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PREFACE

It is a signal pleasure to present to you our fifth volume of the Cincinnati Romance Review. CRR continues to be an annual publication of scholarly articles on the Romance literatures selected from papers read at the University of Cincinnati's annual May conference.

What the Executive Editor wrote in the preface to Volume II (1983) still holds true and merits repetition here: "The warm reception accorded our Conferences confirms our original belief that an annual gathering of scholars to exchange ideas on various aspects of Romance literatures satisfies an urgent need." During each of the past two conferences (1984 and 1985) more than 150 papers were read. The May 1986 Conference promises to be a well-attended meeting of scholars, from the United States and abroad, who will discuss a wide variety of topics. We appreciate your support of our Conferences and CRR and welcome any suggestions about our annual May event as well as our publication.

We wish to thank the graduate students of our Department of Romance Languages and Literatures whose efforts made the 1985 Conference run so smoothly. Thanks are due to our colleagues who chaired sessions and helped determine which papers should be included in this volume. The Romance Languages and Literatures faculty and several graduate students offered useful advice and help to the editors of CRR. Special thanks must be given to Kathy Lorenz who successfully performed the task of coordinating the 1985 Conference and worked so diligently in preparing this number of CRR. We are grateful to Vicki Maddox whose typographical skills were essential to the production of Volume V.

Donald W. Bleznick

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Miracles of the Virgin in Poetry and Prose:
Alfonso X, Sancho IV (?),
and an Anonymous Prose
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If "originality" means only new, novel, or not copied, the term does not apply to the writings of the Middle Ages. Yet to equate the anonymity prevalent in the literature of this period to servile copying, to an impersonal duplicating from one generation to the next, is equally inappropriate. Literary source studies show that, although medieval authors bow to tradition, they nevertheless subtly, unmistakably, and irrepressibly manifest their own individuality, their own genius and novelty, by transforming their sources, by making them their own, in the process of tradition.

Two Castilian prose accounts of the miracles of the Virgin corroborate these notions with specific details. One consists of the translations found in the margins below Canticas 2-25 in Escorial codex T.I.1. The other is the miracle story found in Chapter 19 of the Castigos e documentos para bien vivir ordenados por el Rey Don Sancho IV. We do not know the author of the former; determining the author of the latter is problematical. As concerns the anonymous writings, however, we know that their source is the Galician-Portuguese poetry written above them in the designated writing area of the folio. The marginal text appears mostly under the six-panel illuminations which illustrate the contents of the poetic miracle stories. This study examines the following two questions: is the Castigos tale based on the poetry account of the miracle in question, as Apagnito Rey (p. 19) and others suggest? If it is, is it sufficiently similar that they share the same author? The evidence suggests an affirmative answer for the first question and a negative one for the second.

Alfonso, I maintain, did not sponsor, write, or have anything to do with the marginal prose,

even though previous scholarship tacitly or explicitly holds him responsible for it. Several facts argue against this position: 1) the ink in the marginalia differs chemically from the ink of the Galician-Portuguese written in the designated writing area; 2) the script of the marginalia does not merely differ from the thirteenth-century Gothic minuscule common to all Alfonso royal scriptorium text, but actually represents a later hand hailing from the fourteenth or perhaps the fifteenth century; 3) both the orthography and the system of abbreviation⁴ used in the margins are decidedly not Alfonsine. This, in brief, is the primary evidence against attributing the marginalia to Alfonso X. Other arguments, secondary, but worth considering, are that, to our knowledge, nowhere else does Alfonso use margins as a writing area, an act highly uncharacteristic of the regal largesse he consistently displayed. The slightest acquaintance with the original Alfonsine codices makes patent the regal munificence in the production of his codices and provides the distinct impression that these royal codices are finished products as much as they are testimonies to the grandeur, the wisdom, and the patronage of a king who aspired to become Holy Roman Emperor. Viewed in this light, such marginalia would almost have to be considered defacement.

How does the anonymous prose compare with the Galician poetry? Again, previous study reveals that the marginalia are de facto translations of the poetry.⁵ The translation was done at such a time and by such a person that Galician possamos, loco, and desasperado (to list but three examples) were misconstrued as passasemos, lugar, and desanparado, instead of the correct podamos, luego, and desesperado. Comparison of the two texts also reveals that the marginal prose omits some of the Galician content, but in so doing never detracts from the narrative thread. In addition, the author of the Castilian expands the content, primarily, although not exclusively, to clarify what the poetry, restricted by its form, necessarily left to the imagination of the

audience.⁶ The marginal prosifier at times modifies the stories, sometimes actually changing the emphasis of the story line, giving new importance to minor characters, and even introducing leit-motifs not evident in the poetry. This is surprising. In no instance can the translator be said to be servilely copying. Rather, he shows an inimitable flair and style that often enhances the story line.

The question still remains: who could this translator be? John Esten Keller, the first scholar to give more than cursory attention to the marginalia, was also the first to suggest a similarity between the prose in the margins and the writings of don Juan Manuel. The King's nephew certainly makes a prime candidate for author of this prose. A lucid study by James R. Chatham establishes parallelism between the narrative structure of the marginalia in codex T.T.1 and the tales of the Conde Lucanor. In a forthcoming study, Reinaldo Ayeroe-Chaux also pursues authorship of the marginal prose in Manueline quarters.

Another potential author for the marginal texts is the King's own rebel son, Sancho IV, el Bravo. Granted that his literary fame pales next to that of his cousin, don Juan, it must nevertheless be remembered that he, too, had access to his father's codices, and that he brought to fruition some of the literary endeavors begun by his father, even though he may not have done it with the vision, the thoroughness, or the largesse evident in those portions actually completed under Alfonso's aegis.

If, for the sake of argument, we assume Sancho's authorship of the Castigos, we can examine the possibility of his authorship of the marginal prose. To do this we must first establish whether or not the miracle story in Chapter 13 of Castigos is based on the miracle story found in Cantiga 59 as scholars have thought.

Although some may still dispute Sancho's authorship of the Castigos, no one doubts the influence that various Alfonsine writings had on

this work. In particular we know that Castigos 19 treats the same miracle story as Cantiga 59: "Como o Crucifisso deu a palmada aa onrra de sa Madre aa monja de Fontebrar que posera de ss' ir con seu entendeor."¹² Chapter 19 deals with the kinds of women to be avoided in sexual affairs. The list includes married women, virgins, and women belonging to different faiths--namely Jews and Muslims, but first on the list are women belonging to religious orders, nuns. Sancho offers here the story of the buffeted nun as an example of what happened when a young man fell in love with a woman who in essence was betrothed to God. It is the only miracle in Castigos derived from the Cantigas, as far as I am aware.

In the Cantigas de Santa Maria, however, Cantiga 59 is not the sole miracle story of a wayward nun, the Sor Beatriz theme. Cantigas 55, 56, 94, and 285 deal with the same theme. In two of these, 58 and 59, the nun is impeded from leaving the convent: in 58 a vision of hell which the nun experiences while asleep is sufficient to deter her, and in 59 the figure of Christ on the crucifix descends to knock her senseless, as we have seen in the title previously cited. In the others, Cantigas 55, 94, and 285, the nun actually escapes from the convent, has sexual intercourse--in a married state or not--, but ultimately returns to the convent to be reinstated through the intercession of the Virgin Mary. The Cantigas dealing with the Sor Beatriz legend have as their purpose, as do all the Cantigas, the depiction of the role that the Virgin Mary plays in the lives of her devotees, the illustration of how she helps her faithful. In Castigos, however, the purpose is entirely different. Here the counselor considers nuns to be women who are married to God. His point, in short, is that, if a married woman is not eligible for extramarital amorous attentions, certainly one whose spouse is almighty God Himself is even less so. The miracle provides an instance of what happened when a certain young man was foolhardy enough to become involved with a nun.

Because of the different motives for the stories in Cantigas and in Castigos, their recasting cannot surprise. In Castigos, for example, the catalyst for the action, the young suitor's ardor, plays a much larger role than it does in the Cantigas, where the nun's volition receives the emphasis. Since the purpose of Castigos is to discourage young men from courting nuns, the shift in emphasis is understandable. On the other hand, because the purpose in the Cantigas is to show how the Virgin Mary aids and even abets her partisans, it is also reasonable that the nun should be center stage. Furthermore, in Castigos, Christ, as jealous husband, has a much more active role in castigating the nun. Similarly, in the Cantigas, Mary as mediatrix nominum should, and does, receive the limelight. Because of differing purposes, then, Castigos is willing to, and almost necessarily must, provide the terrifying details of the incident that it does. In it, as in Cantiga 59, we learn that the plow knocks out the nun. But Castigos additionally tells us that the plow leaves more than a mere scar, as in the Cantiga. Instead, that nail formerly penetrating Christ's hand becomes embedded in the nun's face, piercing both her cheeks, thereby providing a detail as horrifying as it is dramatic, especially when we recall that this account also describes the nun as 'muy ninna e muy hermosa' (p. 118).¹⁴

Additional differences between the two versions necessarily result from the medium of expression--one prose, the other poetry. The prose is more ample and capable of providing random and more graphic details which would be unwieldy in the poetry. Such details include the information that English kings had established the convent where the miracle took place, that the nuns belonged to the Order of St. Benedict, and that the nun in question honored the Virgin by saying specifically 'aquellas palabras que la saludo el angel diziendo Ave Maria' (p. 118). Several other details of the same kind need not be mentioned here.

Differences, then, between the Castigos and the Canticas versions exist. But what of similarities? Are there enough of these to warrant the position that Castigos uses the poetic version as its source? Many of the details in Castigos mirror those found in the poetry: both refer to the suitor as a knight. Cantiga 59:19-20 also says he is a "cavaleir' aposto e fremos' e de bon prez"; Castigos, in addition to calling him "cauallero" (p. 118), also indicates that he was "muy cancebo e mucho apuesto e bueno de armas" (p. 118). Cantigas 59:55 states that the appointed hour to rendezvous is "meya noite" and Castigos echoes "media noche" (p. 118). Cantigas 59:61 says that before leaving the nun was 'fincando os peollos'; Castigos has "finco los ynojos" (p. 119). Both denigrate the nun with the same word: "mesquinna" (59:68) and "mesquina" (p. 119, twice). Cantigas 59:82-83 states that after the blow to the nun, she "come morta jouve tolleita sen sen"; Castigos refers to this twice in nearly identical words: "cayo en tierra la monja por muerta e asi yogo..." (p. 119) and again "fallaron la monja o varie tendida por muerta en tierra" (p. 120). Another point of contact, reflecting either a misunderstanding or a deliberate change of detail, suggests that Cantiga 59 probably serves as a source: Cantiga 59:40-41 reveals that the nun 'sancristaa era.' Castigos calls her a 'buena cristiana' (p. 118). Is this a misinterpretation of 'sancristaa' as 'san cristaa,' hence 'buena cristiana'? As sacristan in the Cantiga version, the nun has free rein within the convent. Her principal duty is to ring the bells to awaken the nuns for prayer. This detail facilitates her escape. The interpretation in Castigos, however, forces the author to provide other details for her escape: "E cuando vyno la noche que fueron las monjas a deze (sic) sus completas... furto de las otras fue abrir vn postigo pequenno que y auie por do salliese ..." (p. 118). The marginal prose likewise suffers misinterpretations requiring the addition of extraneous detail. There are yet other changes in the marginal prose which seem

much more deliberate.¹⁵ We do not find this sort in the Castigos e documentos per se, at least not in the portion here considered.

To judge from the numerous points of contact and coincidence, then, Cantiga 59 is one, probably the principal, source for this portion of the miracle in Castigos. It nonetheless neglects one noteworthy detail: the fate of the admirer who vainly awaits the nun outside the convent walls. Castigos, on the other hand, tells us that "el caullero partio su corazon del amor della teniendose por escarnido de lo que le contescierra" (p. 120). He remains incredulous as he hears the miracle repeated throughout the land, and only after going to the convent himself does he believe it. He thereupon repents for having seduced the nun, and becomes a monk.

Though Cantiga 59 provides no denouement for the suitor, Cantiga 285 does, as its title indicates: "Como Santa Maria fez aa monja que non quis por ela leixar de ss'ir con o cavaleiro que sse tornass' a sua ordin, e ao cavaleiro fez outrossi que fillasse religion." Unlike the events in the Castigos version, those in Cantiga 285 take place over two nights. On the first night the Mother of God Herself thwarts the nun's sallying forth by standing before the door; "Mas quando foi ne porta, per ela non podia sayr, ca viia deant' a magestada que ll' a porta choya," (285:47-49). On the second night, the Virgin again blocks the exit, but the willful nun ignores her and "foi a porta abrir e sayu per ela e foisse" (285:80-81). The nun absconds, lives a full and happily-married life with her suitor, and even "Deus sofreu que ouvensen fillos muitos e fillas mui grandes e mui fremosos" (285-97-98). The Virgin, nevertheless, berates the nun in her sleep for abandoning Her and her Son. Still, She promises the nun that She will have Christ forgive her if she returns to the convent. With her husband's consent, the nun returns, and he "dela sse partia e d'outr' abadia religion fillava, en que a Deus servia" (285:119-21). Cantiga 285 thus recounts his entering the monastery, but in the

fewest words possible.

Cantiga 285 cannot provide details of the young man's broken heart since in this version he waits in vain only one night. Castigos, however, dwells on this point, providing abundant details about the suitor and his feelings of betrayal. It must if the story is to convince young men not to make nuns their paramours. There are yet other details in Castigos that parallel those in Cantiga 285. For example, we learn in the Cantigas that the nun "de linnage mui alt' era" (285:15), and Castigos repeats: "era muger de muy buen linaje" (p. 118). Castigos states that the suitor pretends to be the nun's relative in order to ward off suspicion. In 285:24 we read that the man was a nephew of the abbess. Could not the information in Cantiga 285 have suggested this detail in Castigos? Additional similarities seem to insinuate this. Cantigas 285:52 reads that the nun was so afraid "que sse foi quanto ir mas pode ao dormidoiro." Castigos indicates that before her escape the nun did not want to go "con las otras a echarse en el dormitorio" (p. 118-19). Cantigas 285:84-85 makes clear that the suitor "logo tragya un palafren mui branco en cue a el subia"; Castigos notes: "E traye vn palafren¹⁶ muy bien ensellado en que la leuase" (p. 120). Moreover, the young man becomes concerned in 285:60 when "Outro dia gran mannaa atanto que a luz viu"; likewise Castigos says that he was concerned 'desque el cauallero vio que el dia era claro' (p. 120). In fine, the numerous affinities between the Cantigas and Castigos, indicate that Cantiga 285, together with Cantiga 59, probably serves as a likely source for the version in Castigos. Other correspondences between Castigos and Cantigas 59 and 285 suggest that to look for another source is to ignore the obvious.

If Castigos employs at least these two Cantigas as a source, and if the Cantigas are the source for the marginal prose of Escorial codex T.I.1, that is, if these prose variants share the same source, can we say that they share the same author?

The *modus operandi* for the two prose versions is distinct. The marginal prose writings translate only the miracle stories above them; the miracle story in Castigos stems from at least two different accounts treating the same theme, and is not, strictly speaking, a translation. The purposes for the two prose accounts also diverge. The purpose of the marginal prose seems to be to make intelligible in Castilian the story contained in the Gallician poetry. This kind of version would be ideal for reading to an audience prior to a musical presentation of the Cantiga. Thus we read at the end of each translation, in more or less the same words: 'E por este milagro fizo el Rey con Alfonso la cantiga susodicha a loor de Santa Maria que diz asy ...' (p. 99). A translation of the corresponding refrain follows these words, and introduces the singing which also began with the refrain in Galician-Portuguese.

The purpose of the Castigos is to admonish:

Agora, mio fijo, que te puedo yo mas en esta razon dezir nin castigar de quanto este miraglo te castiga?, mas para mientes en el tu corazon cuando el crucifixo e la ymajen de Santa Maria, que son ymagines de fuste fechas por mano de omne e mudas que non fablan, tanto se sintieron de tal fecho como este que desuso es contado por tal sentimiento que Dios e Santa Maria ende tomaron, quanto es mayor e mas grande sobre esto el sentimiento que Dios e Santa Maria dello ovieron (p. 121).

Still, the same author could have had different purposes for the two narratives. But would the same author offer two substantially dissimilar styles?

Because the marginal prose extends only to Cantiga 25, a direct comparison of style between prose versions treating the same miracle is impossible. Prose narratives of similar length and content suitable for comparison consist of the

first part of the Castigos prose narrative, that portion most closely corresponding¹⁷ to Cantiga 59, and the marginal Theophilus story. The prose miracle of Theophilus corresponds to Cantiga 3.

A comparison of the two prose texts reveals that the Castigos version reads much more smoothly than the marginal prose for four basic reasons: 1) Castigos concatenates fewer varied subordinate items--clauses and participial phrases--than¹⁸ does the marginal prose below the Cantigas; 2) although the major subordinating conjunction in both pieces of prose is que, Castigos varies the manner of subordination more than the marginal Cantigas prose does;¹⁹ 3) it is more versatile in the use of²⁰ auxiliary verbs followed by the infinitive; 4) the marginal prose, in contrast, makes greater use of the present participle to present additional subordinate information than does the prose in Castigos. It does so at a ratio of almost two to one (19 to 10) in the prose texts compared. Such basic stylistic divergences do not suggest one author for both pieces of prose. It seems unlikely that, if Sancho is responsible for the prose in the Castigos, he is responsible for the prose in the margins of El Escorial codex T.I.1. If we recall the apparent function of the marginal prose, it would be even more surprising if he were its author. Sancho's purpose in Castigos is more worldly than that motivating either the poetic miracle stories or their marginal translations. In this way he moves closer to motives²¹ presented in the writings of don Juan Manuel.

To summarize, Sancho eclectically uses the miracle stories in the Cantigas for practical moral purposes. He adds details not found in his sources, details necessitated by the context in which he presents the story: to dissuade young men from wooing women married to God. The suitor's explicitly stated sorrow, and the emphasis on the fearfulness of the events happening to the nun, intend to discourage such behavior. Expansions in the prose below the Cantigos, on the other hand, essentially limit

themselves to the story line of the poetic version and serve primarily to clarify what poetic economy would not permit in the galician, although, as noted, some changes appear to be deliberate. Finally, the styles of the two prose narratives differ markedly, so much so, that when one considers the differences in connection with other evidence gathered, it seems reasonable to conclude that they do not issue from the same pen.

Could, then, the marginal prose of Escordial codex T.I.1 be don Juan Manuel's? The work of other scholars will inevitably shed light on this possibility. Given the function of the marginal prose, Manueline authorship seems slim. To hold this view would require explaining why don Juan would write in the margins when other outlets were available to him. He does not pen²² his Cronica abreviada, for example, in a margin. Whether or not we ever locate an author for the marginal prose is not as important as appreciating this corpus as a manifestation of creative literary evolution in the Middle Ages.

Notes

¹This prose has been edited more than once. I cite from James R. Chatham, ed., "A Paleographic Edition of the Alfonsine Collection of Prose Miracles of the Virgin," in David H. Darset et al., eds., Oelschläger Festschrift. Estudios de Hispanófila, 36 (Chapel Hill: Estudios de Hispanófila, 1976), 73-111. I regularize his text. John E. Keller also studies the marginal prose in "The Hispanicization of 24 of the Cantigas," in his Pious Brief Narrative in Medieval Castilian Verse: From Berceo to Alfonso X, Studies in Romance Languages, 21 (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1978), 120-126, and elsewhere (see below).

