 16th century to its end we can observe a quantitative decline in the production of printed books in Spain — in contrast to all other European countries.

My concern here is the relationship between media and mentality, and in what follows I would like to present his problem in four historical contexts: first of all, I would like to know, more precisely and more specifically, what the transcription of everyday life actually looked like⁷; then I will investigate the era of the manu-

⁶ For an introduction to the early history of printing in Spain see Clair, C. (1976), *A History of European Printing*, London, 78ff.; Burger, K. (1913), *Die Drucker und Verleger in Spanien und Portugal von 1501-1536*; Haebler, C. (1903), *Bibliografía Ibérica del Siglo XV. Enumeración de todos los libros en España y Portugal hasta el año de 1500*, Den Haag/Leipzig. — A 'must' is E.L. Eisenstein's: *The Printing Press as an Agent of Change. Communications and Culture's Transformations in Early-Modern Europe*, London: Cambridge University Press.

⁷ See my essay 'Schriftlichkeit in mündlicher Kultur'. In: A. Assmann/J. Assmann/C. Hardmeier (1983), (edd.), *Schrift und Gedächtnis. Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation I*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 158-174, and the

script, for our purposes the years between 1430 and 1474, concentrating on the court as the space in which communication occurred; in the third part, I will shift my attention to the city after 1474 as the space and the book as the medium of communication; finally, on the basis of concrete examples, I will look at print and the modern mentality that was receiving its initial formulation in Spain.

What I would like to imagine is a kind of literary-historical investigation and description which is just as interested in textual forms and their concretization through media as in content, a literary history no longer merely gazing at content «through forms and media». Thus such a literary history is necessarily one combining theoretical interests which a re-presentation of the past. The reader should envision himself in Aragón or Castile, transported back into the late middle ages.

2. Saying Goodbye to the Body

The history of manuscripts can be articulated in phases: the written formulation of Latin with a continuity reaching back to antiquity; initial attempts to formulate the vernacular languages in the 12th/13th century; and finally the consolidation of the vernacular, though still in manuscript form, as written languages. I would like to quickly run through these phases in order to show that, for the transcription of daily life, the manuscript imposes different values on a history of mentalities than does print. This is precisely what cannot be said about the manuscript formulation of Latin since antiquity. There we have to do with the phenomenon of the division of labor. Reading and writing in the middle ages was limited to a very few, mainly clerics, who assumed the function of «memory» for the entire society. This division of labor was part of a world order, a cosmology, which was inalterably and self-evidently the expression of God's Will. Every phenomenon, mankind included, had its place, significance, and destiny in this cosmology, and therefore man saw himself as merely capable of ex-

pressing cosmological meaning but never of discovering it. Precisely for this reason, the medieval Latin word *auctor* was able to assume so many roles: *auctor* was first of all God, provider of all significance; yet *auctor* was also the patron who commissioned a manuscript; *auctor* was probably the «inventor» of the content of a text as well (although the question would hardly be raised); *auctor* was the person who copied the text onto parchment; at last, he was also the person who loaned his voice to the text for its recitation. The cosmological order of the medieval world makes it clear why someone who put himself outside of its structure of meaning had committed a sin, why the condition of being outside of this meaning was both a lie and an error; what is decisive for us today, the differential criterion of intentionality, simply did not exist. At any rate, the transcription of Latin hardly effected daily life because the spoken languages were in the vernacular.

Let's move on to the early evidence for the transcription of the vernacular in manuscript-form during the 12th/13th century, to those texts dubbed «medieval literature» by neo-philological medievalists. First of all it must be understood that the written formulation of the vernacular at that time was atypical — about as atypical as the written formulation of a joke today, which is primarily intended to facilitate its continually new oral reproduction and which is therefore grounded in the voice and body. It would never occur to anyone to regard the written form of a joke as «the joke itself». The written formulation of the vernacular in the high middle ages had no effect on daily life because it was still keyed to the division of labor: vernacular manuscripts as well were prepared by clerics, but transcription was so scarce that the vernacular languages underwent very little change at first. There wasn't, as there would be two-hundred years later, any normalization of spelling, nor were there as yet any syntactic markers for writing, such as hypotaxis.

The consolidation of the vernacular languages in manuscripts from the end of the 13th century on can be interpreted as a symptom of crisis, for it was no longer carried out exclusively by clerics but also by literate laymen working as scribes in merchants' counting-houses and in kings' treasuries, where more than ever before they were outside of the intellectual space of the church. The development of the vernacular into a written language was «a symptom of crisis» not only because it dispersed the traditional division of labor but also because the cosmological meaning of phenomena,

in the new social and communicative space, was no longer experienced as self-evident and intrinsic to the phenomena themselves. Increasingly the meaning of things had to be explained — or even created and then projected onto the things. Since the 13th century this new mode of supplying meaning was being prepared for by the allegorical mode of speech. But for a while yet, since manuscripts in the vernacular were still not caught up in mechanized mass-production, the human body remained the context for providing meaning.