Agapito Rey, ed., Castigos e documentos para bien vivir ordenados por el Rey Don Sancho IV, Indiana University Publications Humanities Series, 24 (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University, 1952). All passages cited are followed and identified by page number within parentheses.

³Rey, op. cit. pp. 14-18, in the section titled "Autor y Fecha" recapitulates reasons following Sancho's authorship, providing we understand authorship as sponsorship. For an excellent synopsis of the authorship controversy see Billy R. Weaver, "The Date of Castigos e documentos para bien vivir." pp. 289-300 in Studies in Honor of Lloyd A. Kasten (Madison: Hispanic Seminary of Medieval Studies, 1975).

It is certainly possible for Sancho to have sponsored both pieces of prose, and to have had two different men redact different prose variations. This would account for the different styles. This position demands explaining 1) why he uses the margins of codex T.I.1 for one redactions, 2) why he does not identify himself as sponsor in the marginal redaction, and 3) what his motive for sponsoring the marginal text is. Similar questions put to the Castigos are much easier to answer. If, however, authorship is simply a matter of sponsorship, admittedly, the possibilities are many.

I have presented the evidence in a study titled "The Anonymous Castilian Prosifications of Cantigas 2-25 of Alfonso X (Escorial Codex T.I.1) at the Ninth St. Louis conference on Manuscript Studies, October 1982.

I provided details in a study titled "La traducción prosaica de las Cantigas 2-25: una comparación con la versión poética," at the August 1984 meeting of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese in Mexico City. See also John Esten Keller and Robert White Linker, "Some Spanish Summaries of the Cantigas de Santa María," RoN, 2 (1960), 63-67 and "Las traducciones castellanas de las Cantigas de Santa María," BRAE, 54 (1974), 221-93. See note 15 below⁶ as well.

The studies cited in note 5 above and note 7 below⁷ discuss details here presented.

I have listed details in a paper "Tres versiones del milagro de San Ildefonso en los códices de la cámara regia de Alfonso X, el Sabio" presented at the Congreso de la Asociación

Internacional de Hispanistas at Brown University in August 1983. Publication forthcoming in the Acts of the Congress.

John E. Keller, "A Feasible Source of Denouements of the Exemplos in El Conde Lucanor." American Notes & Queries, 14 (1975), 34-37.

"Escorial MS T.I.1 of the Cantigas de Santa Maria and Two MSS of El Conde Lucanor," RSH, 18 (1984), 441-43.

¹⁰"La prosificación castellana de las Cantigas: ¿Libro perdido de Juan Manuel?," to be published by the Medieval Research Seminar (Westfield College). See "Alfonso el Sabio: A Colloquium," LC. 13.1 (1984), 52.

¹¹On p. 13 of his introduction, Agapito Rey implies that Cantiga 59 is the source for his story in Castigos. John E. Keller and Richard P. Kinkade, Iconography in Medieval Spanish Literature (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1984), p. 54, note that the two versions are different and simply admit the possible that Cantiga 59 may be a source for Castigos.

Walter Mettmann, ed., Afonso X o Sábio. Cantigas de Santa Maria, 2 vols. (Vigo: Edicions Xerais, 1981). Number of Cantiga, followed by a colon, followed by number of line in poem identify all citations. I ignore end-of-line indications in citing.

¹³In la forme longue (Weaver, p. 293) of Castigos e documentos there are two miracle stories also found in the Cantigas de Santa Maria: the story of Theophilus (Cantiga 3); and the story of a remorseful women devotee of the Virgin who swallows a poisonous spider to commit suicide (Cantiga 201). The Theophilus story is so different from the poetic version in the Cantigas that it cannot possible derive from it. The Canstigos and Cantigas versions of the woman who swallows the spider are closer in content. Nevertheless, the two prose miracles (p. 216) in Castigos e documentos edited by Pascual Gayancos in Vol. 51 of Biblioteca de autores españoles. Madrid: Libería y Casa Editorial Hernando, 1928) are later interpolations and "could not have

possibly been produced during the reign of Sancho IV, i.e., 1284-95" (Weaver, p. 293). Consequently, they do not affect the study here, but are worthy of scrutiny elsewhere.

On p. 55 of Iconography Keller and Kinkade state that the artist in the Castigos manuscript they study leaves "nothing to the imagination." Neither does the author of Castigos.

Dorothy Clotelle Clarke, "Additional Castilian Verse and Early Arte Mayor in the Marginal Passages in Alfonso X's Cantigas de Santa Maria," KRO, 23 (1976), 305-317 provides evidence of a clerical bent behind some of the changes.

It is worthwhile noting here that the illumination of Cantiga 59 depicts a white horse with a handsomely tooled saddle. If the author of Castigos had before him this very picture, that the saddle caught his attention is easily understood. I am grateful to John E. Keller who generously provided a color slide of this Cantiga as found in El Escorial codex T.I.1.

A quick count totals about 1020 words in the Castigos portion and about 970 words for the Theophilus story below Cantiga 3. See also James R. Chatham, ed., "The Alfonsine Prose Theophilus Legend--A Reading Text," LC, 7.1 (1978), 57-59.

An example of varied concatenation in the prose below Cantiga 3 is: "E ella como seruidora de Santa Maria e nunca perdiendo della fiuza dixo quella nunca tal negocio faria aunque sopiese prender la muerte ca mas preciaua su muerte seruiendo a Dios que non onrras nin riquezas seruiendo al diablo ..." (p. 87). Castigos handles a comparable thought in a more varied and, hence, more comprehensible manner as follows: "E acaescio asi, por el diablo que suele ordir estas cosas, que vn cauallero de aquella tierra, el qual era muy mancebo e mucho apuesto e bueno de armas, e era de grande linaje, ouo de enamorarse de aquella monja, ..." (p. 118).

Both versions are partial to que. The marginal prose below Cantiga 3 uses six subordinating elements (conjunctions, relative pronouns) 13 times: de como (1), en quien (2),

ca (2), avn que (1), desque (4), and por que (3). Castigos employs ten subordinate elements (conjunctions, relative pronouns) 21 times: elqual (2), ca (2), en quisa que (2), en como (1), como (1), quando (4), desque (4), con que (3), ante que (1) and por que (1).

Cantiga 3 uses eight different auxiliary verb combinations a total of 13 times: venir a (3), saber (1), soler (1), cesar de (1), poder (2), haber a (2), ceber (2), placer (1); Castigos makes use of 12 verbs a total of 20 times: venir (1), querer (1), huviar (1), comencar a (2), soler (2), ver (2), ir (2), ir a (1), poder (2), acostumbrar de (1), haber de (3), haber a (2).

See Richard P. Kinkade, "Sancho IV: Puente literario entre Alfonso el Sabio y Juan Manuel," PMLA, 87 (1972), 1039-51.

Diego Catalán elucidates don Juan Manuel's autodidactic motive for the Cronica abreviada in "Don Juan Manuel ante el model alfonsí: El testimonio de la Crónica abreviada," in Juan Manuel Studies, ed. Ian Macpherson (London: Tamesis, 1977), pp. 17-51.

I wish to thank John E. Keller for reading an earlier draft of this study and Kathleen L. Kirk whose careful reading of this work has greatly improved it. All stylistic infelicities and deficiencies are my own.

Lope de Vega's Pastoral Drama:
De-mythification to Re-mythification
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The great literary masters of the Spanish Golden Age can perhaps be commonly defined by their thorough knowledge of literary traditions and their success in reworking the inherited conventions in new and imaginative ways. While an admittedly small segment of his total production, Lope de Vega's rich treatment of the pastoral is no exception. Finding in the pastoral very fertile ground for literary experimentation, Lope frequently turned to the pastoral throughout his long writing career and carefully cultivated the tremendous variety inherent in this mode. We need only recall his work in pastoral narrative, La Arcadia, Pastores de Belén, Remedio en la desdicha; the pastoral interludes in his epic, Jerusalén conquistada; and the bucolic tone of much of his lyric poetry as proof of his longstanding attraction to and engagement with the pastoral. Yet, it is in his drama that Lope presents the most creative elaboration of bucolic convention. His theater is strikingly rich in pastoral motifs and original treatments of this suggestive mode. This study examines the ways in which Lope exploited, subverted and restored the themes and formal conventions of bucolic literature in his early and late theater.

It is significant to note that Lope chose the pastoral as a viable means of creative literary expression from the very outset of his career. El verdadero amante (sometimes considered Lope's first drama as he states in the prologue that he composed the play at the age of twelve), La pastoral de Jacinto and Belardo el furioso, are all estimated to have been composed before 1600, and all very consciously imitate the conventional motifs of Renaissance pastoral romance. La Arcadia, based on Lope's pastoral romance of the same name (1598), is a somewhat later work, but treats the pastoral in much the same manner as the afore-

mentioned plays. In each of these plays the action unfolds in a rural, bucolic setting, the characters wear the garb of shepherds and a good deal of the drama is concerned with the articulate expression of the amatory sentiments of the characters. Yet, while these plays appear to conform externally to the traditional motifs of pastoral romance, they actually represent a demythification of the pastoral which Lope achieves through parody and subversion of bucolic norms.

In contrast to the Neoplatonic principles of the universality and harmony of love usually informing Lope's Renaissance models, in these plays love is characterized as jealous passion, and its destructive nature is powerfully suggested by such images as conflagration and ruins. The pervading sense of otium, the "lack of fear and sense of well-being ... the calmness and tranquility of the spirit" common to the pastoral is noticeably absent in these plays as they dramatize the fragmentation and disintegration of love. Love inspires disorder and discord between the inhabitants of the pastoral bower, as they frequently engage in plots and intrigues to further their amorous ends. Rather than ennobling the lover, his passion drives him to the extremes of madness. Lope very clearly subverts the norms of serenity and renewal so integral to the pastoral. In fact, in his depiction of the irrationality of love, he draws upon a very different Renaissance model, Ariosto's Orlando furioso.

The epitome of the crazed lover is Belardo el furioso, propelled to the heights and depths of insanity as he storms the countryside in search of Jacinta, his Angelica. Yet, typical of these dramas, his madness is characterized by such excess and exaggeration that it is often carried to the point of the farsical. In the scene that marks the commencement of his mad exploits, he decides to bury Jacinta's portrait before his return to Arcadia. During the solemn "ceremony" he recalls historical exempla of other "noble" burials and likens himself to Alexander and the emperor Tiberius. Yet the venerated burials he

alludes to are those of a horse and crow, and rather than heighten the seriousness of the occasion, the exempla in reality undercut its solemnity and underscore the burlesque nature of the scene.

Lope repeatedly presents a comic deflation of serious literary motifs throughout these plays, most notably in his ironic treatment of the characters' contemplation of suicide. The suicide motif is certainly not uncommon in the Renaissance pastoral tradition, with examples found in Boccaccio's Ninfale fiesolano, Tasso's aminta, Juan del Encina's Egloga de tres pastores and Egloga de Plácida y Victoriano, as well as Garcilaso's second eclogue. Yet in these plays, the threats are so frequent and the characters so easily distracted that they effectively eliminate any of the tragic overtones present in the previously mentioned works. The three attempts in Belardo el furioso are all followed by comic scenes, a feigned swoon, wedding festivities, and a slapstick sort of chase scene. While heightening the madness and despair of the characters in their contemplation of suicide, Lope also very cleverly pokes fun at serious pastoral works through exaggeration and burlesque.

The debunking of pastoral myth through parody in fact becomes an underlying theme in his later play, La Arcadia. The rustic characters and Cardenio in particular, the clever rustic equivalent of the gracioso, openly mock bucolic tradition and its artificiality. Cardenio disguises himself as Venus in the temple and delivers an oracle at the wedding of Salicio and Belisarda which recalls the solemn edict of Diana in Guarini's Il pastor fido. His pronouncement that any man who marries the maiden will die in three days is taken seriously by all and throws the countryside into an uproar. Yet, the foolish Bato, descendant of the pastor bobo, ironically comments that the goddess "debe² de estar resfriada/porque habló como un becerro." Later in the play, Bato pursues Flora disguised as a wolf, a scene taken from Daphnis and Chloe of Longus. The ruse backfires,

however, for the shepherdess pays him little attention, and the country folk beat him with sticks, mistaking him for a real wolf. The parodic intention of the play becomes even more evident in a statement by Cardenio in which he sardonically exclaims:

¡Par Dios, Bato, que yo tiemblo!
 ¡Las cosas que hay en Arcadia!
 Todos son encantamentos,
 todos son dioses y dioses,
 faunos, dríás, semideos,
 sátiros, medio cabritos,
 circes, gazmios, Polifemos,
 centauros y semicapros (p. 140).

By satirizing the mythical and magical elements of the Arcadian world Lope effectively transfers and focuses his audience's attention not on the ordered beauty and harmony of the pastoral (which he is incapable of poetizing in these works), but on its ultimate artificiality.

Even in his depictions of the natural setting, Lope turns from the conventional idealized locus amoenus with its shady trees, grassy fields, crystalline fountains and pleasant breezes attuned to man's sentiments to an inhospitable, disordered, and even hostile landscape which offers its inhabitants no refuge. Belardo el furioso opens with a lament by Floripeno stressing the unsympathetic view of nature with its craggy rocks, turbulent waters and poisonous flora:

Quedaos, ovejas tristes, derramadas por
 esos altos y empinados riscos; que mejor
 andaréis que mal guardadas, paciendo a
 solas malvas y torviscos; las hierbas,
 del rocío aljofaradas, sin que os
 detengan el redil ni apriscos, podéis
 pacer, primero que la aurora la copia
 esmalte de la bella Flora.

Paced, siquiera, adelfas venenosas,
 y entre ellas el postrero parasismo;

bebed las aguas turbias y dañosas y, despeñadas, id al propio abismo; que mal tiene cuidado de otras cosas el que apenas le tiene de sí mismo; perdad cuidado que, perdido, o³ cobre rico de males, y de bienes pobre.

Later, in a fit of jealousy and despair, Belardo describes the disharmony of the world by stressing the inversion of the normal order: "Todo está lleno/el mundo de un confuso barbarismo,/ya las abejas dan por miel veneo,/furias el cielo, estrellas el abismo,/amor desdenes, y Jacinta besos" (p. 86). While these expressions of Nature's discord are very obviously antithetical to the norms of Renaissance pastoral, they nonetheless form a very coherent and consistent vision of disorder within the plays themselves.

The medium of expression, of course, determines to a great extent the attitudes and themes reflected in a literary text. The fact that the works discussed are comedias accord them certain generic characteristics which often take precedence over thematic and contextual concerns. It is for this reason that Lope can so easily subvert many pastoral conventions without disrupting the fundamental unity and meaning of the dramas. Indeed, it would appear that the chaotic vision characteristic of Lope's capa y espada plays was his model. The intrigue and dissimulation common to the capa y espada play set the works' dominant tonality, and not the peaceful vision of bucolic tranquility of Renaissance pastoral. The fast pace, agitated movement, confusion and disorder of these plays is much more suited to the capa y espada type of play and its urban environment. The quick action is quite contrary to the static nature and introspective focus of much pastoral literature.

Thus, we see that Lope very consciously exploited and exploded pastoral myth and its essential vision. By dramatizing the destructive and irrational nature of love and the resultant chaos it wreaks in the bucolic setting, Lope, in es-

sence, presents a disintegration of the lyrical world of amatory pastoral. Lope's tendency to undercut and parody bucolic convention in these works manifests his dissatisfaction with the artificiality of the genre at this point in his career, and, yet, anticipates his subsequent attempts to preserve and restore it by radical alteration of its emphases.

La selva sin amor represents the very different directions in which Lope displayed his artistic genius. Written in 1629, it is Lope's last pastoral play and, also, the first Spanish opera, commissioned by Philip IV to inaugurate the Buen Retiro Palace. While the play has been largely overlooked by critics, it is instrumental in the development of the court theater in seventeenth century Spain and as a sort of final statement by Lope on the pastoral. The play marks the first attempt in Spain to introduce dramatic performances with music. Noting this distinction, it was called not a comedia, but an "égloga pastoral." The dialogue was entirely sung, and Lope himself⁴ affirms that it was "cosa nueva en España."⁴ It was performed with elaborate stage sets and costly machinery designed by Cosme Lotti, the⁵ Italian architect who Philip IV brought to Spain. Lotti designed the staging for the Spanish court plays for several years following Italianate models of the court spectacles at Ferrara, Mantua, Florence and Urbino.

La selva sin amor surely impressed its audience with its innovations in music, its striking visual effects and lyrical beauty, but it is hardly the stuff of drama. A brief summary will serve to illustrate its splendid scenic potential, as well as its very reduced plot. The play opens with "un mar en perspectiva, que descubriría a los ojos (tanto puede el arte) muchas leguas de agua hasta la ribera opuesta, en cuyo puerto se vían la ciudad y el faro con algunas naves ... Víanse asimismo algunos peces que fluctuaban según el movimiento de las ondas ..." (p. 187). Venus appears in a chariot drawn by swans and tells Cupid of a loveless forest, "la selva sin amor,"

in the court of Spain where the maidens defy the laws of Love. Flying through the air by means of a stage machine, Cupid leaves at once for Spain to avenge this affront to his power. The scene then changes to a forest on the banks of the Manzanares with a view of the Casa de Camp and the Royal Palace. Silvio the shepherd mourns his beloved Filis's disdain, while Filis extols the life of freedom from love. He offers her as gifts some lovely goldfinches he has caught, and she frees the birds and quickly retreats. While he laments his despair, his friend Jacinto appears, and the two lovelorn shepherds exchange their tragic stories. Jacinto, too, has received the same rebuffs from his beloved Flora. The two shepherds retire, and Cupid appears, striking the maidens with his golden arrows. Filis and Flora gently feel the stirring of their passions and seek out Silvio and Jacinto, who in turn have been smitten by Cupid's leaden arrows and therefore show the same indifference that the shepherdesses had displayed previously. Before departing with Venus, Cupid strikes the shepherds with his golden shaft so that Filis, Silvio, Jacinto and Flora are united, and all celebrate the triumph of love in a final chorus.

So very different from the agitated movement of his early plays, Lope here presents a work distilled of its action and largely reduced to set pieces. The dramatic tension derives more from its bipartite structure--two settings, pairs of characters, parallel speeches or arias--than from any real conflict. Yet, in minimizing the drama, Lope is, in fact, more closely following the pastoral's conventional static quality and lack of forward movement. The traditional introspective focus of bucolic literature is evident here, as the characters discourse in alternating fashion on their sentiments. Indeed, in structuring his play around successive expositions of the characters feelings, Lope is adapting a fundamental pastoral model, the singing contest, which lends itself quite readily to an operatic treatment. The dialectical form of the Renaissance pastoral eclogue

writers in particular often present a protagonist in regular, ironic alternation between first- and third-person narration.

The simultaneity of a text's feminist and patriarchal effects raises the question of audience, or of reader response. The preceding examples enable a woman to use words in such a way that they have one meaning for her and another for the man who is listening or reading. In this way irony can give a woman's opinion while placating a male audience. This practice has special appeal when women writers move from relatively private genres, such as diaries and letters, to more public ones, whose readership almost always includes men.