Finally, we can watch how the medium, print, rapidly spread across Europe following Gutenberg's invention of movable type around 1450. The human body was definitely no longer the vehicle for the constitution of meaning; the body had been visibly separated from the vehicle of meaning, the book, by the insertion of a machine, the printing press. At the same time that it was relieved of its function as the vehicle of meaning-constitution, the body was also released from its function as the source of meaning. In a reading a book we have experienced, up until quite recently, the consciousness of an author as the source of meaning. The body had been screened out of the consciousness of communication. Suddenly; within a few years, the spatially absent author became the «provider» of meaning in the relational situation of reading; suddenly the physical presence of the lecturer, the writer, or the printer was bracketed; and suddenly the receiver felt himself bound to the «intentional meaning» of an author, who disqualified as inadequate any modification by way of the lecture, copying, printing, or reception.

3. Court and Masque

It should be kept in mind, with respect to the Spanish Court as the space in which manuscript communication took place up until 1474, that it was hardly a permanent context, but rather one that required continual symbolic demarcation and internal restructuring. The circumstances are neatly described by Juan del Encina, a Castilian author from the late 15th/early 16th century:

Whither the King and Queen may go,
there is the Royal Court;
wherever They might be,
there is our Welfare;
to see Their Imperial Scepter
and the Glory of their Fame
is a Joy unsurpassed,
a common Glory
flowing on us all⁸.

How this demarcation of the court as a communication-situation could be achieved by deploying symbols through an imaginary space is exemplified by the description of a festival produced in 1428 by the Castilian Infante Enrique, the later King Enrique IV:

On Tuesday, the 18th of May in the Year of Our Lord, 1428, the Infante don Enrique held a grand festival in the city of Valladolid in the following manner. In the plaza of this city, at the corner of the street leading from the Puerta del Campo to the plaza, he erected a fortress out of wood and cloth. It was built so: a very high tower with four turrets on it, on top of the tower was a belfry with a bell in it. And on the belfry was a pillar, which was made in the same way as the tower but which seemed to be out of stone. And on the pillar was a gilded griffin which had a large white and red banner in its arms. And on each of the four turrets... was a little banner that looked exactly like the big one... And a cloth was stretched out on which a palisade was set, and the cloth began at the fortress and at its other end were two more towers and a vaulted gate which each knightly adventurer had to approach. And on the archway was written: *This is the Gateway of Perilous Passage to the Grand Adventure*⁹.

Here is an imaginary world that must be staged against the backdrop of everyday existence, a world of the allegorical masque, a play marked off from daily life. Since there was no everyday, as it were «natural», structure of relevance for this world, it required a certain

⁸ Spanish original quote in: Juan del Encina, *Obras completas*. Ed. A.M. Rambaldo. Vol. II. Madrid 1978, 30. — For a reconstruction of the milieu in which late medieval court-poetry was performed, see my essay 'Intertextualität und Herbst/Herbst und neuzeitliche Rezeption des Mittelalters', in: Wiener slavistischer Almanach, Sonderband 11. 1983, 111-139.

⁹ Spanish original quote in: J. de Mata Carriazo, ed., *Refundición de la Crónica del Halconero por el obispo don Lope Barrientos*. Madrid 1946, 65 f.

amount of external demarcation and internal structuration through architecture.

The same function of staging interactive or communicative situations — which we just saw in the staging of a courtly play — could also be assumed by the texts themselves in the late middle ages. This can be shown in the handwritten collections of songs, the *cancioneros*, that appeared up into the 70s of the 15th century. In most instances the individual texts were meant to be performed with musical accompaniment and also provided a repertoire of courtly roles and masks. The texts are arranged in groups in such a way that the prescribed roles, taken all together, form a kind of grid of situations which can then be staged. Hence the staging of situations seems to have also been the essential function of the *cancioneros*. Here a receptive disposition is presupposed which can hardly be characterized as a conscious state but was rather a readiness to adjust *the body* to music and text. This can be seen in the following quote from a contemporary poetics by Enrique de Villena:

The definition of science (knowledge), according to Walter-Burley in the *Summa arithmetica* is: science (knowledge) is the consummate order of immutable and true things.

Science and knowledge are not defined as the content of consciousness but as the order of things. Villena goes on:

And we must pay attention to six instruments — or organs — which make articulated, formed sounds in mankind: namely, the lungs with their continual movement, systaltic and diastolic... secondly, the palate; thirdly, the tongue. Fourthly, the teeth, which when closed produce sibilants, making the sound softer or weaker. Fifth, the lips. Sixth, the trachea¹⁰.

We sense that the text should function as a catalyst, putting bodies in motion and serving to constitute a situation, much like the background music at a cocktail party which helps to get the conversation going and then is no longer heard once the conversation is flowing along.