In a more complex context, the woman's audience may consist of another woman as well as a man. If the women share certain values, irony can serve as a code between the two of them. Critics have begun to write about women's codes. For instance, Annis Pratt mentions the "drowning" effect, in which acceptable sounds are used to drown out subversive ones. Susan Sniader Lanser tells of one woman who describes her marriage in a letter to another woman; the letter seems to express contentment but reveals anguish when one reads only every other line.

An example that will reward close examination appears in Doris Lessing's novel The Marriages between Zones Three, Four, and Five. Not only do women employ an ironic code in a man's presence, but one woman teaches the code to the other while they are using it. Al-Ith, queen of a feminist utopia, has been forced to marry Ben Ata, king of male-dominated Zone Four. In his land she becomes friends with another woman, Dabeeb. Dabeeb and her suffering countrywomen occasionally celebrate secret song festivals that both nourish their sisterhood and defuse their discontent. Al-Ith suspects the existence of the "underground movement" (104) and remembers having heard a song that might come from the festivals. Curious Al-Ith asks her husband to have Dabeeb come to their pavilion. There Dabeeb sings different versions

of nature manifests the same amorous desire that Filis and Flora now sense:

Repara, Flora, y mira
 que aquella blanca tórtola suspiráa;
 ¿no ves aquella cierva
 llamar el gamo, y él pacer la yerba
 ocioso y descuidado?
 El arroyuelo deste ameno prado
 sale a besar las flores,
 con lengua de cristal las dice amores
 ¿que novedad es ésta? (p. 195)

The play very appropriately ends with a choral affirmation of the transformation of the "selva sin amor" to the "selva de amores."

Lope has radically altered his focus; but in so doing he is able to preserve and renew the pastoral while, at the same time, acknowledging and poetizing its artificial construction. La selva sin amor represents a re-mystification of classical pastoral, a form Lope had previously satirized but now embraces with new vigor as a vehicle for spectacular court drama. Music, myth, love and verse are now integrated in a harmonious whole aimed at the celebration of the lyrical beauty of pastoral drama.

Thus, Lope very clearly approached the pastoral with a critical, yet sympathetic eye. The versatility of the mode itself enabled him to be most creative in his dramatic treatments of the pastoral, yet Lope's artistic genius cannot be denied. He worked with the inherited conventions as a master craftsman, expanding them, modifying them, and often subverting them, but always enriching the very traditions in which he found inspiration.

NOTES

¹ Thomas Rosenmeyer, The Green Cabinet: Theocritus and the European Pastoral Lyric (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1969), pp. 65-67.

² Lope de Vega, La Arcadia in Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, CLXXXVIII (Madrid: Atlas, 1965), p.140. Subsequent page references are to this edition.

³ Lope de Vega, Belardo el furioso in Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, CLXXXVIII (Madrid: Atlas, 1965), p. 63. Subsequent page references are to this edition.

⁴ Lope de Vega, La selva sin amor in Biblioteca de Autores Españoles, CLXXXVIII (Madrid: Atlas, 1965), p. 187. Subsequent page references are to this edition.

⁵ Lope himself praises Lotti's genius in the preamble to the play, "La máquina del teatro hizo Cosme Lotti, ingeniero florentín, por quien S.M. envió a Italia para que asistiese a su servicio en jardines, fuentes y otras cosas, en que tiene raro y excelente ingenio. Nuevo Hieron Alejandro, y no menos admirable en sus máquinas semovientes que aquel insigne griego, o el alemán famoso que hizo el águila que acompañó por el aire la coronada frente de Carlos V." (p. 187)

⁶ David Young develops these ideas in his penetrating study of Shakespeare's pastoral plays, The Heart's Forest, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1972.

La déponance: A Functional Heterogeneity in
Expression

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In recent years, linguists have relegated ever greater areas of language to the category of paralinguistics where they have been eagerly assimilated into the repertory of new sciences such as semiotics and praxematics. Nonetheless no other discipline has successfully dealt with language without recourse to the methodology, general principles, and models of linguistics. Why is linguistics abandoning much of this broader conceptual field to other disciplines? In fact, linguistics is facing a long anticipated crisis which might have originated in a conceptual framework wrought by the ancient Greeks, or perhaps in an even earlier frame of reference. Can a discipline calling itself a science successfully treat or even tolerate a deliberately ambiguous object always projecting two disparate faces? Can the linguist contemplate language as a heterogeneous object not only refusing to resolve the enigmas of its heterogeneity but also audaciously declaring them as the basic tension inherent in its genesis and the principle for transformation of its own structural foundations? Guided by the precepts of scientific positivism, the linguist feels obliged if not constrained to perfect the topology of the object of his science, language, as a homogeneous object. However, the long history of language's development almost always presents two opposing functions in its genesis and as a result two opposing philosophical views of this genesis.

THE "EXPRESSIBLE" AND THE IDEA

What is the underlying reason for the impression of heterogeneity or homogeneity in language? The argument for a homogeneous model for language originates in the Platonic dialogues and Aristotelian scientific discourse. This model remains very little changed in its application to

contemporary linguistics and, in effect, constitutes the underlying reality in the Saussurian concept of the sign. The basis for this conceptual reality is largely attributable to the central position of the definition in Aristotelian thought. In effect, the definition is the translation of the very idea of being. This valorization of the definition as a real concept supplanting the material reality of its formation or cognitive strategy is the forerunner of the arbitrary relationship between the signifier and the signified in contemporary linguistics. The valorization of the definition allows it to supplant the reality which it represents, thus precluding any further discussion of the heterogeneous psychic process which functions as its genesis. This position regarding the definition is not shared by Stoic thought. For the Stoics, the definition is neither a representation of an essential concrete reality, a signifier, nor the essential idea of an object, the signified. The definition is rather a dynamic "expressible," that is to say an intelligible cognitive sign. This opposition between the Aristotelian definition and the Stoic definition is not based upon the inspiration of contemporary hindsight but rather upon the observations of Ammonius in regard to the equivalences between thought, word, and object in the Aristotelian system.

Sextus recounts the following anecdote illustrating the principle of the "expressible" in Stoic philosophy. A Greek and a Barbarian hear the same words and see the same object, but the Greek understands and the Barbarian does not. What reality exists in this case other than the sound and the object? According to Plato and Aristotle there is the universal essence or idea, but how can this idea be a universal essence if the Barbarian doesn't understand the word which represents it? Both sound and object remain the same for the Greek and the Barbarian. Evidently the object has an attribute perceived by the Greek alone, that is to say the attribute of being

signified by the sound as language. This attribute constitutes the basis for the Stoic "expressible." Therefore the signified object, according to Sextus, does not share the same real space as the object alone, nor does the "expressible" change the nature of the object. Is the "expressible" merely a signified? Not all "expressibles" are signifieds. The fact of being uttered is a predicate radically different from signification which is itself an "expressible" and a predicate of the object signified. The predicate is central to the concept of an "expressible", and, yet, not all predicates are "expressibles". According to Sextus and Diocles, only predicates designating a transition are "expressibles".⁵ Consequently, one can conclude that an "expressible" is not a form but an incorporeal entity generated by human reason during the process of signifying. Are all Rational notions "expressibles"? In effect, Diocles distinguishes "expressibles"⁶ from other entities perceived by human reason. Zeno clarifies this position stating that "expressibles" are like the objects they represent and like their qualities, that is to say similar to the impressions left on the human mind by the perception of the object.

Clearly, the static signified is abandoned in the conception of "expressibles". Therefore, the "expressible" is a possible point of departure in the quest for a dynamic heterogeneity in the generative structures of language. According to Stoic thought, if the subject and the predicate are considered to be equally concrete and real, all expression must be reduced to discovering identical categorical judgments for both, expressed as reciprocal metaphors linked by an unexpressed copula. No transition is possible in the relationship between the subject and predicate in such a system. Since the presuppositions of Platonic thought coincide with the system described, we must accept the Stoic criticism of this theory, that is to say that Platonism is limited to expressions of a single word with no possibility of expressing temporality nor syntax.

Consequently, the reduction effected by Aristotle in the definition must be read as a solution to heterogeneity in the sign.

The stoics try to restore syntax and transformation to the sign by accepting the sign as non-material and designating its differentiation or "différance" as a product of the predicate. The implications of Platonic reality suggest that in expression two subjects using the same expression must coincide, thus relinquishing their individuality in each illocutionary act. An absurd idea, it would seem, but is this not the very assumption underlying the modern concept of linguistic community and linguistic competence? Is this not, perhaps, also the cause of multiple personalities in the individual who feels too restricted by the implications of his language?

The Stoics substitute transformation for identity and focus this transformation of attributes, not in the subject, but in the predicate itself. Consequently, "the tree is green" becomes "the tree greens". As a result, the predicate becomes the seat of a chronothesis recording the transformation of the individual subject or speaker in his attributes. Thus, the aspect of the predicate is not a real concrete space but rather the attribute of its own activity. Although this logic resembles earlier Megaric philosophy and Epicurean thought, the Stoic's introduction of a non-material "locus" into "being", which is purely expressible and not sensorially spatial nor temporal distinguishes them from all philosophy of the period. Within these parameters, Stoic logic freed itself from the need for external verification or referentiality. The "expressible" which knows no concrete being becomes the sufficient justification of the veracity of a phrase. As a result, the phrase, "If he has a scar, he had a wound." derives its logical justification from the metaphorical nature of the "expressible", that is to say "scar" implies "wound" in the chronothetic non-being of expression.

Although the logical limitations of the Stoic model prevent it from being accepted in its entirety in the context of modern linguistics, one can perceive certain basic concepts shared with transformational and generative linguistics. Recognizing the subject and the predicate as distinct referential realities suggests contemporary concepts such as occasional subjects opposed to idealities and syntactical logic opposed to referential logic. This basic heterogeneity in language functions is reflected in modern concerns for cognitive strategies and their relationship to bio-feedback. The Stoic "expressible" calls to mind the semiotic classeme of modernity with its auto-referentiality. The sense of this classeme as a metaphor for the object in the human brain suggests the ultimate modernity of kinesic and kinesthetic studies such as those conducted by Birdwistell, Poyatos, and Slobin. Currently, Donald Dew and Paul Jensen¹¹ in the United States¹² and neurolinguists at the University of Montreal¹² are studying bio-feedback in relation to the neuromuscular interference in the verification of speech. However, Sophist thought naively grasped this sense of muscular interference as they reiterated Zeno's assertions that the meaning of a word was related to its articulation. Moreover, and most significantly, this early work on the role of the predicate in syntacticalization and language generation mirrors the thoughts of Gustave Guillaume in his opposition of a praxeogenesis designating the verification of language through its syntactical correctness, and an ontogenesis predicating a referentiality¹³ as the basis for veridicity in expression. In fact, the problem with Stoic thought is that it is conceived as a polemic critique of Platonic thought, whereas the reality of language practice suggests that the two theories are poles of a heterogeneous process, established in the acquisition of language.

THE LANGUAGE OF ACTION

In the eighteenth century, Condillac

recognized the inherent heterogeneity in language as the result of empirical experience in language acquisition and the structure of the mind. A ferocious opponent of innate ideas and essentialism Condillac asserts:

Ainsi il y a un langage inné, quoiqu'il n'y ait point d'idées qui le soient. En effet, il falloit que les élémens d'un langage quelconque, préparés d'avance, précédassent nos idées; parce que, sans des signes de quelque espèces, il nous seroit impossible d'analyser nos pensées, pour nous rendre compte de ce que nous pensons, c'est-à-dire, ¹⁴ pour le voir d'une manière distincte.

In an historical context, Condillac's sense of an innate language preceding and serving as the basis for the genesis and organization of human reasoning, leads him to criticize the naive assumptions of Plato's Cratylus regarding the genesis of thought in primitive man. In our age, who remains unsympathetic to the notion that man acquired his reason empirically and that primitive man was not burdened with the abstract concepts of Athenian reason? Condillac does not realize the complexity of this statement. However, even within an anthropological context, language is considered to be the product of the individual's environmental needs within the limits of his community. Condillac's empirically guided appraisal of man's acquisition of language is behaviorally correct. When Condillac, ¹⁶ asserts that man develops an initial mime language based upon gestures closely related to immediate physical impulses, and that this mime language is the predecessor of thought organization or cognitive strategy in modern man, he is essentially speculating on the basic principles of Skinnerian behaviorist theory and Piaget's theory of language acquisition, one hundred and fifty years before they were articulated as modern sciences.

The language of action shared by both primitive man and the child, as a stage in the development of their language capabilities, according to Condillac, aggregates its participants not according to the parameters of universals and the perception of these universals by the individual but rather by the organic makeup of the members of a language group¹⁷. Furthermore, the language of action is shared by members of all species. In effect, man has become accustomed to encoding and decoding this language in his relations with domesticated animals, and they successfully reciprocate. Your dog understands neither the articulation of your idioms nor the syntax of your sentences but rather the immediate shared perceptual reality, that is to say the pitch and the expressive content. In the initial stages of development the child shares this language of action with your dog but the child acquires the ability to explore and exploit the chronothetic "expressible" which is not available to your dog. According to Condillac, the child learns to create artificial signs¹⁸ based upon the first natural signs as his need to extend his desire into the past and future develops.

Animals never acquire the ability to motivate the artificial image replacing the real and immediately present signs of their experiential situation¹⁹. Condillac indicates that, by means of analogy²⁰ and analysis, that the child creates first classemes and second a syntax logically classifying this system of classemes. Both concepts preclude the ready acceptance of an arbitrary relationship between the signified and the signifier and naturally, it is this concept upon which Condillac unleashes his fury in the eighteenth century:

il n'est pas étonnant qu'au hasard
d'etre absurdes, nous mettions de
l'arbitraire dans nos opinions, quand
nous en mettons dans notre langage.²¹

Perhaps this is the exaggerated and bitter criti-

cism of an aging scholar in his last work, but on the other hand what would be the consequences of placing an arbitrary relationship in the center of an analogical system. The "arbitrary" is the refutation of any dialogue between the signified and the signifier and, consequently, the refusal of all logical relations and possible analogies between the two constituents of the sign. Moreover, the concept of intensive or internal analysis leading to the discovery of deep generative structures is a sterile and fruitless activity in the context of the "arbitrary".

The significance of analysis and analogy in Condillac's linguistic system is best understood through his views on language acquisition in the child. Condillac proffers the following anecdote²² to explain the formation of generative classes during language acquisition. When a child names a tree, following the example of his instructor, he understands the sound as the name of an individual, but the next time he sees a tree, because he perceives the same analogical relationship with this object, he will also call it a tree, although this tree is completely different from the first. Consequently, the child learns to generalize without intending to do so. "Tree" no longer represents a particular object but rather a class of objects. The child learns to decompose and re-compose his sensorial perceptions as a cognitive language in accord with the demands of the complexity of his experience, not as a result of a preconceived notion. Subsequently, according to Condillac, the very act of analysis teaches the child to understand the categories and sub-categories of his analysis as the fragmentation of a single teleologically complete entity. Such an apprenticeship implies that language is based upon empirical relationships between two poles of a single heterogeneous activity, the brain itself and the external world. The external world excites the human mind to ever greater complexity of thought and expression in its quest to return to a balance of energy between external stimuli and internal strategies which it understands as homeo-

stasis.

LE STADE DU MIROIR AND NEUROLINGUISTIC MODELS

Neither Condillac nor the Stoics had psycholinguistic or neurolinguistic models at their disposal for developing their theories to their culmination as the expression of a model for language practice. If we accept with Tomachevski and Robert Lafont, the principle that it is the fable, itself, which allows man to "temporalize" and "spatialize" events beyond his immediate sensorial and cognitive environment, we perceive that the "expressible" through a series of equivalences represents the specular narration of the subject. Thus, the subject and the idea of subject develop as the result of a heterogeneous relationship between the brain and a perception of external reality excited by stimuli. The duration of this development is delimited by what Lacan calls the "stade du miroir" during which the child passively, and, deprived of any expressive language, elaborates the ideality of the subject:

La fonction du stade du miroir s'avère pour nous dès lors comme un cas particulier de la fonction de l'imago qui est d'établir une relation de l'organisme à sa réalité--ou, comme on dit de l'Innewelt à l'Umwelt. ...Ainsi la rupture du cercle de l'Innenwelt à l'Umwelt engendre-t-elle la quadrature inépuisable des récolements du mois.

Lacan indicates that this period lasts until the eighteenth month, but I tend, personally, to believe with Piaget that this is a preliminary stage in a development which lasts until the fourth year. The drama described by Lacan as a conflict between the "Innenwelt" and the "Umwelt" can best be explained as the product of the associative processes occurring during language acquisition in the region of the fissure of Roland. I propose that the opposition between the thetic and chronothetic realities of language results from a

kinesic perception of the body based upon the development of synapse tracts²⁷ in order to regulate the ever increasing complexity of external stimuli. This assumption is based upon the distribution of sensorial and motor regions on opposite sides of the fissure of Roland generating a mental image of a tensive body, dynamically producing language to reduce the tension between stimuli and motor compensation. This very real activity in the human brain links the cognitive strategy of language to a heterogeneous biological state.

THE ACQUISITION OF LANGUAGE

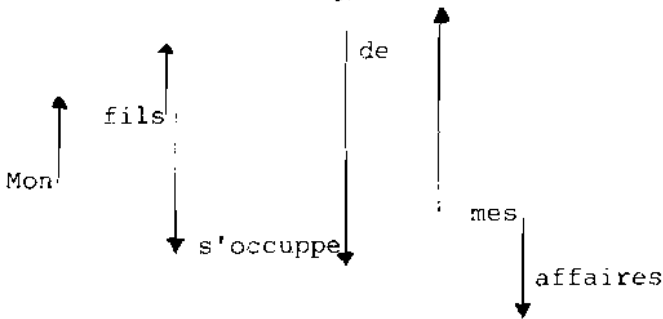
What are the parameters for the cognitive strategy allowing man to acquire the paradigm for an infinite generation of language in less than two years? In effect, Condillac's language of artificial signs, Lacan's imago and Lafont's fable all focus on man's ability to generate autonomous stimuli which replace real sensorial stimuli. This same speculative substitution is the basis for the divisions in the child's acquisition of language. The principal division observable in language acquisition is the presyntactical stage constituted of one word utterances, holophrases and the syntactical or analytical stage after the articulation of the first utterances linking two words.²⁸

Two dominant theories regarding the distribution of these events postulate that either the child classifies language into two distinct categories regarding the self and the environment, thus generating a child grammar distinct from adult language practices or that the child associates two objects at one time following the adult model because he knows the name of both and consequently is forced²⁹ by the series of stimuli to name both. Chomsky³⁰, and Miller and Ervin³¹ subscribe to the first theory whereas Staats³² and Palermo uphold the second theory. All are in agreement that the one-word utterances are holophrases evoking complete temporal and spatial environments so large that they cannot be sub-

divided or combined. Thus, neither predicates nor nouns are distinguishable in holophrases. The predicate, "eat" or "speak" shares the same degree of static nominalism as the word "mother" at this stage of development.