What is the relationship of a staged situation at court to the daily exercise of power for which the kings and nobles were cos-

¹⁰ Original quote in: M. Menéndez Pelayo (ed.), *Antología de poetas líricos castellanos*. Vol. IV. Edición nacional de las obras completas de Menéndez Pelayo. Vol. XX. Santander 1944, 8 ff.

mologically responsible? In the introductions to the *cancioneros* we always come across the same explanation: the songs are supposed to serve as a means of relaxation from everyday life, are to assume, so to speak, «a compensatory function». Yet when concentrate on the chronicles from the time of the first two Castilian kings in the 15th century, Juan II and Enrique IV, we realize that their lives were consumed by a practically unbroken sequence of masques, so that *the boundary between the play and daily life* couldn't have actually been visible. Metaphorically it could be said that the plays were a kind of prison of these kings, a prison to be sure whose walls they were unable to perceive; and behind their backs politics was taken care of by others, by their favorites like Juan II's famous/infamous Alvaro de Luna. Since the borderline between masque and daily life was still not drawn in consciousness but was for the most part a visible borderline created by staging, the kings were hardly contained within the play, for they were incapable of really perceiving these spatial boundaries in their daily existence, which was merely filled by pageantry.

And the Seneschal, don Alvaro de Luna, discussed with the King how the feast for his nomination as Seneschal of Tordesillas should be celebrated, and thus was it executed. And the Seneschal don Alvaro commanded that in Tordesillas many feasts and many opulent jousts and other entertainments be held, of which the King and his entire court had pleasure and joy. The Seneschal, who always executed such events in the most honorable and intelligent manner...¹¹

Even more interesting, perhaps because of its strangeness, is the following text, a character portrait of the unfortunate Enrique IV, the half-brother and predecessor of the Catholic Queen:

... he had lively, somewhat widely set eyes, fleshy eye-lids: where his gaze landed, there it remained fixed for a long time... his beard was long and seldom trimmed... His intellect was large and strikingly clever, and his speech was reasonable, honest, and moderate; he opened himself up to those he felt close to; he was comfortable with his servants and menials... A small group relaxed him; all intercourse with people was a burden for him. He seldom presented himself to the people; he put off the business of his office, dispatching it at the last moment... His voice was

soft and harmonious; every sad song pleased him: he was proud of his singers and often sang with them. The divine services gave him great pleasure. He was always withdrawn; he played the lute softly; he well understood the perfection of music: he liked musical instruments. He was a great hunter of all sorts of animals and beasts; his greatest pleasure was to go into the hills and erect shelters and lairs, and for this he spent a great deal... He was so courtly, so modest, and pleasant that he never addressed anyone with «thou» and never permitted anyone to kiss his hand. He was little concerned with himself... His life-style and clothing were humble, he wore woolen clothing in the form of a long robe and a cape and cloak. The royal symbols and ceremonies were very alien to him. His eating habits were rather irregular than gluttonous, which however corrupted his complexion and moreover caused gout and sometimes toothache; he never drank wine¹².

What this king failed to accomplish was the transfer of his training from the world of the play to the daily experience of the exercise of royal authority and representation. Indeed, not only was he incapable of discriminating between the world of the play and that of serious politics but also between the world of the play and the sacred world: thus he incurred the displeasure of the spiritual authorities when he once suggested, apparently without irony, that two cardinals, who were to celebrate a mass, should sing the benedictions as a kind of duet¹³. And finally, we can surmise from the description of Enrique's robes that he was also incapable of differentiating between consciousness and body as the source and vehicle of meaning: when he was in the mood to dress up like his Mozarabian or Jewish friends, then he wouldn't permit himself to bear the insignia of the kingdom in a royal ceremony.

How was the regime of this monarch regarded beyond the confines of his court? In answer a short text will suffice, the *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo*, whose origin was probably in the communicative milieu of the nobility. There are two speaking roles, the common folk, Mingo Revulgo, and the aristocracy, Gil Arribato. Together they permit the mise en scène of a general indignation. The bucolic world of Mingo Revulgo and Gil Arribato is presented

¹¹ Original quote in: J. de Mata Carriazo (ed.), *Crónica de don Alvaro de Luna, Condestable de Castilla, Maestre de Santiago*, Madrid 1940, 53.

¹² Original quote in: Biblioteca de autores españoles. Vol. 70 100 f.

¹³ See C. Real de la Riva (1961), 'Un mentor del siglo XV: Diego de Valera y sus epístolas'. *Revista de literatura* 39/40, 279-305.

as chaos, the shepherd, devoted to boys and wine, is asleep. It is a non-culture, an un-culture without meaning:

Hi ho, Gil Arribato,
we had some terrible fuck
when we got that Candaule
as the shepherd of our flock;
He chases the boys
along these paths,
drunk the whole day long;
he lays around rassed out
and don't see the trouble we got.

Look at the herds,
look at the donkeys and the dogs
running around in the bushes,
forlorn and masterless.

By all the saints, believe me,
this crazy Beltrano —
may he be forgotten by God —
has abandoned the sheep
to get his fun behind every fence¹⁴.

The impossibility of severing political action from the body of the actor during the age of manuscripts can be seen in certain political actions in that «civil war» against Enrique IV which would culminate in the regime of Isabel and Fernando. In 1465 for example, a gathering of noblemen in Avila deposed the King in *absentia*. To do this they needed a straw dummy of the King, which had its insignia ripped off, was beheaded, kicked around, after which the conspirators filed past the effigy, spitting on it and crying, «A tierra, puto!»¹⁵.