THE PROTO-DISOURSE

The acquisition of the holophrase is represented by the following primal scene: The global image is received as object and stimulus, reinforced by a sound; the sound is reproduced and verified by a second external stimulus, the parent's approval. Thus, the brain learns that language constitutes a series of stimulation both sides of Roland's fissure. The repetition of the same event through this set of synapse tracts symbolizes an internal reality for the brain, homeostasis or stability in brain energy. The repertory of stimuli in this event is stored without any specific content. Consequently, the synapse tracts and the counting of the stimuli are retained as psychic realities by the brain. As the child develops, prior to a two-word model, he learns to self-motivate by recalling the sequence of the initial event, first, without external confirmation and, second, without external images. This proto-discourse becomes the model for substitutions in the generative process. The first discourse developed is the ontogenetic discourse based upon the external referential stimuli described above. All subsequent discourses appear as "non-rotto-discourse" to the brain and consequently in the self's positing process are considered as "dé-ponance." Such a sense of positing is probably the reason for Plato and Aristotle insisting upon real spatial referents in their philosophy. If the brain were limited to the ontogenetic strategy, closure would follow every word, and in French, where closure is indicated by intonation, we would be forced to speak as this gentleman whose full neurological control of language generation has been impeded by aphasia:



PRAXEOGENESIS: SYNTACTICAL DISCOURSE STRATEGIES

At a certain stage in the child's language acquisition, the child is corrected in his language production and the Umwelt imposes an analytical labor on the brain which only knows one strategy for attaining homeostasis to this point. This moment--when the chair, a "fauteuil," is erroneously called "chaise"--which Anna Freud calls "Vermeommg"³⁴ is, in fact, the very moment when literary negativity is born. The brain has two signifiers for one holophrase and no strategy other than replacement of the real by the virtual to solve the problem. The solution is an intensive analysis of the holophrase as a composition made up of sub-categories. Thus, an autonomous system is born out of this fragmentation of the proto-discourse to generate a totally new discourse, not just new analogies. In effect, for the first time, the child is truly, man, the inventor inventing a language of specifiers and deflectors which indicate the logical parameters of his expression and his thoughts. This discovery generates a strange event in the child's development, a morphological fabulation during which the child disassembles all of the language he knows, reassembling it in structures purely of his own invention. Thus is born literary man.

Following the intensive analysis, the child's attention focuses on his ability to extend his expression into the world. The familiar activity of the child throwing the toy and calling to his mother to fetch it repeatedly is, in fact, the articulation extending his desire into the world as object, language, in order to perceive its

practical effect as complement upon its return. It is in this empire of the syntacticalizing predicate that the "déponance" realizes its full dominion in language as the expression of the subconscious's dominance over the world of objects. All analysis of this system and, consequently, all literature remains forever a product of this praxeogenetic temporal space in its role as analysis of who we are and what we think. The "déponance" is expressed as every shifting-out of conventionalized language strategy into the area of the unknown, but the "déponance" is a very human representation of the Ca, comfortably veiling the reality of the absolute otherness of the world of objects. Succinctly, the "déponance" is the law which constitutes the "non-legisign" and every "non-legisign."³⁵

TEXT STUDY AND THE DEPONANCE

The very nature of the acquisition of language leads the human mind, limited to basic strategies, to better readings of some texts than the critical mind. If the text reflects a dichotomy in its structure or is born out of an historical moment at the juncture of two epistemologies, the very analytical nature of the brain's strategy will cause it to recognize the teleological incompleteness of the structures in the work. Thus, a simple dictionary like Thresor de la Langue francoyse by Jean Nicot refuses to be read simply as a dictionary because of the extensive range of its teleological discourse. Published in 1606 and compiled in the last half of the sixteenth century, the articles are compiled in such a manner that they can neither be considered to be complete in the context of modern lexicography nor in the context of the pedagogic tradition of the Latin-French "dictionarium" or phrase book. Thus, each article demands an extensive and intensive reformulation of our epistemological evaluation of the period, as a reflection of the morphological concerns of the Medieval mind and the sense of exploration born out of the Renaissance. In cases such as Thresor de la Lan-

gue francoyse, the "déponance" allows us to conceive of epistemologies outside of the highly posited subject system of modern language.

Clearly, the brain's ability to substitute ideas for stimuli indicates that truth based upon referentiality is not a major constraint in its activities. Therefore, fiction and non-fiction do not merely represent different degrees of coincidence with external reality. Most of our expression is a response to perceived physical needs. However, fiction born in literary negativity, as I have previously indicated, does not respond to any physical need. Fiction is a response to the doubling of the signifier in literary negativity which first gave rise to the mind's conception of praxeogenesis as a response to this type of tautology. All fiction is a tautological statement directed toward various epistemological discourses, such as beauty, tragedy, futurism, and the poetic, which it expands through the need to raise the whole praxematic mental system in dealing with tautology. Thus, literature is to thought as the phrase "six is six" is to philosophy. Is this a torturous state of affairs for the brain? No, literature is the total realization of homeostasis as "jouissance"³⁶ which can only be realized by a full quest through the brain's problem-solving sets. In effect, the telling of the tale throughout human history and wherever man is to be found confirms and reveals the brain's passion for enigmas which sanction and express its dominion over the empire of things, achieved through its access to the imaginary kingdom of "la déponance."

¹ Sextus Empiricus, Mathematici, in H.F.A. von Arnim ed., Stoicorum veterum fragmenta 2 (Lipsiae: B.G. Teubneri, 1903) p. 48, l. 27.

² Ammonius, Aristotiles de interpretatione, in Stoicorum veterum fragmenta 2 p. 48, l. 31.

³ Sextus, in Stoicorum veterum fragmenta 2 p. 48, l. 19.

⁵ Diocles, Stoicorum 2 p. 68, l. 15.

The question of transformation separates the

Stoic "expressible" from Frege's "predicables." See Gottlob Frege, "Über Begriff und Gegenstand," Vierteljahrschrift für Wissenschaftliche Philosophie und Soziologie XVI (1892) pp. 192-205.

7 Diocles, Stoicorum 2 p. 24, l. 18.

8 Zeno, Stoicorum 1 p. 20.

See R. Birdwhistell, Kinesics and Context (Philadelphia: University of Philadelphia, 1972).

See F. Poyatos, New Perspectives in Nonverbal Communication (N.Y.: Pergamon, 1983).

See D.I. Slobin, The Ontogenesis of Grammar: A Theological Symposium (N.Y.: Academic Press, 1971).

See D. Dew and P. Jensen, Phonetic Processing: The Dynamics of Speech (Columbus: Merrill, 1977).

12 See META, 29, 1 (Montréal: mars 1984).

13 Gustave Guillaume, Leçons de Linguistiques de Gustave Guillaume (Laval: Les Presses de l'Université Laval, 1982) pp. 11-2.

E.B. de Condillac, La Logique in Oeuvres Philosophiques 2 (Paris: 1780 rpt. Paris: PUF, 1948) p. 396.

See E.B. de Condillac, Cours d'Études pour l'instruction du Prince de Parmes in Oeuvres Philosophiques 1 (Paris: 1775 rpt. Paris: PUF, 1947) p. 432.

17 See Condillac, (1775) p. 428.

18 See Condillac, (1775) p. 430.

19 See Condillac, (1775) p. 431.

20 See Condillac, (1775) p. 429.

21 See Condillac, (1780) p. 376.

E.B. de Condillac, La Langue des calculs in Oeuvres Philosophiques 1 (Paris; 1798 rpt. Paris: PUF, 1948) p. 420.

23 Condillac, (1780) p. 402.

See B. Tomachievski, "Thématique," in T. Todorov ed., Théorie de la littérature (Paris: Seuil, 1965) pp. 268-92.

See R. Lafont, Le Travail et la langue (France: Flammarion, 1978).

J. Lacan, "Le Stade du miroir," in Écrits I (Paris: Seuil, 1966) pp. 93-4.

26 See J. Piaget, Le Langage et la pensée chez

l'enfant (Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1970)

²⁷J.P. Changeux predicates a central importance for the relatively limited number of synapse tracts in relation to neurons in the human brain in "Quelques observations biologiques et leurs conséquences pour une théorie de l'apprentissage," in Problèmes actuels in psycholinguistique (Colloque) (Paris: 1971) pp. 281-7

²⁸See G. Bramaud du Boucheron, La mémoire sémantique de l'enfant (Paris: PUF, 1981).

²⁹See N. Chomsky, "Explanatory Models in Linguistics," in E. Nagel, P. Suppes, and A. Tarski, Logic, Methodology and Philosophy of Science (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1962)

³⁰See W.R. Miller and S.M. Ervin, "The Development of Grammar in Child Language," in U. Bellugi and R. Brown ed., The Acquisition of Language: Monographs of The Society for Research on Child Development 29 (1964) 1, pp. 9-33.

³¹See A.W. Staats, Learning, Language and Cognition (N.Y.: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1968)

³²See D.S. Palermo, "On Learning to Talk: Are Principles derived from the Learning Laboratory Applicable," in D.I. Slobin, The Ontogenesis of Grammar (N.Y.: Academic Press, 1971)

³³P. Bhatt, "The Linguistic Analysis of Aphasia," (Seminar) (University of Toronto: 1984)

³⁴See Lacan, (1966) p. 96.

³⁵C.S. Peirce defines legisign as follows: "A legisign is a law that is a sign. This law is usually established by men." in Collected Papers of Charles Sanders Peirce 2 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931-5) p. 246.

³⁶The concept, "jouissance" is basic to human homeostasis, but in the context of this study I understand it as an expression of "le plaisir du texte." See R. Barthes, Le Plaisir du texte (Paris: Seuil, 1973).

L'Échec linguistique du dialogue racinien

Étude de Phèdre

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Dans des conditions linguistiques normales, tout dialogue "est réalisé dans une situation spatio-temporelle particulière qui comprend le locuteur, l'auditeur, les actions qu'ils font à ce moment-là, et divers objets et événements extérieurs¹ auxquels ils réfèrent.

Dans un dialogue normal, c'est à dire celui où on peut parler d'un vrai échange entre les participants, le rôle du locuteur, rôle informationnel, peut passer d'un participant à l'autre sans pour autant nuire à la communication. Ce rôle, bien qu'alternatif, doit être cependant tenu par celui qui détient l'information. Ainsi donc, pour que la communication réussisse, il faut que les participants du dialogue en question soient suffisamment informés sur la diversité des messages émis, c'est à dire sur la diversité des projections référentielles. En d'autres termes, un certain degré d'uniformité dans la compréhension de tel ou tel autre énoncé est exigé chez les participants du dialogue.

Il me semble cependant que, dans la plupart des dialogues raciniens, cette uniformité dans la compréhension fait souvent défaut. La mauvaise compréhension des énoncés linguistiques provient surtout du fait que le participant détenant le rôle informationnel, le locuteur, ne veut pas ou ne peut pas l'assumer. Ce fait oblige ainsi l'auditeur à s'accaparer du rôle du locuteur. L'auditeur racinien ne semble pas être bien informé pour assumer ce rôle à bon escient, il conduit le dialogue à un échec total. Ce renversement des rôles est en effet la conséquence de la non-communication; mais quelles sont les causes précises de celle-ci? Barnett nous donne une réponse:

L'incommunicabilité racinienne se définit plutôt comme l'incapacité de l'émetteur d'un message d'énoncer selon le code "reçu" la teneur exacte et complète de la communication qu'il veut accomplir (souvent parce que lui-même ne comprend suffisamment ni le contenu du message, ni en effet le véhicule qui le transporte) et l'incapacité corrélatrice du récepteur du message de reconstituer selon le même code le sens exact et complet attribué₂ par l'émetteur à sa communication.

Ainsi donc les causes de l'échec du dialogue racinien peuvent provenir du récepteur. Dans la tragédie de Racine, l'émetteur peut ne pas communiquer son message parce qu'il ignore lui-même le contenu du message à transmettre. Le personnage racinien arrive parfois à un point où il ne peut comprendre ni sa pensée, ni ses sentiments; et où il ignore même sa propre identité.

Hippolyte: "Maintenant, je me
cherche et ne me trouve plus."
(Phèdre II, ii)

Il y a, chez Racine, un échec évident de l'auto-référentialité. La prolifération des questions comme: "que dis-je?", "qu'entends-je?", "Que vois-je?", "quel langage?" dans presque toute l'oeuvre tragique racinienne illustre très bien le désarroi d'un personnage n'arrivant pas à se placer dans un contexte bien déterminé.

Chez le locuteur racinien, la non-communication peut se manifester sous une forme de crise d'aphasie.

Le personnage racinien est fréquemment contraint à se soustraire à une réalité linguistique qui le dépasse. Ceci en

feignant une sorte de crise d'aphasie.⁴

Le personnage tragique de Racine semble être victime de toute une série de trous de mémoire, d'oublis et parfois même d'une paralysie de la langue.

Phèdre: "Mes yeux ne voyaient plus, je ne
pouvais parler."
(Phèdre I, iii)

Phèdre: "Le voici. Vers mon coeur tout
mon sang se retire. J'oublie,
en le voyant, ce que je viens lui
dire."
(Phèdre II, iv)

Phèdre: "Ciel! Que lui vais-je dire?"
Et par où commencer?"
(Phèdre II, iii)

L'échec communicatif peut aussi provenir du fait que l'émetteur a peur de parler. Cette peur du langage peut être causée soit par horreur et indignation vis à vis du contenu du message à transmettre ou par peur d'auto-destruction entraînant à son tour la culpabilité.

Phèdre: "Tu frémiras d'horreur si je
romps le silence."
(Phèdre I, iii)

Phèdre: "Quand tu sauras mon crime, et
le sort qui m'accable, je n'en
mourrai pas moins, j'en mourrai
plus coupable."
(Phèdre I, iii)

Phèdre: "J'aime ... A ce nom fatal, je
tremble, je frissonne."
(Phèdre II, v)

Cette fuite et cette peur de la parole va

condamner le personnage au silence. Dès le premier acte de Phèdre, nous savons que le personnage de Phèdre s'engouffre dans le silence:

Théramène: "Phèdre est atteinte d'un mal
qu'elle s'obstine à taire."
(Phèdre I, i)

Dans d'autres cas, la fuite de la parole menaçante peut se révéler sous un langage tautologique, adopté par le personnage refusant de nommer l'objet de son mal, considéré comme "tabou". Le langage de Phèdre en est un exemple. A propos de la référentialité tautologique adoptée par Phèdre, Barthes affirme:

La nomination du mal l'épuise tout
entier, le mal est une tautologie. 5
Phèdre est une tragédie nominaliste.

Voilà comment Phèdre réfère à Hippolyte, l'objet de son mal:

"Ce fils de l'Amazone, ce prince
si longtemps par moi-même opprimé."
(Phèdre I, iii)

"J'offrais tout à ce Dieu que je m'osais
nommer."
(Phèdre I, iii)

"J'ai même défendu par une expresse
loi qu'on osâ prononcer votre nom
devant moi."
(Phèdre II, v)

La seule distance que Phèdre essaie d'établir entre Hippolyte et elle-même est une distance purement linguistique. Phèdre ne nomme pas l'objet de son amour; mais par une description plus ou moins progressive, elle arrive à faire parler son interlocutrice, Oenone. C'est finalement cette dernière qui, la première, prononce le nom d'Hippolyte. C'est seulement quand les

chaines relationnelles ont plus ou moins claqué que Phèdre se permet de prononcer le nom d'Hippolyte.

Phèdre: "La veuve de Thésée ose
aimer Hippolyte!"

(Phèdre II, vi)

Ce n'est plus la femme de Thésée qui aime Hippolyte mais bien sa veuve.

Phèdre n'est pas la seule qui se réfugie derrière ce langage tautologique mais Hippolyte lui aussi l'adopte.

Hippolyte: "Je devais faire ici parler
la vérité, seigneur; mais
je supprime un secret qui vous
touche. Approuvez le respect
qui me ferme la bouche;"

(Phèdre IV, ii)

Hippolyte: "Oubliez, s'il se peut, que je
vous ai parlé, Madame; et
que jamais une bouche si pure
ne s'ouvre pour conter cette
horrible aventure.

(Phèdre V, i)

Nous savons aussi par Thérémène que comme Phèdre, Hippolyte se couvre également dans son silence.

Thérémène: "Vous périssez d'un mal
que vous dissimulez"

(Phèdre I, i)

Le locuteur racinien qui est en principe un des principaux personnages de la pièce n'arrive pas ou ne peut pas communiquer au récepteur la teneur exacte de son message. Le récepteur, malgré sa bonne volonté, se heurte au silence, à un mur à détruire pour laisser percer le message.

Le locuteur racinien qui semble reconnaître les faiblesses intercède auprès de l'auditeur et l'invite en quelque sorte à éclaircir le message reçu si message il y a :

Phèdre: "Songez que je vous parle une
langue étrangère, Et ne rejetez
pas des vœux mal exprimés."

(Phèdre II, ii)

L'incommunicabilité du locuteur, les faiblesses de son langage poussent ainsi l'auditeur à prendre le rôle d'interprète et même celui d'informateur detenu auparavant par le locuteur.

Dans la pièce, Phèdre, le dialogue entre Phèdre et Oenone illustre très bien cet échec communicatif qui entraîne le renversement des rôles linguistiques des participants du dialogue.

Le héros est enfermé. Le confident l'entoure mais ne peut pas pénétrer en lui. Leurs langages s'échangent mais ne coïncident jamais.

Oenone ne peut rien opposer au silence de Phèdre, elle ne peut ni la faire parler ni percer son cœur. Cependant ni Phèdre ni Oenone ne renoncent réellement à la parole. Elles parlent mais ne communiquent pas. La parole semble être apparemment satisfaisante pour Phèdre qui a besoin de parler pour "épuiser le réel," pour "meubler le temps" et surtout pour "faire taire sa propre peur et tenter de s'oublier" comme les héros becketttiens. Mais cependant cette "parole qui se dit" n'arrive pas à satisfaire Oenone qui, elle, tient encore aux normes de la communication.

Cependant des éléments déictiques qui sont sensés être donnés par le locuteur ne sont pas pertinents ou parfois même ils sont totalement absents du message émis par Phèdre. Sur quoi Oenone doit-elle se baser pour interpréter le soi-disant message reçu?

Malgré son incapacité de saisir les caractéristiques pertinentes de la situation, Oenone décide cependant de prendre la relève. Pour sauver la situation de la locutrice qui se désagrège, Oenone s'empare du rôle de cette dernière. Oenone n'étant pas bien informée pour assumer correctement ce rôle informateur, ce renversement de rôle va conduire tout le dialogue dans une série de pièges qui, à leur tour, donnent à ce même dialogue un aspect de dialogue de sourds.

De tels dialogues abondent dans la tragédie racinienne et Phèdre en contient plusieurs. Le dialogue entre Hippolyte et Phèdre, entre Hippolyte et Têrêmène; et entre Hippolyte et Thésée sont des exemples assez remarquables:

La scène où Phèdre déclare son amour à Hippolyte est un modèle d'incompréhension ou si l'on préfère un modèle de dialogue de sourds. Les deux interlocuteurs appartiennent à des mondes étrangers entre lesquels aucun passage n'est réalisable.

Devant de tels dialogues, le lecteur ou le spectateur a l'impression que non seulement le récepteur ne comprend pas le message de l'émetteur mais que le peu qu'il saisit, il le transforme lui-même jusqu'à rendre la pensée initiale (de l'émetteur) trop simpliste et parfois même fausse.

Les mots sont chargés (ceux de Phèdre surtout) d'une signification "affective" allant bien au-delà du sens littéral, limité, lexical saisi par l'interlocutrice.

Le récepteur racinien soucieux et anxieux de percer la pensée de l'émetteur va essayer d'extraire la vérité chez celui-ci. La soi-disant méthode socratique du récepteur va aboutir à un

échec total et va plutôt se transformer en un jeu d'essai et d'erreur. Pour faire parler le locuteur "bloqué" dans le silence, le récepteur essaie d'émettre une série de références qui souvent s'avèrent fausses. Voilà un vers tiré de Phèdre où le système référentiel peut facilement prêter à confusion.

"Je languis, je brûle pour Thésée"

(Phèdre II, v)

Pour un auditeur ou un lecteur averti, le nom de Thésée prononcé par Phèdre dans ce contexte bien déterminé ne réfère plus à Thésée mari et père mais plutôt à Thésée, fils, c'est à dire à Hippolyte. Mais la pauvre Oenone ignorant tous ces éléments référentiels nécessaires à la compréhension du dialogue, ne saisit que la référence primaire ou plutôt littérale. Elle ignore en effet le code linguistique établi par son partenaire, Phèdre; et le décodage qu'elle impose aux énoncés de cette dernière n'entraînent pas des messages qui coïncident mais bien des messages parallèles.

La grande manifestation de ces sortes de messages est la prolifération des mots. Chez Racine, la parole n'est plus le véhicule même du tragique mais plutôt l'essence et le produit même de ce tragique. La parole est un acte puissant, elle conduit le personnage et celui-ci n'arrive pas à y échapper. Le silence est torturant chez Phèdre, mais la parole l'est plus parce qu'une fois le silence rompu, il faut poursuivre.

Hippolyte: "Puisque j'ai commencé"
de rompre le silence,
Madame il faut poursuivre:
il faut vous informer
' D'un secret que mon coeur
ne peut plus renfermer.

(Phèdre II, ii)

Ainsi donc ce qui fait la parole si terrible,

nous dit Barthes :

C'est d'abord qu'elle est un acte, le mot est puissant. Mais surtout c'est qu'elle est irréversible: nulle parole ne peut se reprendre.

Si la parole est ainsi considérée chez Racine, qu'est-ce qu'un aveu dans la tragédie racienne, qu'est-ce qu'une confidence dans cette tragédie où jadis le rôle de confident était considéré prépondérant? Sommes-nous vraiment d'accord avec les critiques et les études traditionnelles raciniennes qui ont toujours qualifié le personnage comme Oenone, de confident? Oenone ne détient aucun secret parce qu'elle n'en a pas reçu ni n'en reçoit. Des conseils à prodiguer, elle en a, mais malheureusement ils ne semblent pas avoir aucun lien avec la situation du moment. Une vraie confession invite le personnage à une attitude de rachat et de sécurité; mais l'aveu ou la confession racienne est un acte de suicide implacable. On s'y refuse mais on s'y conduit malgré soi. Le héros ou plutôt le locuteur racinien ne choisit ni ne pèse les mots de son énoncé pour agir sur le confident ou l'auditeur. Il ne cherche pas à faire naître en lui ou bien la sympathie ou la terreur. Et quand il le fait c'est par mégarde ou parce qu'il n'arrive pas à dissimuler ses pensées. Plusieurs fois dans un dialogue racinien, le locuteur semble ignorer les règles même de la rhétorique. Il n'arrive pas à manipuler le langage. Celui-ci semble agir sur le personnage et l'entraîne à ses dépens. La parole n'est donc pas une solution à la rupture du tragique silence que s'impose le héros racinien.

Le langage n'est jamais une preuve.
Le héros racinien ne peut jamais se

prouver¹⁰ On ne sait jamais qui parle
à qui.

Le locuteur conscient de la faiblesse de son langage ne compte que sur le secours de l'auditeur. La réaction de l'auditeur est (comme nous l'avons signalé ci-dessus de prendre la parole. L'auditeur racinien n'est pas encore en mesure de faire fi à ces paroles qui tombent à torrent n'apportant aucun message. Il a peur de cet écroulement du langage. Il veut absolument la réussite du processus communicatif. Il essaie de trouver un sens à chaque énoncé émis par le locuteur. Il n'est pas encore aux bornes de l'absurde du personnage beckettien ou ionescien qui, lui sait que la parole est "un fait, un accident."

Je n'ai rien à faire, c'est à dire rien de particulier. J'ai à parler n'ayant rien à dire, rien que les paroles des autres. Ne sachant pas parler, ne voulant pas parler, j'ai à parler. Personne ne m'y oblige, il n'y a personne, c'est un accident, c'est un fait. Rien ne pourra jamais m'en dispenser, il n'y a rien à découvrir, rien qui diminue ce qui demeure à dire, j'ai la mer à boire.

Les participants du dialogue racinien semblent plus intimes que ceux du dialogue beckettien. L'auditeur racinien prend le fil conducteur du dialogue, pour essayer de communiquer avec l'émetteur en "crise d'aphasie;" mais chez Beckett les personnages semblent être dans l'obligation de faire rebondir le soi-disant dialogue.

Voyons Gogo: il faut me renvoyer la
balle de temps en temps.¹²

Chez Beckett, il semble que si le personnage ne parlait pas, la pièce serait condamnée au silence et il n'y aurait plus de théâtre. Par contre chez Racine, nous constatons que le silence du locuteur ne pourrait jamais mettre fin à la pièce car l'auditeur est toujours prêt à prendre la relève. Cependant il y a un point commun chez Racine et chez Beckett: la prolifération des mots ou l'écroulement du langage qui rend les dialogues raciniens et becketttiens insignifiants c'est à dire dénués de sens. Tout comme Phèdre, le personnage de l'Innommable affirme qu'il faut continuer à parler une fois que le silence est rompu.

Il faut continuer, je vais donc
continuer, il faut dire des mots
tant qu'il y en a, il faut les dire
(--), il faut continuer, je vais
continuer¹³

Ainsi donc le tragique racinien et beckettien réside dans la parole, acte puissant qui se défait sans pouvoir se reprendre. Sur ce, nous sommes d'accord avec cette affirmation de Roland Barthes:

Dire ou ne pas dire? Telle est la question. C'est ici l'être même de la parole qui est porté sur le théâtre. La plus profonde des tragédies raciniennes est aussi la plus formelle; car l'enjeu tragique est ici moins le sens de la parole que son apparition, beaucoup moins l'amour de Phèdre que son aveu (--). Phèdre est son silence même, dénouer ce silence, c'est mourir mais aussi¹⁴ mourir ne peut être qu'avoir parlé.

Par son fond et sa forme et surtout par sa violation de code linguistique inscrit même dans le processus de communication, le dialogue

racinien illustre très bien le tragique et le désarroi de l'homme condamné à la parole et surtout l'élasticité absurde du langage. L'absurdité linguistique beckettienne saute aux yeux du lecteur mais ce même lecteur a du mal à s'imaginer l'absurdité du langage racinien. Cependant bien qu'apparemment différents l'écroulement du langage beckettien et l'incommunicabilité racinienne aboutissent au même résultat fondamental: l'absurdité et le tragique de l'homme.

Notes

¹ Lyon J. Linguistique générale. Paris: Larousse, 1970, p. 317.

² Barnett, R., "Le Travestissement de la Parole Racinienne," Studi Litteratura Francese, vol. 154, Milan: 1979, p. 167.

³ Toute référence à l'oeuvre de Racine se rapporte à l'édition suivante: Théâtre complet de Racine VI-2, texte établi avec préface, notices et notes par André Stegmann, Paris: Garnier-Flammariion, 1965.

⁴ Barnett, p. 162.

⁵ Barthes, P. Sur Racine. Paris: Seuil, 1963, p. 115.

⁶ Idem., p. 163.

⁷ Goldman, L. Jean Racine. Paris: Arché, 1956, p. 133.

⁸ Barnett, p. 163.

⁹ Barthes, p. 119.

¹⁰ Idem., p. 67.

¹¹ Beckett, S. L'Innommable. Paris: Minuit 1952, p. 55.

¹² Beckett S. En Attendant Godot. Paris: Minuit 1952, p. 15.

¹³ Beckett, S. L'Innommable. Paris: Minuit, 1952, p. 262.

¹⁴ Barthes, R. Sur Racine. Paris: Seuil, 1963.

Mechanical Invention and Vice in Proust
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In modern times, the juxtaposition of the terms "mechanical invention and vice" is an appropriate one: excessively loud electric music, battery-driven vibrators, man-made drugs, television, junk-food vending machines, tattoos, robots mining fossil fuels, canned beer, photographically reproducible pornography and extortion, handguns, clandestine sex in the backseat of an early model Chevrolet, electronic typewriters spewing self-correcting invective prose and atomic weapons are just a few examples that come to mind. It often seems that behind every modern vice lies the production of some device geared to mesh with the culture that houses it as a newly assimilated element.

The initial impact of a mechanical influx is most clearly exposed close to the time of its invention, at its point of entry into the host society where pre-existing habits and tastes act as counterparts in the completion of the production/consumption transaction. As an imperceptible presence in everyday life, mechanical inventions can change the way we see and act. When an invention can modify a particular mode of perception and its production solve obstacles of accessibility, a new form of expression arises. The mechanism by which new inventions are habitually assimilated and incorporated into a social body of consumers constitutes a collective form of autobiographical discourse: show me your apparati and I'll tell you who you are.

Gilles Deleuze's description of individualized desire as a smaller personalized machine works well within the scope of the collective portraiture of A la recherche du temps perdu, a novel laden with such machinery. A la recherche... frames an historical period for mechanical invention as it reproduces portraits of individuals whose obsessions and vices are made

highly visible by gadgets collected in the double mechanism of desire and consumption. This is a time where automobiles, airplanes, lightbulbs, telephones, trains and photography were a new presence being gradually assimilated into a society which the narrator calls the demi-monde.

Meanwhile, before further discussion of the mechanical influence present in those lives portrayed in the Proustian autobiography, let us consult a more basic critical apparatus, Webster's Unabridged Dictionary (2nd ed.), for a clarification of terms:

- mechanical:
1. having to do with machinery.
 2. produced or operated by machinery or a mechanism.
 3. ...a mechanical contrivance (a thing made in accordance with any mechanics).

- machine:
1. a structure or built-up fabric of any kind: specifically, the human or animal frame.
 2. an automobile.
 3. a structure consisting framework and various fixed and moving parts, for doing some kind of work.
 4. a person or organization regarded as acting like a machine without any thought or will.

- vice:
1. a grave moral failing.
 2. corruption, depravity
 3. a fault, defect or blemish. syn: evil, crime, sin, badness.

vice²
one who acts in the place of another (a substitute).

As a construct of both fixed and moving parts set in motion for some specific application, a machine is a synthetic composite, the end-product of the inventive process by which it was created. Its invention requires the re-ordering of pre-existing elements of the environment from which it was constructed. A new machine is composed of parts, bits and pieces of a world which will, in turn, be altered by that new and artificial presence. Vice, too, constitutes the re-ordering or deviation of a pre-existing system. A vice represents the breaking down of widely accepted and practiced social mores; a vice can also be the invention of a different, more individualized set of social practices. Any value judgement inherent to "vice" is the result of a practice in opposition to a generalized proposal for propriety. The second definition of "vice" is even more compatible with mechanical imagery: substitution and the interchangeability of working parts to achieve an end are two concepts at the core of modern mechanical and modern social life. As alternative solutions and "short-cuts", mechanical invention is a gradual process of attractive and repulsive forces. The pace of assimilation is measurable by the lives of those whose application of their chosen machinery is motivated by their private desires. While some react to inventions with curiosity or shock, others find an immediate place for new machines within their ever-growing collection. The narrator momentarily describes the politics of new inventions in Le temps retrouvé:

...les nouveautés, coupables ou non, n'excitent l'horreur que tant qu'elles ne sont pas assimilées et entourées d'éléments rassurants. (III, 727)

For people like Charles Swann, his daughter Gilberte, Albertine, le Baron de Charlus and others, the collector's time-frame depicted in A la recherche... is the privileged enclosure of acquisition. In a society where être most often

equals avoir, one might easily predict the success of invention and mass production. The reproductive power and resulting proliferation of newly invented machinery create a greater form of accessibility to either a copy of the original machine (toaster) or a mechanically reproduced object (Mona Lisa). By increased ownership, a formerly rare object is reduced to a familiar sight and an invention becomes an appliance. In his piece "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," Walter Benjamin clearly explains this devaluation of rarities vis-a-vis the framework of production. Changing modes of reproduction have certainly influenced certain modes of perception and left their mark on contemporary expression, although in terms other than mere mass-production and devaluation. In their diverse obsessions and attachments to mechanical inventions, the classe demi-mondaine offers an array of examples illustrating how these inventions become a source of personal expression and a means of identification for their users.

Does the appearance of a new machine actually cause vice? Is the invention of a novelty also the invention of a vice? As we consider several portraits in autobiography (complete with mechanical attachments), the question will remain as to whether an acquired invention resulted in an acquired vice or simply helped to awaken a dormant or concealed deviation. As we read, time passes and, as time passes, life mechanizes:

Les progrès de la civilisation permettent à chacun de manifester des qualités insoupçonnées ou de nouveaux vices qui les rendent plus chers ou plus insupportables à leurs amis. (II. 730)

The narrator's remark is in reference to his domestic, Françoise, and her refusal to approach a telephone. He describes her reaction to the invention as "un défaut de plus" since it complicates his incoming communications and he blames the whole situation on Thomas Edison. Françoise's

reluctance to learn about the instrument even when help is offered is a refusal to give the machine a place in her world. Between speech and machinery, she will not transact. Her old-fashioned house-keeper's repulsion à la grande belle seems appropriate to her culinary station, as yet outside the frame of commercial acquisition.

Whether an individual becomes "more dear or less tolerable" to others as a result of newly acquired vices may well depend on the vices of those around him. A close match in inventive desire does exist between Charles Swann and Odette de Crécy. His collection of reproduced art and her taste for novelty items find a common field of vision in Un Amour de Swann. Swann's home environment is the collection of reproductions which ostensibly serve as the basis for his unending study on Vermeer Van Delft of the Flemish School of representational art. Odette, on the other hand displays a different interior. When Swann comes to visit her in her private quarters, her taste for imported novelty and inventions is revealed:

Elle l'avait fait asseoir près d'elle dans un des nombreux retraits mystérieux qui étaient menagés dans les enfoncements du salon, protégés par d'immenses palmiers contenus dans des cache-pot de Chine, ou par des paravents auxquels étaient fixés des photographies, des noeuds de rubans et des éventails.

Unlike Swann's framed reproduction, Odette's inventory of exotic and domestic novelties plays an active role in her interior designs and are just for viewing. Their arrangement and deployment is intended to serve a Parisian scheme in Oriental "nooky". The niches created by Odette's interior displays are compartmentalized enclosures for a process of private activity best described by the series: retraits, enfoncements, protégés, contenus and, finally, fixés. The dis-

placement of space and compacting of resources are characteristic of a mechanically composed environment. Odette's choice of devices are themselves microcosms of the spatial economy that they create. Folding screens, folding fans, knots and photographs each constitute a compacted gathering of lines and space. As collapsible accessories, these inventions are tools for complete spatial re-organization to fit the habits (and imagination) of their consumer. If Swann has the time, Odette has the space. Odette's use of her acquisitions is a play in appropriation, une comédie de paravent. By imposing newly obtained and artificial borders, she creates new enclosures of her desire and a surrounding of her own property. In terms of mechanical interior design, Odette has Swann right where he belongs.

As a working collection of interchangeable parts, a machine represents a fragmented whole. Its unity must be described in terms other than those describing a unity in nature, since the machine is the result of a re-ordering of that nature. Necessary items and resources are exacted from the pre-existing environment by their separation from the rest. Prolonged exposure to mechanical inventions as a means of appropriation through fragmentation can, as in Odette's case, prove to be contagious. The human mechanism of desire seeks to increase ownership part and parcel. Throughout her relationship with Swann, Odette will impose frames of appropriation on anything identifiable as part of their romance. Even intangible music does not escape her mechanical grasp. When Swann expresses the wish to hear his favorite sonate de Vinteuil in its entirety, Odette discourages him from wanting the "whole thing," explaining, "Qu'avez-vous besoin du reste? C'est ça notre morceau."²

The compacting of resources often makes them portable. A portable machine creates the possibility of use anywhere and is the solution to the drudgery of at-home vices which can now be practiced anywhere. This is the experience of the narrator who, in Le Temps retrouvé, becomes im-

patient with Albertine's habit of excessive primping before they go out together. At a friend's suggestion, he makes her the gift of a necessaire (or compact) from the House of Cartier so that she may take the face of her choosing wherever she wishes,³ and verify its status at her (and his) leisure. Although it is never quite clear whether Albertine is any more dear to the narrator for the compact, she is apparently rendered more tolerable.

The narrator's experience with mechanically fashioned women is quite extensive. In La Fugitive, Gilberte St.-Loup (formerly Gilberte Swann) is obsessed with her own appearance, but differently the Albertine. Her style of vanity is assembled from old photographs of her husband's former mistress (the actress Rachel) that he has kept in his dresser.⁴ Made to feel like a detachable accessory in some roman à tiroirs, Gilberte manifests the desire to paint her face so as to match the photographed face. She even begins to take on what the narrator describes as, "certaines habitudes chères à l'actrice."⁵ Gilberte attempts to exchange her identity for one perceived in a mechanical reproduction. The substitution and interchangeability of mechanical reality leads one woman to model herself after the plastic reflection of an image which no longer exists.

In terms of mechanical reproduction, change can only be affected in the original. In the photographic reality of both Albertine and Gilberte, there is no original and therefore no change possible. A self-image exclusive of change is an illusion, a falsehood. These two women have taken static, imaginary portraits as their models of copy. Their real necessaire is the need for a mechanical perfection, one that reflects no wear and tear on the displayer/consumer. As a matter of habit and general acceptance, this vice passes virtually unnoticed.

As a play in substitution, vice can become the apparent norm and originality the exception. Stereotypes and stereotypical behavior are

generated by a society geared to mechanical reproduction. A complete turnabout occurs whereby those following paths laid by mass-produced modes of identity are the majority and deviant are those who "do not fit in." Hence, the aspiration to absolute identity manifest in Gilberte and Albertine backfires as their chosen identity is lost in a vat of reproduction. As vices become habits, the machines they acquire are assimilated to the point of invisibility:

...parce que nous ne connaissons vraiment que ce qui est nouveau, ce qui introduit brusquement dans notre sensibilité un changement de ton qui nous frappe, ce à quoi l'habitude n'a pas encore substitué ses pales fac-similés. (III, 529)

An individual being based on machines, mechanical reproduction or the collection of artifice is marked by the half-life of consumption. The identification of one's self and possessions by mechanical means is the substitution of an imaginary replacement part for more genuine notions of a forever changing and unframed existence. Subscription to mechanical inventions simultaneously opens doors and builds walls. By force of habit, what began as an alternative becomes sole substitute for pre-existing practices. The machines present in the lives of Swann, Odette and other demi-mondains have as a common function the imposition of new limits: "rien n'est plus limité que le plaisir et le vice."⁶

Invention is certainly as old as writing. Perhaps the first set of mechanics were those which governed the process of written text. In what may well be the earliest mention of mechanical invention and vice, Plato's Phaedrus tells of the invention's first availability to mankind. Socrates tells the story of the Egyptian divinity Theuth who, in his offer to the King of Thebes, boasted the invention "a recipe for both memory and wisdom," to which the king replied:

"...since you are the father of written letters, your paternal goodwill has led you to pronounce the very opposite of what is their real power. The fact is that this invention will produce forgetfulness in the souls of those who have learned it. They will not need to exercise their memories, being able to rely on what is written, calling things to mind no longer from within themselves by their own unaided powers, but under the stimulus of external marks that are alien to themselves (...) And as for wisdom, you're equipping your pupils with only a semblance of it, not with the truth.