4. City and Instruction

Caught between the court and the city, between the era of the manuscript and the book, was the Marquis de Santillana. In 1448 a young Portugese nobleman begged the Marquis to have a manu-

¹⁴ Original quote in: J. Rodríguez Puertolas (ed.), *Poesía de Protesta en la Edad Media castellana — historia y antropología*. Madrid 1968, 208 f.

¹⁵ Real de la Riva (1961: 295).

script of his poems made and to send it to him (which was as common among cultivated gentlemen then as trading records to-day). Although this request was made before the introduction of printing in Castile, the Marquis' reply shows that the new medium in fact corresponded to a mental disposition which was already available. He wrote a letter to the young Seneschal of Portugal in order to explicate his poems. It was important to him that the texts would not only be used for the staging of plays but that his authorial intention would also be perceived. In this regard, Santillana pointed out that a fundamental change in poetry had taken place: previously there had only been «*trobadores*», but now there were «*poetas*», the difference being that *poetas* were conscious of their own activity. Ultimately the Marquis was no longer really interested in the performance of his texts. Of course he didn't consider this lack of interest, as we do today, as the symptom of a historical threshold, but felt that it should be ascribed to the age:

For these enjoyable and amusing things concur in the time of youth, knowing how to wear clothes, joy in jousting, dancing and similar courtly activities. And therefore, Sir, many things please you now which no longer please or should please me¹⁶.

In this context it is significant that Santillana no longer attended plays at court but organized them in his own house, an early form of privacy where the masque could be functionalized within the interaction of daily existence. This is the constellation requisite for a renaissance of the topos «*prodesse et delectare*»:

And in order that his entourage might learn from experience what they had heard as doctrine, he had tournaments put on in his house and commanded that other material exercises be carried out; thus his attendants, being habituated to the use of arms, would find the travail of war less troublesome¹⁷.

Precisely that which constituted the life of the Marquis de Santillana was what was so impossible for the Castilian kings, to learn about the praxis of daily life from plays.

This brings us to the city as communication-space and the book as medium. Printed books require the structures of those com-

¹⁶ Original quote in: Marqués de Santillana, *Poesías completas*. Ed. M. Durán. Vol. II. Madrid 1980, 209 f.

¹⁷ Original quote in: Fernando del Pulgar, *Claros varones de Castilla*. Ed. J. Domínguez Bordoná. Madrid 1969, 38.

munication-situations which were already anticipated in the attitude of the Marquis de Santillana towards his texts. Thus when Hernando de Pulgar, court historiographer of the Catholic Kings, published *Coplas de Mingo Revulgo* as a book (its original distribution having been in manuscript-form), he no longer has any interest in a staged representation or in the presentation of a situation but merely wants to locate a textual meaning.

These Coplas were made in order to admonish the people to live righteously. And in this bucolic, that is to say, rustic and pastoral song, the moral lesson was given to the understanding in the colors of rustic speech; this was done so that the understanding, whose task is to know the truth of things, could exercise itself in discovering this moral and be pleased, as it is accustomed to be pleased, when it has understood the truth. It was the intention of this work to present a prophet or soothsayer in the guise of a shepherd named Gil Arribato, who interrogates the people (in the guise of another shepherd named Mingo Revulgo)...¹⁸

«Intention» is the key concept. Behind every work an intentional instructive message is presumed, and since he was looking for intentionality, Hernando del Pulgar also had to speculate about the author of the *Coplas*. We have an analogy to this in the first collection of songs in book-form, the *Cancionero de Llavía* (Zaragoza, 1489). Its editor detaches himself, as it were, from the communication-context. What he wished to achieve was an immediate exchange between the consciousness of the authors whose texts he was publishing and the consciousness of the readers of his anthology. In the selection and presentation of the texts, he stresses content, whose reception in the readers' consciousness was supposed to effect a change in their interaction in everyday existence¹⁹. It would appear that this change in the comprehension of roles has something to do with the fact that situational differences were no longer spatially represented in the city. The city walls inclosed highly heterogeneous spheres and fairly soon they too lost their symbolic value as a communicative boundary. In the city where situational limits were no longer marked and represented spatially, communi-

¹⁸ Original quote from Fernando del Pulgar, 'glosa a las coplas de Mingo Revulgo', in: *Clásicos castellanos*. Vol. 1C, 147 ff.

¹⁹ See Llavía's Prologue in: *Cancionero de Ramón de Llavía*. Ed. Sociedad de Bibliófilos Españoles/Nueva Epoca. Vol. XVI. Madrid 1945.

cative situations had to be produced in the mind, hence authors had to try and effect the consciousness of their readers.