The mechanical aficionados in Proust's collection are not your typical students. They are consumer/collectors of inventions and pupils of mechanical process in the fragmented wake of which originality and authenticity are lost. Their attachment to mechanical invention is the progressive detachment from a more truthful or virtuous self-construction. As the Baron de Charlus reminds the narrator at one of their last meetings, "Oui, nous nous sommes tous abimés dans le dilettantisme, nous tous..."

With their life and love a play in replica, these consumers of inventions and fac-simile collectors are ultimately consumed by the larger body of production. They are enclosed by their chosen accessories. As Gilles Deleuze demonstrates in L'anti-Oedipe, the most encompassing machine is the machine of society. Individual desire is but a small personalized gadget turned upon the greater social mechanism in order to transact. In Proustian narrative, the greater machine is the collective desire of those individuals whose portraits are composed of fixed and moving parts and which include the acquisition of mechanical inventions and process. The only limit on number and function of accessories is the

inventive imagination and personal obsession. A favorable self-construction is the necessary requirement to mother the invention of a compact and accessible means of identification. In his painterly wisdom, Marcel Duchamp produces a more accurate, visual portrayal of the way these Proustian subjects "make themselves up," the truth as it stands in modern times: a mechanical woman, naked to the world as she descends an increasingly fragmented staircase, all enclosed in a frame. As in the story of the King of Thebes, the man who appeals to vice in the promise of a short-cut to truth through forgetfulness is the sower of substitution and the father of mechanical intervention.

NOTES

¹ Illuminations, pp. 217-252; New York: Schocken, 1969.

² A la recherche du temps perdu; Editions de la Pleiade, vol. I, p. 219.

³ II, 1037.

⁴ III, 702.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ III, 827.

⁷ Phaedrus, Plato; ll. 275-291.

MARÍA, UNA POÉTICA DEL OCULTAMIENTO

Ramona Lagos

Pocas novelas hispanoamericanas del siglo XIX han sido tan leídas, comentadas o discutidas, como María, del colombiano Jorge Isaacs.¹ Desde su aparición, en 1867, y durante las siguientes décadas, su popularidad aumenta a medida que la novela se publica en otros países hispanoamericanos. En México, por ejemplo, la edición de María en forma de folletín causa expectación no sólo en el público lector, sino también en los escritores que ven en ese texto su propio lenguaje, su paisaje autóctono y sus costumbres expresadas en la impronta romántica.²

Sin embargo, paralelamente a su fama, la novela es abordada, desde su publicación, desde ángulos tan subjetivos y disímiles, que ha sido difícil tener una visión clara sobre su mérito literario, sobre su significación como novela romántica, sobre su especificidad novelesca. Para José Antonio Portuondo, el valor de María reside en la presencia del paisaje 'que enmarca el argumento lacrimoso y la idealización de la existencia rural'.³ Para otros como Fernando Alegría, por ejemplo, la novela tiene el mérito de poseer 'todas las características de la novela romántica: de tendencia subjetiva, los sentimientos son genuinos, (...) el paisaje vive en comunicación ardiente con la sensibilidad del autor que lo transmuta, (...) los personajes muévense encadenados por la mitología romántica del amor, la fatalidad y la muerte...'⁴ Para Guillermo Prieto,⁵ como para L. E. Nieto Caballero,⁶ María debe su inmortalidad literaria a su eficiencia lacrimosa. Probablemente es Enrique Anderson Imbert quien se ha acercado más a la especificidad de la novela de Isaacs al destacar rasgos formales de su construcción, su unidad estructural, y la tensión coporal reprimida: "A pesar de la delicadeza de su amor, Efraín está todo tenso a las pequeñas desnudeces de María. Estas desnudeces eran las elaboradas por la literatura, pero los ojos de Efraín buscan

el desnudo total"⁷.

Gustavo Mejía ha escrito, a su vez, el estudio socio-político más comprensivo de la novela de Jorge Isaacs para la edición Ayacucho de 1978.

Sin embargo, todavía leemos juicios reductivos de viejo origen sobre María: "Los que hemos leído la romanza inmortal hemos sentido nuestros ánimos embargados por una melancolía imposible de precisar"; "Sentí al leerla y meditar sobre ella, algo de esa extraña impresión indefinible que sobrecoge al espíritu..."¹⁰; "¿Quién no tiene una María muerta¹¹ en su corazón?, Ese libro nos ha sorprendido"¹¹. Melancolía imposible de precisar, extraña impresión indefinible, sorpresa, son términos y intensidad afectiva, su prosa poemática o la perfección formal de su estructura narrativa, su secreto reside en el hecho de que su discurso y su estructura total manifiestan realidades del inconsciente. Ellas corresponden, creemos, a las primeras fijaciones eróticas y al proceso de madurez viril. Desde este punto de vista, el personaje femenino, María es solamente un recurso para exhibir la realidad interior de su héroe, su proceso de madurez y su consiguiente independencia de la familia y del terruño natal. El mérito de María como novela romántica reside en su captación de este mundo subterráneo y ambivalente, a través de un discurso que adopta las formas y las convenciones del romanticismo europeo. La novela también expresa, y aquí su significación como texto hispanoamericano, nuestro siglo XIX y sus consiguientes modos de experiencia social.

El estudio del narrador y su discurso, más el nivel actancial, revelan una poética del ocultamiento que muestra y esconde el proceso de desarrollo de Efraín, en primer lugar; y una etapa de profundas transformaciones sociales y culturales, en un segundo plano.

Programación y texto: univocidad y ambigüedad.

La programación del relato, inscrita en el epígrafe, construye un hiato con el texto que le sigue inmediatamente. Mientras la programación es explícita, el capítulo primero es ambiguo; mientras la programación ofrece una historia de amor, el capítulo primero exhibe la partida de un niño; mientras la programación tiene un narrador en segundo grado--un amigo de Efraín, quien ha re-escrito el diario de vida adolescente--, el capítulo primero exhibe como narrador de su pasado al mismo Efraín.

Estas tres diferencias fundan, desde el epígrafe, el carácter ambiguo del discurso novelesco.

María es la historia de un hombre ya muerto, historia re-escrita por el amigo, testigo de una experiencia adolescente dolorosa. Este rasgo sugiere un doble tiempo: el de Efraín y el del narrador en segundo grado, el de la adolescencia y el de la madurez. Y efectivamente, la novela está construída sobre el pasado que predomina, y el presente que contempla:

"...y su acento, (...) se hacía lento y profundo al pronunciar palabras suavemente articuladas que en vano probaría yo a recordar hoy: porque no he vuelto a oírlas, porqué pronunciadas por otros labios no son las mismas, y escritas en estas páginas parecerían sin sentido. Pertenecen a otro idioma, del cual hace muchos años no viene a mi memoria ni una frase" (p. 20).

María es una novela que incluye el final narrativo ya en su programación. Por el epígrafe sabemos que el texto está visto como 'libro de los recuerdos', recuerdos escritos y borrados con las propias lagrimas de Efraín, sujeto de la enunciación. Son, por lo tanto, memorias de una experiencia vivida como martirio. (p. 3). Queda claro que la historia que leerá el lector carece de final feliz. El motivo del 'amor funesto', caro a la literatura romántica, se manifiesta

aquí de manera relevante. Para acentuar el dramatismo de la programación, todo el proceso de producción y lectura del relato queda encerrado en un fiel confidente del "héroe", y está dedicado" a los hermanos de Efraín". El narrador de segundo grado está unido a Efraín por la 'gratitud' y el 'afecto' y el trabajo de reelaboración textual es precisamente un testimonio de estos sentimientos. Por otra parte, el acto de entrega del diario de vida se sugiere, por el rito y el discurso que lo acompaña, como un acto final, como situación límite: "Vosotros no ignoráis las palabras que pronunció aquella noche terrible, al poner en mis manos el libro de sus recuerdos: ... (p.3).

Tanto el confidente del libro de adolescencia de Efraín, el encargado de completarlo--porque él es el único que sabe lo que falta, como los destinatarios de estas memorias (los hermanos de Efraín), pertenecen al tiempo de los acontecimientos y han sido testigos de la historia. La novela rescata, de este modo, el pasado juvenil sin perder su carga afectiva. Circunscribe el mundo del relato a los testigos de la experiencia, sólo la familia, y garantiza el cumplimiento de uno de los requisitos exigidos al lector: la condición de amigos, la identificación con la narración, la capacidad de llorar: "Leedlas, pues, y si suspendéis la lectura para llorar, ese llanto me probará que ia he cumplido fielmente".

La programación de María cumple formalmente con todos los requisitos de un relato romántico: historia de amor funesto, diario e historia de un adolescente, muerte, narradores que completan, identificándose con ella, la experiencia vivida, lectores que aman a los héroes que son sus hermanos, lágrimas, melancolía y rito. De acuerdo a este esquema formal, la novela parece absolutamente ortodoxa en el cumplimiento del verosímil romántico. Sin embargo, todos estos rasgos son insuficientes para fundar un valor literario. Creemos que es precisamente en la ruptura de lo programado canónicamente donde reside la clave para entender esta novela. Y esta ruptura ya se

opera en su primer capítulo.

En María hay tres partidas del hogar hacia el exterior. Una primera salida hacia Bogotá, una segunda hacia Londres y la tercera y definitiva hacia el "vasto horizonte de la pampa solitaria." (p.195). Mientras la primera salida marca una relación nacional -Valle del Cauca y Capital-, la segunda señala una relación internacional -Valle del Cauca y Londres. La tercera no es sino el signo de la definitiva liberación del pasado, de la familia y de la tradición colonial. Es al mismo tiempo la posibilidad de apertura hacia nuevos niveles de experiencia que en el texto quedan virtualizados por "el vasto horizonte de la pampa".

Al mismo tiempo que las salidas, la novela nos narra dos llegadas: una primera llegada, en el capítulo II, desde Bogotá; un segundo regreso, dramático, desde Londres.

El problema que se suscita aquí es el otorgar la debida significación a cada viaje. En este sentido, el primer capítulo pareciera narrar un viaje gratuito. En efecto, el primer capítulo narra la primera partida del hogar. Todo el relato está destinado a describir las emociones de Efraín, 'ni'no aún'. La separación hijo-madre realizada por el padre que 'desata' de la cabeza infantil, 'humedecida por tantas lágrimas, los brazos de la madre'; la separación de las hermanas, y la separación de María ubicada bajos los aposentos de la madre, singulariza el capítulo por la ruptura. La brutalidad con que es vivida esta experiencia se manifiesta nítidamente en el comienzo del discurso, en su mismo umbral narrativo:

"Era yo niño aún, cuando me alejaron de la casa paterna..." (p.3).

El impersonal 'me alejaron' no puede ser un azar en la prosa de Jorge Isaacs, tan cuidadosa de los mínimos detalles expresivos. ¿Es la familia? ¿Es el padre? Todo el texto parece sugerir la segunda alternativa. La violencia de la relación padre-hijo es visible en la narración y creemos que es este factor, no enunciado explícitamente

en el primer capítulo, aunque sí sugerido en el impersonal y censurado 'me alejaron', el que predomina en la novela. La relación padre-hijo es la relación verdaderamente problemática. Del choque de las dos voluntades surge el dolor. De la impotencia, las lágrimas. Recordemos que María se enferma precisamente cuando sabe que el padre ha decidido separarla de Efraín; y que muere, herida por la separación definitiva que sólo ella intuye como tal, cuando Efraín parte a Londres.

Sin embargo, la novela no explicita el problema central del relato. Lo encubre bajo la apariencia inocua de la relación desdichada entre dos adolescentes. Por eso, el discurso, más que mostrar, oculta. Muestra la historia oficial de la familia y la historia oficial de los amores de Efraín y María. Oculta el auténtico conflicto planteado en relación al padre, y especialmente, oculta el nivel pasional del amor, nivel que se percibe en la novela sólo indicialmente. En este sentido, hay que reconocer que Enrique Anderson Imbert fue quien primera señaló la preferente atención de Efraín por la desnudez de María.

Esta tensión narrativa, constitutiva de todo relato, adquiere especial significación en esta novela, pues se elabora en una doble vía: la explícita del amor desdichado, y la oculta de la represión social y sexual. Creemos que éste es el nivel donde se funda el secreto de la permanencia de María, nivel construido indicialmente y encubierto bajo una historia de amor.

Es sorprendente la falta de atención que se ha prestado al primer capítulo de María debido a su apariencia 'ajena' a la obra. Sin embargo, en ese capítulo aparentemente suelto reside la clave de una lectura posible de la novela, avalada por su estructura total.

Desde el punto de vista de la experiencia sentimental de Efraín, la novela sólo comienza en el capítulo III. El capítulo II narra el regreso, en plenitud, al hogar. Lo que se describe aquí es el reencuentro del hijo con la madre, descrito como "sumpreno placer": "Oí un

grito indefinible; era la voz de mi madre; al estrecharme ella en los brazos y acercarme a su pecho una sombra me cubrió los ojos: era el supremo placer que conmovía a una naturaleza virgen." (p.5)

Significativamente, la figura paterna, tan importante en los cinco fragmentos que constituyen el capítulo I, no aparece aquí. María es aún sólo una figura que permanece en el fondo confundida con las hermanas. El único signo de su emoción es el rubor (p.5).

Por otro lado, la sombra que cubre los ojos en situaciones límites sólo se vuelve a destacar en otra oportunidad igualmente intensa: el momento en que, al abrir el armario del cuarto de María, escapan de él los aromas de los días de amor y aparecen ante la vista de Efraín las trenzas que ella le ha legado:

"Abrí el armario: todos los aromas de los días de nuestro amor se exhalaban combinados en él. Mis manos y mis labios palpaban aquellos vestidos, tan conocidos para mí. Abrí el cajón que Emma me había indicado; el cofre precioso estaba en él. Un grito se escapó de mi pecho y una sombra me cubrió los ojos al desenrollarse entre mis manos aquellas trenzas que parecían sensibles a mis besos" (p.192).

Grito y sombra se repiten en ambas situaciones. Una vez en relación a la madre; otra vez en relación a María, ya muerta. En el capítulo II, el grito y la sombra serán el signo de un placer supremo; en el capítulo LXIII serán indicio del dolor supremo. En ambos casos vemos que la imagen del padre está ausente. El padre aparece destacado en todas las situaciones de fuerza, de desencuentro; o en situaciones formales, en la crónica familiar y oficial de la familia. La madre, por contraste, está siempre ligada al nivel afectivo. La novela capta específicamente el instante de transición de

Efraín desde la inocencia al conocimiento. Y es esta experiencia la que permite la ambigüedad de algunas situaciones en que María y madre aparecen confundidas, como por ejemplo en el instante de los encuentros decisivos.

En el primer capítulo, junto con plantearse el conflicto con el principio paterno, se da, simultáneamente, una significativa asociación entre la madre y María. El último 'ser querido' que Efraín ve al partir, es María "bajo las enredaderas que adornaban las ventanas del apoyento de mi madre". En el capítulo II, el encuentro madre-hijo es el más importante en el discurso narrativo. Varios años han pasado entre el capítulo uno y el dos. En los capítulos posteriores la madre cumplirá una función transgresora de la ley paterna al permitir el encuentro clandestino de Efraín y María.

La ambigüedad se acentúa. Ya no es meramente indiciale como en los capítulos I y II. En efecto, Efraín y María son hermanos por adopción y son también primos. Estas relaciones de parentesco generan en la novela un sistema que contribuye a la básica ambigüedad de la historia.

Sin embargo, el clímax de esta situación, sugerida ya en el primer capítulo, se opera entre los capítulos 61 y 63, cuando Efraín regresa de Londres. María ha muerto. Efraín le dice a su madre:

-Así me engañaron...¿A qué he venido?
-¿Y yo? -me interrumpió humedeciendo mi
cuello con sus lágrimas." (p. 186).

Posteriormente, al entrar en la casa después de la muerte de María, Efraín va en busca de las trenzas que ella le ha legado, las cuales están en su cuarto. Sin embargo...él entra... al dormitorio de su madre, recinto "frío y oloroso a tumba". ¿Cómo explicar este lapsus del protagonista? María es quien ha muerto. Sin embargo, el cuarto de la madre es el espacio oloroso a tumba: "Abrí la puerta del apoyento de mi madre,

romántica, desde el punto de vista histórico-social, María exhibe un proceso de ruptura con el pasado irrecuperable. Ella no pueda, en la lógica del texto, sobrevivir al tiempo nuevo que representa Efraín. Mientras ella significa un sistema de valores coloiales, una ideología patriarcal, Efraín significa la apertura al mundo europeo, a la modernidad, a la ciencia, a la visiones prácticas. María, idealizada, y amada en la experiencia infantil, pertenece a un universo prestigioso ante los ojos del narrador. Sin embargo, ese prestigio n es suficiente porque ya no ofrece las virtualidades que exige la nueva época inscrita en el protagonista. María es el signo de un pasado colonial que se recuerda con melancolía, pero al cual se sabe desprovisto de actualidad. Por eso el personaje femenino debe morir al finalizar el relato. Y la partida de Efraín, con Europa en su horizonte, viene a objetivar este proceso.

Es significativo que la novela esté construída sobre y desde el personaje masculino. Hombre de ciudad, 'inglesito', poeta y científico, la sensibilidad de Efraín tenía que ser, necesariamente, alerta al paisaje de sus orígenes, a las costumbres de su infancia. Es precisamente a través de Efraín que el lector percibe la vision romántica del paisaje. María es sólo un elemento más de ese ambiente bucólico, sin tensiones, inmóvil y cubierto por la patina de un cristianismo perfecto que lo uniforma todo. María, por oposicion a Efraín, se mueltra siempre vinculada a una naturaleza domesticada. Es ella quien continuamente está cortando flores, plantando otras nuevas, silvestres, para incorporarlas a su jardín, su prolongación física.

El padre de Efraín cumple una interesante función, desde este punto de vista. Pertenece al mundo de María, comparte los valores que ella significa; sin embargo, en el momento de la decisión del destino de su hijo, opta por una situación que expulsa a Efraín del mundo colonial y que, por el contrario, lo incorpora a la modernidad.

María es una novela que se inicia en la no disyunción y en la ambigüedad, para concluir en una disyunción. De este modo, lo que comienza siendo un espacio de armonías casi cósmicas termina en ruptura.

Como novela romántica, María se inscribe en el verosímil que le aporta su relación intertextual con Atala. Sin embargo, la solución narrativa sugiere una liberación de la poética romántica canónica. Dentro de las leyes del amor funesto, al amor de la pareja se resuelve con la muerte de María, a la cual en realidad, Efraín ha abandonado. La novela es explícita al respecto, una primera vez cuando Efraín lee el pasaje de la despedida de Chactas; y una segunda vez, al finalizar el relato:

"Luego que leí aquella desgarradora despedida de Chactas, despedida que tantas veces ha arrancado un sollozo a mi pecho: ¡Duerme en paz en extranjera tierra, joven desventurada! En recompensa de tu amor, de tu destierro y de tu muerte, quedas abandonada hasta del mismo Chactas" (p.21).

"Estremecido, partí al galope...(p.195).