We have a couple of examples for this rupture, the first taken from what was probably the most successful book in Spanish 15th century, *Celestina* by Fernando de Rojas. The first surviving edition of this (printed) text is from Burgos, 1499. In the preface the author describes how he wrote the book — in solitude, that is to say, no longer in a situation that we would categorize today as face-to-face communication:

... often after retiring to my room, my chin supported by my hand, letting my senses and my mind fly with the wind, this thought arose in me... the need of our common fatherland for this work because of the multitude of young gallants and lovers...²⁰

Conceived in the retirement of the studio, this text no longer speaks to a limited circle of readers alone. Aside from one privileged reader, the friend to whom the author turns, he addresses an anonymous public as well as a target-group, «the young Castilian lovers» of the time, for the instruction tendered.

But what actually is the story of *Celestina* that one could derive moral profit from it? ²¹ Of course it deals with a pair of lovers, Calisto and Melibea, who unfortunately are only able to get together through the intervention of their servants and the procuress Celestina. Passionate love-scenes in Melibea's garden are quickly interrupted by a veritable flood of apparently contingent mortalities. Celestina is murdered by Calisto's servants because she didn't cut them in to a share of the match-making money. They are arrested by «the police» quite by accident, at any rate not for the murder of Celestina, and are killed trying to escape. Calisto is killed — how else? — when he falls from the ladder he used to climb into Melibea's garden. Whereupon Melibea, like a good modern protagonist, is left with no other choice than to leap from the tower of her father's house. It is interesting how Rojas provides a reader-orientation for this series of deaths, all of which strike

²⁰ Original Quote in: Fernando de Rojas, *La Celestina*. Ed. J. Cejador y Frauca. Vol. I. Madrid 1968, 4.

²¹ As an attempt to answer this question, see my article 'Lachen und Arbitrarität/Subjektivität und Ernst. Der *Libro de buen amor*, die *Celestina* und der Sinnbildungsstil der frühen Neuzeit'. In: *Wolfram-Studien* 7 (1982) 184-213.

us as merely accidental: they are to be understood as God's exemplary punishment for the sins of the flesh.

To be sure, Rojas counts on the fact that a plurality of readings will emerge, at least as many as there are typical ages for readers. He also takes it for granted that his work will be read in the manner already familiar to us from the frame of Boccaccio's *Decamerone* where a group of young people gather in order to alternatively recite the speaking roles of the text. To this purpose Rojas provides the readers with the following advice:

If it's important to you to maintain the listener's attention when reading the role of Calisto, then it's important that you know how to speak between clenched teeth, sometimes filled with desire, hope, and passion, sometimes angry and turbulent. While reading, invent a thousand tricks and artifices. Question and answer the protagonists orally, laugh and cry at the right time and right moment.²²

It is a matter here of identifying with a performed role, an identification which is a transgression and which must complete itself within the reader's consciousness. Through the reciter, he is encouraged to slip into the role of the lover Calisto.

Now any number of literary historians have asked whether *Celestina* is «really» a play or whether it is a novel in the modern sense. Both views are correct, for the text still belongs to the era prior to the modern differentiation between the genres drama and novel. Somewhat later the novel will integrate the situational framework into the text itself (narrative voice, frame-story, etc.), thus eliminating the body from the performance. As a specific form of communication in the modern sense, theater will begin to exist only when corporality has completely vanished from the solitary situation of the individual reading, when corporality, out of all the literary forms of communication, is exclusively reserved for the stage.

Salamanca, where *Celestina* was written, was also the home of Juan del Encina, who is considered «the father of the Spanish theater» and who was, almost paradigmatically, already a modern author. Born in 1468, he probably was the son of a Jewish shoemaker yet managed to acquire a musical education at his hometown university — like his brothers, one who was a professor, another a lawyer, another personal advisor to the Kings, and the

last a priest at the cathedral. In 1490 Juan del Encina applied without success for the position of choirmaster at the Cathedral of Salamanca. In 1492 he produced a little play at the court of the Duke of Alba some 20 km. outside of Salamanca in order to win the Duke's patronage, an effort that would be a new disappointment in the course of a few years. Then he published all of his own poems as a printed *cancionero* dedicated to the son of the Catholic Kings; but unlucky once again, Encina lost this potential patron when he died, newly married, a few months later in Salamanca, of all places. Around the turn of the century Encina finally made «the right choice». He got over to Rome and into the court of Pope Alexander VI where he quickly became popular, eventually being appointed by His Holiness to the position of prior in the Cathedral of León.

The modern character of Encina's biography is marked by four moments. First of all, he benefited from a development that can be called, somewhat anachronistically to be sure, «the educational policy» of the Catholic Kings: that is, the son of a Jewish shoemaker was advanced by the «state», again the concept being only slightly anachronistic. Secondly, it took him a long time to learn that, in Castile at the end of the 15th century, a couple of decades after the introduction of print, an author had to seek his fortune in the literary marketplace. Neither the Duke of Alba nor the Royal Family seems to have been interested in courtly plays. All that was left, and he made use of it, was the framework of musical performance; here the «meaning» (or actualization) of the written text was still bound to the body, and consequently the culture of handwriting maintained itself much longer at the periphery of musical practice.²³ Third, Encina was the first Castilian author to publish an anthology made up entirely of his own poems. And fourth, it is significant, as the poems demonstrate, that he consciously performed theater at the court of the Duke of Alba as a form to be distinguished from traditional mimetic recitation; writing poems and their solitary reception had been separated from the theater as that literary medium for which corporality still had a conscious meaning.