Asimismo, en la conversación con Emigdio, cuando éste le cuenta a Efraín su deseo de casarse con una mujer del pueblo, en contra de la voluntad paterna, Efraín contesta asombrado: "¿Con una mujer del pueblo? Sin consentimiento de tu padre? ... Ya se ve ... Tú eres hombre de barbas y debes de saber lo que haces." (p.40).

La situación y la decisión de Emigdio es opuesta a la experiencia de Efraín, quien no elige a María, pudiendo hacerlo, en contra de la voluntad de su padre. El problema en esta historia de amor frustrado no reside en la enfermedad de María, recurso débil en la novela, sino en la tensión con el padre cuya voluntad aleja a los amantes. En este sentido, la novela muestra un hiato con otros textos románticos. La ruptura con

y mis espuelas resonaron lúgubrementemente en aquel recinto frío y oloroso a tumba"(p. 191).

La identificación entre las dos mujeres completa su ciclo en el antepenúltimo capítulo, antesala de la liberación definitiva del principio edipiano. La novela termina, cuando Efraín parte "al galope por en medio de la pampa solitaria", mientras su segundo viaje a Europa lo espera para completar el proceso educativo iniciado al comienzo del relato.

Otro personaje importante es Emma, hermana de Efraín. Ella actúa como intermediaria y cómplice. Emma tiene la misma función que las flores, las miradas, los cabellos, y Juan, el hermano menor. La relación corporal entre María y Efraín se manifiesta siempre mediatizada:

"Y se acercó a tomar a Juan. Yo lo estaba alzando ya en mis brazos, y María lo esperaba en los suyos; besé los labios de Juan, entreabiertos y purpurinos, y aproximando su rostro al de María posó ella los suyos sobre esa boca que sonreía al recibir nuestras caricias,..."(p. 71).

La expresión 'nuestras caricias' es claramente ambigua. Se puede interpretar como caricias al niño; o como caricias entre los amantes. La pasión está siempre descrita en situaciones que la ocultan. En este segundo plano, creemos que la máxima eficacia de esta poética del ocultamiento se objetiva en el oratorio, momentos antes de la partida de Efraín a Europa:

"Mis labios descansaron sobre su frente...María, sacudiendo estremecida la cabeza, hizo ondular los bucles de su cabellera, y escondiendo en mi pecho la faz, extendió uno de sus brazos para señalarme el altar. Emma que acababa de entrar, la recibió inanimada en su regazo..."(p.166).

En este episodio vemos conjugados los dos modos como se vive la pasión: Mediatizada por algo, a por alguien, que deviene prolongación del cuerpo de los amantes; y por la represión constante que funda un sistema gestual en María, siempre ocultando sus ojos, sus pies, el pecho. Lo que provoca el llanto es la represión, especialmente cuando ésta aparece encarnada en el padre; los principios religiosos, o las órdenes médicas. Según el padre, quien que repite las palabras del doctor Mayn, "son las emociones intensas las que han hecho aparecer los síntomas de la enfermedad" en María. (p.27).

La represión determina toda una poética del ocultamiento válida también para el discurso narrativo, para la gestualidad de los personajes y para la dialéctica mostración-negación del cuerpo. Esta poética del ocultamiento es cualitativamente diferente del tipo de ocultamiento puramente corporal que se verifica en el romanticismo. Amalia, Clemencia, Manuela o Cecilia, personajes femeninos clásicos de la novela romántica hispanoamericana, manifiestan una gestualidad semejante, pero nunca por el tipo de represión que vemos en María. La especificidad de la poética del ocultamiento en María explica el por qué es posible leer ingenuamente sus intensas escenas de amor sin problemas, pues ellas ya están censuradas. Y aún en los casos en que ellas se representan en el texto, su inscripción está en clave, o mediatizada.

La novela de Isaacs culmina, aparentemente, con la muerte de María, pero en realidad lo que ha concluido es el proceso de transformación de Efraín. Desaparecida María, desaparece la causa del dolor, desaparece la represión. En el final narrativo tenemos la apertura a una etapa vital diferente. Al final, el héroe es aguardado por otros mundos: los de la cultura y la ciencia. Por eso la necesidad de la partida, de la separación.

Si en el nivel del desarrollo del protagonista hay un proceso de liberación del principio materno y paterno encubierto bajo el tópico

el verosímil romántico se da precisamente aquí.

La transformación de Efraín de niño en hombre refleja una ruptura, la cual opera como signo positivo de madurez, de independencia. Si bien en la conciencia de Efraín el elemento separador ha sido la muerte, el lector sabe que el agente del dolor ha sido el padre.

La novela muestra finalmente el triunfo del héroe sobre sí mismo, al romper los nexos edipianos y partir rodeado por el vasto horizonte de la pampa nocturna. Igual ruptura se verifica e el plano de las representaciones y en e nivel de la relación de la novela con la época en la que se escribe y se incribe: el pasado colonial, perfecto en el recuerdo, conocido a través de la memoria infantil, debe desaparecer; y con él, María. La novela refleja así uno de los cambios mas notables del siglo XIX hispanoamericano.

En el plano histórico-social, la experiencia de Efraín señala una etapa del siglo XIX, de apertura y salida al mundo. Por eso es significativo el viaje de Efrajin a Londres--viaje que nunca hizo Isaacs--, su regreso tortura-do, y la salida definitiva. Todo parece hablar de una etapa de desarrollo socio-político que en 1929 completará José Santos Luzardo, cuando regresa precisamente de Europa--ya eliminada la esclavitud--, a imponer su voluntad en un mundo que aún permanece primitivo, a la colonia y el caciquismo que aún perdura en el agro latinoamericano de comienzos del siglo XX.

NOTAS

¹Jorge Isaacs. María (1867). Consultamos la edición de Biblioteca Ayacucho, (Caracas-Barcelona, 1978). Prólogo, notas y cronología de Gustavo Mejía.

²Ignacio M. Altamirano. María (París: Casa Editorial Garnier hermanos, 1894). Prólogo de J. M. Vergara y Vergara. Juicios críticos de Ignacio M. Altamirano, Guillermo Prieto y Justo Sierra.

³José Antonio Portuondo. "El rasgo pre-

dominante en la novela hispanoamericana". En Juan Loveluck, ed. La novela hispanoamericana (Santiago de Chile: Editorial Universitaria, S.A., 1969),⁴ pp. 89-96.

Fernando Alegría. Historia de novela hispanoamericana (México: Ediciones De Andrea, 1966),⁵ pp. 42-45.

⁶Guillermo Prieto. María (1894), p. 419.

L. E. Nieto Caballero. En Jorge Isaacs. Obras Completas (Medellín, Colombia: Editorial Montoya, 1966), pp. 228-45.

Enrique Anderson Imbert. "Prólogo" a María (México: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1951), pp. VII-XXX.

⁸Gustavo Mejía. "Prólogo" a María (Caracas-Barcelona: Edición de Biblioteca Ayacucho, 1978), pp. IX-XXXII.

Mario Carvajal. Vida y pasión de Jorge Isaacs (Santiago de Chile: Ediciones Ercilla, 1937)¹⁰ pp. 127 y ss.

Ignacio M. Altamirano. María (1894), pp. 411-418.

¹¹Justo Sierra. María (1894), pp. 431-432.

¹²Enrique Anderson Imbert, op. cit., pp. VIII.

¹³El primer capítulo de María, como también su epígrafe, no han recibido una debida atención por parte de la crítica. Existen, incluso, ediciones de dedicatoria puramente emotiva.

¹⁴Aunque todo relato incluye en su programación su desenlace narrativo, este proceso tiene en María una especificidad en su doble vertiente de articulación narrativa: la individual del amor funesto y la colectiva histórico-social que subyace a la historia de amor.

Figures Poétiques du Badinage Précieux
Patrick Laude
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On connaît Voiture comme un des représentants les plus éminents de ce mouvement si polymorphe que fut la Préciosité. De ce "complexe" de tendances littéraires, morales et politiques, les figures multiples sont sujettes à susciter d'éventuelles systématisations unilatérales de la part de certains critiques. C'est ainsi que Brunot tend à réduire la Préciosité à un mouvement d'essence linguistique, en négligeant tout ce qui participe chez les Précieux d'une orientation morale et sociale, tandis que Debu-Bridel, isolant certains éléments de son développement historique, tend à l'assimiler à une "conception héroïque de la vie" en fait parallèle à l'"idéologie" que présida à l'affirmation de la Fronde. Notre intention n'est pas ici, à propos de Voiture, de revenir sur cette problématique complexe que Roger Lathuillière a magistralement mise en perspective dans son ouvrage de synthèse.³ Nous concentrant sur une des formes littéraires les mieux représentatives de la manière et de l'esprit de Voiture, nous voudrions nous borner à déceler quelques figures fondamentales de la "pratique littéraire" précieuse qui nous semblent particulièrement riches de sens, sous leur aspect badin, quant au climat intellectuel et social des années 1630-40.

L'utilisation d'une forme aussi ancienne que le rondeau peut surprendre de la part d'un écrivain représentatif de tendances jugées "nouvelles" ou "originales" dans le contexte de la vie littéraire du XVII^e siècle.⁴ En fait, bien que "sentant son vieux temps",⁴ cette forme médiévale connut un succès avéré autour de l'année 1635: "l'Hôtel de Rambouillet en fut le plus grand centre de production et tous ses habitués y participèrent plus ou moins".⁵ Sous des variantes de détails, le rondeau médiéval se

caractérisait globalement par une forme courte marquée par le retour d'un mot, d'une expression ou d'un vers entier à la fin de la seconde et de la troisième strophe, retour faisant écho à son utilisation en début de poème. Les rondeaux de Charles d'Orléans constituent une sorte de modèle du genre illustrant la capacité de cette forme à traduire par sa brièveté et sa structure "circulaire" les états d'âme nostalgiques ou mélancoliques; la monotonie indéfinie du sentiment se laisse en particulier traduire de façon expressive par le retour périodique du même vers. Cependant, en accordant ses faveurs au rondeau, Voiture avait en vue des possibilités littéraires bien différentes (de celles qui furent explorées au XVII^e siècle par Marot): Ainsi que le rappelle Odette de Mourguis:

"Voiture took up again this old poetic form which was somewhat forgotten and did so for various reasons but mostly because it₇ was a form 'propre à la raillerie.'

La plupart des rondeaux de Voiture recèlent en effet un propos de moquerie ou de taquinerie sous la forme de sous-entendus et de signes de reconnaissance à l'intention de la société de l'Hôtel de Rambouillet. Ayant à être lu en compagnie, le rondeau doit ainsi se prêter à des effets spirituels susceptibles d'être goûtés par l'auditoire, sans avoir néanmoins à satisfaire à la perfection aux règles formelles de l'art. Y. Fukui n'hésite pas, à cet égard, à avancer que "les bourres et les redites abondent dans les vers de Voiture." Ce dernier se soucie peu d'une perfection formelle que son badinage souverain doit être capable de traiter avec une certaine négligence. Le respect religieux de la forme serait en effet une concession à l'esprit de sérieux, esprit inféodé à un manque de distance

par rapport au jeu social et littéraire. C'est que l'art de Voiture est bien un art de la "subversion" déguisée, un dandysme supérieur qui refuse à toute chose le statut d'objet d'une attention sérieuse. Ce mépris voilé de la forme qui transparait dans la "facilité" du style poétique de Voiture nous semble particulièrement bien mis en évidence dans le rondeau intitulé "Rondeau très-ingénieux, que l'auteur fait, en disant qu'il ne le sçaurait faire"; voici le texte de Voiture:

Ma foy c'est fait de moy, car Isabeau
 M'a conjuré de lui faire un Rondeau,
 Cela me met dans une peine extrême:
 Quoi, treize vers, huict en eau, cinq en
 éme
 Je lui ferois aussi tost un batteau.

En voila cinq pourtant en un monceau,
 Faisons-en huict, en invoquant Brodeau,
 Et puis mettons par quelque stratagème,
 Ma foy c'est fait.

Si je pouvais encor de mon cerveau
 Tirer cinq vers, l'ouvrage seroit beau:
 Mais cependant je suis dedans
 l'unzième,
 Et si je croy que je fais le douzième,

En voila treize ajustez au niveau,
 Ma foy c'est fait.

Ici, l'artifice se prend pour objet. Voiture n'hésite pas à utiliser d'évidentes "bourres" pour s'assurer les faveurs de la rime. Les mots qui closent les vers traduisent souvent une certaine négligence. Le terme "batteau" n'a par exemple aucune nécessité sémantique impérative et pourrait aisément être remplacé par quelque autre mot, les termes "monceau" et "cerveau" ne seraient probablement pas utilisés dans ce contexte en

dehors d'exigences harmoniques. Le septième et le huitième vers consacrent le point culminant de l'artifice se mirant en sa propre image littéraire, puisque l'appel au "stratagème" qui est exprimé constitue en lui-même ledit stratagème. Le tout se trouve souverainement clos par le "Ma foy c'est fait" qui reprend le vers initial en le séparant de groupe "de moy" qui lui donnait un tout autre sens. Nous verrons que ce type de jeu sur le double sens de certaines expressions dans des contextes différents est un des ressorts fondamentaux de l'"esprit" de Voiture. La répétition de l'expression initiale, en témoignant d'un glissement de sens, consacre la toute-puissance de l'artifice. Le mot en lui-même n'est rien, son sens se déplace selon les contextes et les intentions qui l'animent. Voiture joue sur ces possibilités linguistiques comme sur un système d'"illusions" dont il connaît parfaitement toutes les facettes. Le "Ma foy c'est fait" résonne ainsi, avec une pointe d'impertinence témoignant d'une distance un peu railleuse, comme une affirmation de maîtrise dans le domaine du jeu des lettres.

Ce caractère de distance se refusant à prendre au sérieux la forme même de son expression se manifeste au plus haut point dans l'évocation des choses amoureuses. Ainsi que l'affirme fort judicieusement Fukui: "Les oeuvres de Voiture détruisent tout un système de la mystique de l'amour."⁹ On pourrait à bon droit s'étonner de ce phénomène, vu le contexte d'une vie sociale très largement déterminée par l'élément féminin; mais il y a probablement là le signe d'un glissement dans la conception de la femme et de l'amour, glissement ou changement d'accent que traduit l'aspiration précieuse: La femme ne fait plus l'objet d'un culte, elle semble revendiquer de descendre de son piédestal et de se voir chanter avec une distance critique qui frôle parfois l'impertinence mais qui témoigne a posteriori de sa finesse et de son intelligence.

Les femmes de l'Hotel de Rambouillet ne sont plus les idéaux de la tradition courtoise, elles se veulent plus "intelligentes" en ce sens qu'elles aspirent à être à même de se situer dans un système codé dans lequel elles deviennent aptes à percevoir la véritable nature des messages artificiels que les hommes leur prodiguent. "Société du spectacle" consciente d'elle-même comme société du spectacle, le salon mondain et littéraire exalte comme modèle de l'"esprit" cette aptitude à assentir et à faire assentir le libre jeu des apparences en jouant souverainement sur leur nature d'apparences. Le rondeau suivant nous semble riche de sens à cet égard:

Si vous vouliez qu'on vous parlast
d'Amour,
Je vous ferois cent Rondeaux chaque
jour,
Car je vous ayme, et mon Ame dolente,
Toutes les nuits est pour vous
miaulante,
Et l'on l'entend en chaque carrefour.

Vous pouvez tout sur Monsieur de
Tricour,
Et l'on m'a dit que Monseieur de
Beaujour,
Pour vostre Amour auroit l'ame
brûlante,
Si vous vouliez.

Les deux Beutez qui règnent au Faux-
bour,
Et celle-là du petit Luxembour,
N'échauffent point mon humeur froide et
lente;
Mais de vos yeux l'ardeur étincelante
M'embraserait, cela s'entend tousjour,
Si vous vouliez.

Toute la thématique pétrarquiste se déploie dans

ce poème: la tristesse de l'âme amoureuse, les nuits blanches passées à pleurer, l'embrasement de l'âme par les yeux ardents de l'aimée. Or aucune de ces notations ne trahit explicitement le jeu d'une sincérité simulée; pourtant, l'auditeur ne peut se laisser prendre. L'hyperbole amoureuse, quoique classique, est ici dans le second vers à double tranchant. Le terme "miaulante" introduit plus nettement une note douteuse de mignardise, tandis que le thème de l'errance amoureuse se teinte d'un sourire en coin de par le choix du lexique ("l'on l'entend en chaque carrefour"). La mention des deux amoureux transis, puis des trois grand noms de la société mondaine qui ne peuvent échauffer le flegme du poète, ont en vue de donner plus de force à la chute tout en ménageant des rimes pres que impertinemment commodes. Le thème final du regard qui embrase se trouve sensiblement "désamorcé" par le "cela s'entend tousjour" qui fait affleurer une sorte de politesse ambiguë, à la fois délicate et malicieuse. Le "Si vous vouliez" final peut enfin être entendu dans un sens qui marque un glissement sémantique par rapport au premier vers. On voit sur cet exemple comment Voiture est habile à créer un système de suggestions subtiles tout en prenant pour base un système idéologique de l'amour qui, sans être récusé, se trouve travaillé de l'intérieur par un réseau de figures et de références à la fois évidentes et voilées. D'autres pièces témoignent d'une utilisation plus nette de l'hyperbole "entendue", dans le contexte de l'amour, tel ce rondeau:

Pour le moins vostre compliment
 M'a soulagé dans ce moment;
 Et dès qu'on me l'est venu faire,
 J'ay chassé mon Apoticaire,
 Et renvoyé mon lavement.

Vous m'avez guéry promptement,
 Vos mots coulent si doucement,

Que chacun d'eux vaut un clistère,
Pour le moins.

Vous me deviez ce traitement,
Car je vous ayme uniquement,
Et mesme depuis cette affaire,
C'est un peu plus qu'à l'ordinaire,
Cela veut dire infiniment,
Pour le moins.

L'association des mots doux à la médecine, filée par des comparaisons presque triviales ("Que chacun d'eux vaut un clistère") laisse présager une démystification à peine voilée de la "mystique de l'amour." Le terme "Pour le moins," tout en apparaissant atténuer la comparaison, ne fait que renforcer, au second degré, sa force destructrice de par son caractère de saillie malicieuse. La juxtaposition des deux vers "Vous me deviez ce traitement,/Car je vous ayme" illustre la distance quelque peu ironique entre les deux ordres. La chute est dans le plus pur style de Voiture: C'est un jeu assez subtil sur les schémas de la quantité et de l'hyperbole en amour, "un peu plus qu'à l'ordinaire," "infiniment," "pour le moins." L'antithèse du "un peu plus" et du "infiniment" met fortement en relief l'hyperbole tout en lui retirant malicieusement toute crédibilité. La chute ne fait que confirmer spirituellement l'artifice hyperbolique en intensifiant encore sa dérisoire démesure. Le "Cela veut dire" donne plaisamment la clef d'une "herméneutique" de l'amour précieux selon Voiture: "l'infiniment" du langage ne signifie rien de plus en fait qu'un peu plus qu'à l'ordinaire," mais Voiture traduit finement le message en sens inverse à l'intention de la société précieuse: Le "un peu plus" trivial et concret signifie "infiniment" en bon langage. Voiture fait ainsi preuve d'un don de la dérision achevé, il annihile le système de l'hyperbole pétrarquaisante en l'exaltant dans sa précaire

littéralité. Mais la démystification de Voiture va parfois jusqu'aux bornes de l'impertinence, comme dans "Louange des beautés de Philis:"

Tout beau corps, toute belle image
Sont grossiers auprès du visage
Que Philis a receu des cieux,
Sa bouche, son ris et ses yeux
Mettent tous les coeurs au pillage.