²² Original quote in Cejador's ed. of *'La Celestina'*, Vol. II, 217.

²³ I am following a hypothesis of Professor Finscher (Heidelberg University) at the colloquium «The Transition from Script to Print» (Siegen, February 1984).

5. The Ambivalence of Modern Subjectivity

Until now the question has been left open how we are to take our impression that there is a connection between print on the one hand and, on the other, consciousness as the space of signification as well as subjectivity as the new mental structure of the modern era. Let's focus then once again on Fernando and Isabel as representatives of an early modern subjectivity. As we have already learned, not only were they patrons of print but could read and write themselves, something quite rare for medieval kings; indeed they established an academy, directed by an Italian humanist, with the proposition that reading and writing not only would not be unfavorable for military service and knightly courage but could even serve a useful purpose.

Fernando and Isabel knew how to play with institutionalized meaning as an instrument of their politics; they could handle meaning as *ideology*, precisely Machiavelli's meaning when he spoke of the *mantello*, the ideological cloak of the Catholic King's policy. For instance, the father-confessor to the Catholic Queen, Hernando de Castillo, criticized her for the luxury of her gowns and for having allowed the Castilian ladies and knights at a dinner to be seated with the French ladies and knights in, as he expressed it, a lascivious arrangement, that is not separated according to sex. Isabel's reply, hardly imaginable for her predecessors, placed her own piety, the importance of which she herself was perfectly aware, beyond «political necessity». If she wore elegant clothes in official ceremonies, she answered, then because she used her body as the vehicle of a symbolic function:

... only a gown of silk with three golden brooches did I have made, but truly as plain as possible. It is quite common for the French to eat together at the table (however we will not import this custom into our realm), and whenever the nobles eat with kings, ladies and knights eat together at the tables in the hall, the ladies never eat there alone²⁴.

Someone who is able to experience only consciousness as the source of meaning is able to imagine the past and the future as distinct from the present, and doesn't have to close out the possibility, like Isabel of Castile and unlike the King of Portugal, that

a somewhat shabby visionary from Genua might actually be able to find a quicker way to India. This was an important factor in Isabel's support of Columbus's journey. To be sure it was a calculate risk. She only provided limited backing, setting up, as we would now say, a holding company to finance the exploration. Only after he had discovered new land did she pay for a second trip and then, apparently fully aware of what she was doing, all by herself.

In a similar manner the style of political counselling was altered under the Catholic Kings; the representation of the nobility, the *Cortes*, was degraded to a pure symbol. It was said of the nobility, in an interesting formulation, that they had a *voz sin voto*, a voice in the physical sense but no «voice» in the power of decision. Instead of listening to their nobles, Fernando and Isabel consulted specialists, professors for example from Salamanca or Alcalá, in every area of their activities. Obviously there was a tendency in their politics to suspend the mutual exclusion and hierarchization of the court and everyday life as communication-situations. For instance, with Nebrija's grammar they tried to make *castellano*, whose use had been previously limited to Castile, the unifying idiom of the unified kingdom; and under their dominion the fully conscious integration of what had previously only been oral folk-literature, if *literature* is acceptable here at all, into the canon of learned literature was promoted.

Yet we can also make out a counter-balancing movement. Few queens of the medieval era were as jealous as Isabel. Not only did she want to possess her consort's body but even in his absence she wanted to dominate his consciousness, to penetrate it; in the meta-historical and psychiatric sense, she wanted a symbiotic relationship with him. The following quote refers to the situation of Fernando's convalescence following an attempted assassination in Barcelona. Isabel is writing to her father-confessor:

... according to the doctor from Guadalupe, the wound (at which I didn't have the courage to look) was so long and so deep, the depth four fingers and the length..., and that is a memory which makes me quiver when I put it in words... And that was one of the pains I felt, namely to see the King suffer what I had deserved while he hadn't deserved it, but which was intended for me: that almost killed me²⁵.

²⁴ Original quote from: Biblioteca de autores españoles. Vol. LXII, 16 f.

²⁵ Original quote from: Biblioteca de autores españoles. Vol. LXII, 14.

A final contribution to this counter-balancing of the early-modern shift in consciousness. From this perspective we can probably also re-conceive and re-present the inquisition, that «blemish» on the regime of Fernando and Isabel. Previously the Christian world had been satisfied by the formal act of conversion of Jews and Muslims; further question were not required. But the new inquisitors wished to investigate and control the very consciousness of the convert, not realizing, as we do today, that every path of investigation into the consciousness of others is potentially a path to infinity. Hence they could only rest when the worst had been confirmed, when the contents of consciousness had been «confessed» under torture, contents perhaps not even pertinent to the heretic given over to the fire.

6. New Horizons for Literary History?

As the beginning of this essay I mentioned, not too hopefully, the chances of literary history improving her status as a poor relative of mainstream history, maybe coming up to a level where she could offer a horizon of relations, a field of convergence, a basic orientation for the various historical sub-disciplines. But seriously, are we supposed to believe once again in an «impending paradigmatic change in literary history»? Certainly new directions in research are delineating the moment we can convince ourselves that innovation and substitution in communication-media lead to structural changes in collective mentalities and to the displacement of conventions. It is less the customary courtesy of 'scholarly modesty' than the experience with cultural-historical disciplines that advises us not to expect any dramatic changes. For up to now the «freedom» of «the humanities» in particular has been booked to the continuation of established praxis rather than to intellectual and institutional flexibility.

In any case, our consideration of the reciprocity of media and mentalities has revealed an empty space, overlooked so far, in the material field of literary history — and offers us the prospect of filling it. The particular value of this discovery is to be seen, not so much against the backdrop of some yellowing positivistic ideal of completeness as in the anticipatory pleasure of new directions

in research and new discoveries. The context of this research can be determined by relating it to the «functional history» of literature that has become familiar in the last decade²⁶. Functional history asks questions about the modifying effects of textually constituted meaning on the «knowledge» of readers (or listeners) previous to reception. Because of its concentration on the semantic aspects of texts, functional history can be understood as the successor of a *literary history focused on content*. Analogously, by co-ordinating it to functional history, we can consider a *history of communication-media* on the one hand and *mental structures surrounding textual production and reception* on the other as the successor of «a history of literary forms». The obvious, albeit still provisional answer to the question of the value of this new aspect of literary history is more than just a late-scholastic exercise. For only when it has been answered will it be possible, for instance, to formulate the thesis that «literary communication», seemingly a metahistorical phenomenon, had a precise historical genesis (leading to the institutionalization of the art of printing) — and in the age of electronic media will perhaps find its precise end.

The possibility of imagining a «beginning» and an «end» of literature throws open a broad field of problems and approaches. This new «history of communication-forms» necessitates a radical «displacement» of the conventional praxis up to now where the polymorphism of particular (media-determined) communication-forms had been relativized through the infinitely simple «sender-receiver model». This displacement could maybe suspend complaints about the supposed depraving effects of «new media» on the individual and collective psyche and pigeonhole that promotional «praise of literature» which is merely an attitude of intellectual conformity maintained by indefatigable literary scholars. Through the heuristic modes of contrastive comparison and genetic reconstruction, this new history of forms could seriously take on the once promising, but now somewhat aging, project of «media research», which has always satisfied itself which (more or less admittedly) metaphoric transfers of categories and with the procedure of «literary interpretation». It is certainly not a trivial undertaking, for example, to make clear that the receptive act of «identification» depends on the screening of the body from the receiver's consciousness and the establishment of a meaning-boundary be-

²⁶ Especially through the work of W. Iser.

tween the receiver's space and the space (dramatized or written) of the «fictional world». For a large part of mankind today, «the reality of the world» lies beyond the TV-screen and consequently can only be reached via «identification» — hence disembodied and with a merely fictional status.

A new literary history could be realized through the elaboration of such perspectives. But is it going to supplant *other* literary-historical discourses? This question could be understood as a question of priority among different types of action and subsequently worked out in a socio-ethical argumentation. But I don't want to deprive my readers of the effort and pleasure of answering it themselves. The question is meant more simply, namely as a question of the compatibilities among different literary-historical investigations and different literary-historical discourses. For my part I am unable to see how the results of text-analysis, from the standpoint of an epistemological concern with «esthetic value», can be made compatible as a discourse with the results of textanalysis from the standpoint of a «history of communication-forms». What stimulates me is the concept of a literary history which combines, and *could* combine, a pragmatic history of forms with functional history; this combination could be co-ordinated with a history of mental collectivities, or to put it differently, with a history of the distribution and transformation of the frame-constituants of social knowledge. Someone who could succeed with such a discourse would be able to replace narrative linearity and cognitive teleology with a multi-perspective historiographical re-presentation²⁷. Perhaps he could even realize, *pars pro toto*, the old dream of «l'histoire totale».

ABSTRACTS

I. DISCURSIVE FORMATIONS AND SOCIAL PRACTICES

MARC ANGENOT AND REGINE ROBIN, «*The Inscription of Social Discourse in the Literary Text*»: The authors discuss what they consider to be one of the major tasks of Sociocriticism: to account for the way social discourse is being absorbed in and laboured by literary writings. The realistic writer is not primarily someone who «observes» the world as the common place contends but someone who *listens* to that dismembered rumor of what is being said/written in a given state of Society. Every utterance, every fragment of writing conceals social stakes and debates and preserve a certain memory of their migrations and avatars through the network of established discourses and ideologies. The concept of «sociogramme» borrowed from Claude Duchet's recent work is there defined and discussed: the «sociogramme» is a conglomerate of conflictual predicates and images around a thematic nucleus. A number of examples taken from 19th century Russian and French literatures are used to outline and illustrate literary strategies that each in its own way, deconstruct and subvert elements of the social discourse as it unfolds at a given historical moment with its ideological trends and hegemony.

EDMOND CROS, «*About interdiscursiveness*»: E.C. looks into the Foucault's thesis about the emerging circumstances of the discourse in comparison with the marxist concept of *social formation* and the Pecheux's studies on discourse, in order to point out their divergences and, nevertheless, the interest of Foucault's notion of *discursive practice*. In the second part of his article, E.C. explains his own conception of the *interdiscursiveness* such as this one operates inside the text and not at the plain level of the enunciation; he then illustrates his suggestion with an example taken from *Guzman de Alfarache* (Mateo Aleman, 1604).

ANTONIO GOMEZ MORIANA, «*The subversion of the discourse: an Intertextual Reading of Lazarillo de Tormes*»: Starting with the concept of the text as a redistribution or reelaboration of preexisting elements —the selection axis— and a faithful realization, modification or (even) subversion of the discursive practices in effect in its production environment —the combinations axis—, we offer a reading of the *Laza-*

²⁷ I owe this «closing perspective» to remarks of R. Koselleck and W. Iser.

rillo de Tormes that brings to the fore the subversion operating in the text. We will highlight the incompatibility of the integrated folkloric elements and the type of discourse that conveys them: the autobiographical confession whose model seems to have been the so-called «spontaneous confessions» or those made (or written) for the Inquisition courts in response to their «monitions».

JURGEN AND URSULA LINK, «*The revolution and the System of Collective Symbols. Elements of a Grammar of Interdiscursive Events*»: In this article, the widespread enthusiasm over the first developments of the French Revolution of 1789, especially among the German intelligentsia, is proposed to be regarded as an «interdiscursive event». Such an event is semiotically analysed in terms of «collective symbols» and their effects on subject-formation. In this context, the theoretical linkage between socio-criticism and discourse analysis is discussed systematically.

HENRI MITERRAND, «*Toward a Sociocriticism of Totalities: The year of 1875*»: By taking a synchronic cross-section, H.M. examines the textual production of the year 1875 and discovers that the French Literature forms, at this time, a network and a confrontation of purposes. In 1875, all the authors modulated on varying tones and tempos, and more or less brilliantly the same social discourse crisscrossed by contradictions and uncertainties, articulated by the anonymous voices of the press, the streets or the salons.

PIERRE ZIMA, «*La vision du monde: trois modèles et une critique*»: Taking a critical view of L. Goldmann's genetic structuralism which postulates a correspondance between the significant structure of a literary text and the world-vision of a particular social group, the author invokes the theory of Jan Mukarovsky who points out that the world-view which is supposed to ensure the coherence of a work of art, can in most cases be traced back to the critic's own point of view. M.M. Bakhtin's idea according to which the polyphonic text makes several discourses (conceptions of the world) coexist, could overcome the impasse of a theory geared towards univocity.

II. INSTITUTIONS AND MEDIA

CHARLES GRIVEL, «*The Society of Texts — a meditation on media in 13 points*»: This article departs from the assumption that we live in a permanent reading of different texts of different genres. Our

society is a narrated society; we perceive nothing but narratives and reality is drowned by texts (social texts, spatial texts, mediated texts, literary texts...). Fiction is everywhere — texts filter reality, arrange this «fictional reality», prepare it for me and lure me to it.

The «*Society of Texts*» proposes a concept for a Semio-Sociology or a Socio-Analysis of textualized behavioral signs, and according to this proposal signs are to be seen as elements that engender social action. Text and society, society and text, processes like the city as performance and spectacle, modalities of consumption, the reader's desire and the luring of texts, textual control and fiction in everyday life, represent the core of interest of this article.

HANS ULRICH GUMBRECHT, «*The body vs the Printing Press: Media in the Early Modern Period, Mentalities in the Reign of Castille and Another History of Literary Forms*»: Coming back to a period in History and to a field of communicative phenomena which, through the work of M. McLuhan, had been in the centre of Western intellectual discussion during the nineteen sixties and seventies, this article advocates the integration of a new perspective into the praxis of literary history, which, strange as it may seem, has never been of the literary historians' concern. For almost two centuries, they have been dedicating their whole attention to plots and contents, to semantics and forms of contents, leaving behind — or just «looking through» — the changing media of communication as a constitutive element for the structures, the articulation and the circulation of meaning. A survey on the history of several genres in Castilian literature at the age of the Catholic Kings is developed in order to demonstrate the profound impact which the changing media do not only exercise on meaning and its forms, but also on the functions of communicative processes and on the mentality to those who are involved in them.

JACQUES LEENHARDT, «*Savoir lire, or some socio-historical modalities of reading*»: Starting from some of the results set out in *Lire la lecture* J.L. considers the question of the sociohistorical dimension of the intellectual act of reading, first from the point of view of the attitude that the reader is capable of taking in relation to the text and then from the point of view of the social institutions which organize these attitudes into competencies.

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