Sa gorge est un divin ouvrage,
Rien n'est si droit que son corsage,
En fin elle a, pour dire mieux,
Tout beau.

Parmi tout, ce qui plus m'engage,
C'est un certain petit passage,
Qui vermeil et délicieux,
Mais ce secret est pour les Dieux;
Ma plume, changez de langage,
Tout beau.

Les deux premières strophes sont représentatives de ce chant précieux de la Dame qui constitue un tissu d'insipides conventions: L'amour est un système formel, un code fermé une fois pour toutes. Notons cependant le contraste intéressant introduit par le verbe "mettre au pillage" qui jure, par sa puissance expressive concrète, sur ce fond de clichés rebattus. L'extrême conclusion du "Tout beau" de la fin de la seconde strophe ménage un subtil clin d'oeil à l'assistance dans la mesure où il est bien entendu a priori, dans le système hyperbolique, que la jeune femme ne saurait avoir que "tout beau." Le "pour dire mieux" est chargé de malice, non seulement parce qu'il suggère subtilement un en-deçà du discours hyperbolique conventionnel par son aspect de récapitulation un peu abrupte et "entendue," mais aussi parce que l'expression "Elle a tout beau" n'a certes rien d'un "mieux dire" sur le plan de l'élégance syntaxique. Ici

encore, Voiture joue probablement sur sa propre négligence et sur la désinvolture de sa forme. La dernière strophe est un excellent exemple de l'"impertinence" de Voiture: Le verbe "engager," emprunté au lexique de la passion vraie, est ici d'un cynisme sans appel dans le contexte d'une gauloiserie à peine voilée. Voiture semble fort habilement interrompre le cours de sa phrase, dans les vers "Qui vermeil et délicieux,/Mais ce secret est por les Dieux;" avec une vivacité enjouée et malicieuse dont on peut aisément deviner l'heureux effet dans le contexte "vivant" d'un badinage de salon. L'apostrophe à la plume témoigne aussi de l'habileté de Voiture à voiler son impertinence d'un écran de politesse malicieuse dont personne n'est dupe mais dont tout le monde est charmé. Notons encore le jeu, ici parfaitement réussi, sur les deux sens de "Tout beau" ressort stylistique fondamental du rondeau de Voiture qui accuse une circularité harmonique au plan de signifiant tout en la déjouant sur le plan du signifié: Ambiguïté foncière du langage par laquelle peuvent se traduire les pulsions qui restent en deça du dit et du nommé. Il est à cet égard frappant de constater que l'on est passé, dans notre rondeau, d'un registre idéaliste pétrarquisant à une grossièreté à peine voilée, et cela sur la base des mêmes supports linguistiques, qui garantissent ainsi l'unité interne du rondeau.

De fait, Voiture aime à s'aventurer sur le terrain d'une gauloiserie osée, phénomène paradoxal à première vue, qui nous paraît résulter en définitive de la cohabitation historique de deux veines antithétiques ou complémentaires de la littérature française depuis le Moyen-Age: La courtoisie, plus tard "pétrarquisée" ou "platonisée," et la grivoiserie naturaliste. Voiture réussit le tour de force de réunir ces deux courants en un seul genre, ou disons plutôt qu'il utilise la forme pétrarquiste à des fins "gauloises." Une question se pose alors: Comment les femmes, au demeurant si raffinées, de l'Hôtel

de Rambouillet pouvaient-elles donc applaudir aux sous-entendus et aux équivoques de Voiture? Pour répondre à cette question, il faut postuler une morale sexuelle bien plus lâche qu'un lecteur de notre époque peut avoir tendance à l'imaginer, et un mélange, après tout déjà sensible dans des oeuvres comme L'Heptameron, de "naturalisme" sexuel et de raffinement culturel. Il est peu probable néanmoins qu'il faille interpréter ce phénomène dans les termes moralistes modernes d'une "hypocrisie sexuelle," mais plutôt comme une dualité structurelle de la psyché européenne depuis le Moyen-Age. Quoi qu'il en soit, la société féminine qui applaudit Voiture apprécie vraisemblablement surtout l'aisance et l'"esprit" de la forme dont il enrobe ses propos ambigus, sorte d'exploit littéraire dans un milieu qui tend à se définir par un refus du concret et du "direct" et une dilection conséquente pour la métaphore et la périphrase. Définir dans les termes les plus détournés et les plus subtils les réalités les plus concrètes et les plus naturelles, c'est là peut-être la point idéale du goût précieux. Le rondeau suivant nous semble fort symptomatique à cet égard:

Ou vous scavez tromper bien finement,
 Ou vous m'aimez assez fidèlement,
 Lequel des deux, je ne le sçaurois dire,
 Mais cependant je pleure et je soupire,
 Et ne reçois aucun soulagement.

Pour vostre amour j'ay quitté franche-
 ment
 Ce que j'avois acquis bien seurement;
 Car on m'aimoit, et j'avois quelque
 empire
 Ou vous scavez.

Je n'attens pas tout le contentement
 Qu'on peut donner aux peines d'un Amant,
 Et qui pourroit me tirer de martyre,

A si grand bien mon courage n'aspire;
Mais laissez-moy vous toucher seulement
Ou vous scavez.

Ici encore, Voiture reprend les termes de la tradition pétrarquiste de l'amant transi sur un mode tout conventionnel ("pleurer," "soupirer," "soulagement"). Notons cependant la subtilité de l'alternative initiale ("tromper bien finement"/ "assez fidèlement") qui témoigne a priori du climat d'ambiguïté et de duplicité dans lequel va se développer tout le poème. La seconde strophe joint de façon fort révélatrice de la manière de Voiture, des notations issues de la tradition idéaliste ("empire") à des considérations de "marchandage" amoureux. Les deux derniers vers de la strophe portent la marque du plus pur style précieux de par leur aspect poliment allusif. ("On," "quelque empire," "ou vous scaves"). Avec la dernière strophe, tension entre le pôle "idéaliste" et le pôle "réaliste" de son propos. Les quatre premiers vers relèvent du "martyre" et de la "récompense" amoureuse. Le "A se grand bien" oriente même le ton dans un sens presque platonicien, tandis que les termes "contentement," "martyre," "courage" relèvent du vocabulaire de la mystique et de l'amour "noble." Or les deux derniers vers vont consacrer une chute abrupte de ces sommets. Sous le couvert d'une résignation et d'une soumission aux volontés de la "Dame," Voiture fait passer une obscénité majeure que ne brise cependant pas totalement le régime des "bienséances" de par le double sens, sentimental et physique, du verbe "toucher." C'est ainsi qu'on pense à l'appréciation de Pétrone par Saint-Evremond:

... et si quelqu'un pouvait trouver le secret d'envelopper les ordures avec un langage pareil au sien, je répons pour les Dames qu'elles donneraient des louanges à sa discrétion.

Voiture nous apparaît donc bien comme un "illusionniste" de la langue. Son talent réside en cette capacité subtile à saisir l'ambiguïté du langage social de son temps, fruit d'une conscience de ses facettes "miroitantes." Nous pouvons récuser aujourd'hui cet art "superficiel" ou "factice" en raison de notre imprégnation plus ou moins inconsciente par les modèles rousseauistes de l'"authenticité" et de la "sincérité." Mais ce dont peuvent encore témoigner pour nous ces "petites pièces de rien" écrites à propos de "riens," c'est peut-être d'un "pré-nihilisme" moderne qui saisit partout la "dérive" des sens et la précarité des valeurs. Sans vouloir aller trop loin dans ce sens, c'est peut-être là néanmoins que git la clef de ce jugement a priori si déconcertant de Tallemant sur le maître "en toute matière ingénieuse et galante" de l'Hôtel de Rambouillet:

Mesme avec ceux à qui il voulait
plaire, il avait de grandes inégalitez,
et souvent, ¹il luy prenoit des
resveries;

rêveries d'un monde d'au-delà du jeu?

Notes

¹ Histoire de la langue française, t. III, 1.

² "La Préciosité, conception héroïque de la vie," Revue de France, Paris, Septembre 1938, pp. 195-216.

³ La Préciosité, Paris, 1966. Pour toutes les références aux textes de Voiture, nous avons recours à l'édition de Henri Lafay: Voiture, Poésies, Paris, 1971.

⁴ Nous faisons ici allusion à la querelle entre Vadius et Trissotin à propos de la ballade dans Les Femmes savantes.

⁵ Lathuillière, La Préciosité, p. 385.

⁶ Qu'on en juge par ce rondeau:

En verrai-je jamais la fin,
De vos oeuvres, Mélancolie,
Quand au soir de vous me délie
Vous me rattachez au matin.

J'aimasse mieux autre voisin
Que vous, que si fort me guerrie;
En verrai-je jamais la fin?

Vers moi venez en larrecin
Et me robez Plaisance lie;
Suis-je destiné en ma vie
D'être toujours en tel hutin?
En verrai-je jamais la fin?

⁷ "Voiture and the Question of Wit," L'Esprit Créateur, Winter 1980, vol. XX, no. 4, p. 7.

⁸ Y. Fukui, Raffinement précieux dans la poésie française du XVIIe siècle, Paris, 1964, p. 187.

⁹ Y. Fukui, Raffinement précieux dans la poésie française du XVIIe siècle, Paris, 1964, p. 189.

¹⁰ Saint-Evremond, Oeuvres en prose, "Sur Pétrone," p. 184, ed. René Ternois, Paris, 1962, t. 1.

¹¹ Saint-Evremond, Oeuvres en prose, "Jugements sur quelques auteurs français," p. 343, t. IV.

¹² Tallemant des Réaux, Historiettes, t. III, p. 33.

Teatro Poblacional Chileno (1978-1983)

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El contexto socio-cultural que ha predominado en la sociedad chilena por más de una década, le ha dado una significación especial a la producción y al consumo del teatro entre los sectores populares de la población. En un marco en el cual las relaciones sociales y los diversos niveles comunicativos en la estructura social aparecen altamente cercenados, el hacer y el presenciar representaciones teatrales se convierte en un mecanismo que no sólo facilita la interrelación y la comunicación social, sino que se constituye en un factor esencial en el esfuerzo por conformar un sujeto social que plantee alternativas para un nuevo orden de la sociedad. Así, hacia 1978 comienza a surgir en diversos sectores de la capital, e inicialmente alrededor de comunidades juveniles católicas, un teatro cuyo objetivo explícito es llevar al escenario fragmentos de la realidad poblacional. Es un teatro que aspira a extraer la imágenes más vivas que presenta el momento histórico nacional, del modo como se plasman y se manifiestan a nivel de las poblaciones marginales de la capital. Producido y presenciado por los propios pobladores, esta expresión teatral intenta mostrar la experiencia de la marginalidad bajo el autoritarismo, sin limitarse a este periodo, a través de un lenguaje anclado en las prácticas cotidianas propias de los sectores populares durante los últimos años. El orden económico-social, político y cultural impuesto a partir de 1973, hace que la puesta en escena de la cotidianidad de los sectores marginales vaya más allá de ser una simple alternativa a las limitadas manifestaciones culturales que permite el autoritarismo chileno. El teatro poblacional producido entre los años 1978-1983, como praxis cultural colectiva de los propios sujetos de la marginalidad, se convierte en una forma discursiva que rescata la experiencia histórica de los pobladores, identificándolos como agentes de cambio

esenciales en un sujeto social de carácter popular todavía por consolidarse. Es un discurso popular que va adquiriendo forma en la medida en que los espacios culturales demarcados por el autoritarismo van siendo modificados, y la conciencia y la práctica de expresiones masivamente a las clases populares. Los resquicios contenidos en los decretos de censura establecidos por el régimen no pasan desapercibidos para algunas compañías teatrales y muy pronto descubren que accidental o intencionalmente las representaciones teatrales son sistemáticamente excluidas de los decretos que censuran los espectáculos públicos y los medios de comunicación masiva. La lógica de la dinámica social bajo el autoritarismo excluye la intencionalidad de este hecho de parte de las autoridades militares.

Hacia el término de la década del setenta, la conciencia de que "hacer teatro" es una alternativa disponible para las expresiones culturales independientes, se ha extendido a amplios sectores populares en los alrededores de la capital y ya en 1980 funcionan numerosos grupos de teatro poblacional, esencialmente en torno a centros comunitarios parroquiales y clubes deportivos. Entre ellos, valga mencionar al grupo "Amanecer" de Maipú, a "Tea Tierra" de Villa Francia, al grupo "Engranaje" de Lo Hermida, al "Centro Ecuménico de Maipú, al grupo "Los de Alvear" de la población Digna Rosa, de Pudahuel, al grupo "Parroquia San Alberto" en Conchalí, al colectivo "La Pincoya", al grupo "Parroquia El Carmen" en El Salto, a "Refugio" del Centro Cultural Alberto Hurtado en la parroquia Jesús Obrero, al grupo "San Pedro Pescador" en la población José María Caro, a "Teatro Gente Joven" en Villa Kennedy, a "Expresión de la Verdad" en la población Herminda de la Victoria, Pudahuel Norte, a los grupos "El Globo", "La Cantimplora" y "DEPA" (Deportivo Puente Alto) los tres de Puente Alto, al grupo "La Puerta" de Renca y finalmente a "Las Arpilleristas" de la Zona Oriente. Por diversas razones algunos de éstos grupos han ido desapareciendo y simultáneamente han surgido otros no incluidos en este breve

catastro. Tanto la heterogeneidad en la composición de estos colectivos (estudiantes, cesantes, trabajadores, dueñas de casa, monitores con entrenamiento profesional, todos con variados grados de compromiso político o religioso), como la asimilación y habilidad rearticulatoria de la formas discursivas a la mano, dará origen a variadas representaciones simbólicas de la realidad poblacional que revelan las prácticas cotidianas y la visión de mundo de los propios pobladores.

Autopercepción y marginalidad: tácticas y prácticas cotidianas

El modo como los individuos consumer y utilizan las diversas representaciones de una sociedad, constituye un doble proceso de consumo y producción al cual Michel de Cereau se refiere como los variados "modos de operar" ("ways of operating") dentro de una sociedad determinada. Las dos modalidades fundamentales de "operación" serían las "estrategias" y las "tácticas". Según De Certeau, la diferencia entre unas y otras yace en que las primeras se constituyen en base a una relación de poder que postula un espacio (locus) delimitado como propio y que sirve de base para el establecimiento de relaciones con una "exterioridad" concebida en términos de blancos y amenazas. Las "tácticas", por otro lado, serían acciones calculadas pero autónomas, Dada la carencia de un espacio físico propio, determinadas por la "ausencia de poder" y que operan dentro del espacio apropiado por el enemigo. De acuerdo a De Certeau, las "tácticas" constituirían el "arte del débil".

Estas categorías de la praxis social son útiles para nuestro análisis, en cuanto nos permiten entender la práctica teatral poblacional en el marco del autoritarismo. Desde esta perspectiva, la producción y el consumo de teatro en los sectores populares del Chile actual aparecen como "tácticas" de funcionamiento dentro de la sociedad. Es decir, hacer y presenciar representaciones teatrales es un "modo de operar" que les permite a los pobladores, en una posición de debi-

lidad, apropiarse tanto de las representaciones del orden social que promueve el discurso autoritario, como de aquéllas que postulan un orden alternativo, para rearticular ambas en nuevas representaciones simbólicas que favorecen sus intereses. Es una práctica discursiva autónoma que promueve las visiones de mundo de los sectores populares, dentro del espacio cultural delimitado por el más fuerte. Por el contrario, los variados "modos de operar" del autoritarismo constituirían las "estrategias" de que habla De Certeau.³ El proceso de apropiación de las representaciones de la sociedad llevado a cabo por los sectores populares, es realizado primordialmente mediante un trabajo de naturaleza colectiva que incluye la investigación de grupo, la lectura bíblica, la recolección de datos, la observación y el registro de prácticas de la vida cotidiana en la población, los registros de testimonios, la experiencia individual en la comunidad local, como también el consumo de formas discursivas proporcionadas por los medios de comunicación masiva. El conjunto de estos modos de apropiación de la realidad y sus representaciones, además de los rasgos peculiares de cada colectivo van a modelar los formatos y las correspondientes funciones sociales asignadas a estas representaciones teatrales. Así, hacia 1980 el "sketch" es utilizado por aquellos grupos interesados en la recreación, la "escena bíblica" por quienes aspiran a entregar una educación religiosa (católica) a través del teatro, las "obras de repertorio" son puestas en escena por grupos cuyo interés es primordialmente la promoción artístico-cultural, y finalmente, aquellos grupos que adoptan posiciones abiertamente críticas de los valores y las leyes que rigen en el orden social vigente, es decir, los valores y las leyes del mercado capitalista en una de las versiones más extraordinariamente darwinianas que hayan existido (En el propio lenguaje de los colectivos teatrales estas categorías corresponden a "los recreativos", "los beatos", "los culturistas" y "los políticos").⁵ A través de esta variedad de formatos y funciones sociales se comunican vi-

siones de mundo que se apartan de aquellas concepciones predominantemente naturalistas que estructuran la realidad marginal teatralizada por compañías profesionales. En las representaciones de la marginalidad hechas por los propios pobladores se plasman concepciones del mundo que superan cualquier determinismo y reconocen la capacidad individual y colectiva de transformación de la realidad. Son representaciones que están enmarcadas dentro de lo que en literatura se ha llamado "realismo crítico". O sea, "la capacidad artística de representar las leyes de movimiento de una cultura de acuerdo con el conocimiento de ellas de que disponga el artista, según las formas representativas a su alcance, en un momento histórico..." y mediante la cual "se reafirma la capacidad humana de hacer historia transformando sus determinismos a través de un examen analítico de sus dimensiones."⁶ El fatalismo naturalista es superado por una visión de mundo que no es triunfalista, pero sí "humanística", en cuanto reconoce y afirma la posibilidad de transformación de la realidad basada en la conciencia y praxis humana. De acuerdo a ello, en el mundo marginal representado en el teatro poblacional se pone de relieve la capacidad de los personajes de establecer, o de aspirar a establecer, un orden social más humanizante, fundamentalmente a través del trabajo colectivo (La realidad de Las Arpilleristas, El sindicato de trapo, del grupo La Puerta o LCI-LCO Liceo del grupo Engranaje). Han desaparecido el lumpen, lo grotesco y los personajes marginales degradados que no vislumbran alternativas de cambio que pueblan el mundo marginal visto desde la perspectiva de la clase media, y se los ha reemplazado por personajes que recuperan su pasado para darle sentido al presente y proyectarse al futuro, por personajes que apelan a la unidad, a la lucha, por personajes cuya interacción social constituye el elemento esencial en el desarrollo de su capacidad de autotransformación y de transformación de su mundo. Es significativo que muchas de las representaciones de la cotidianidad poblacional hagan hincapié en aquellas situaciones en las

cuales las relaciones sociales permiten y promueven algún tipo de trabajo colectivo y una conciencia sensible al cambio. Algunos nombres apuntan precisamente a ello, como por ejemplo: El sindicato de trapo, En la veга las papas queman del grupo La Puerta, Homenaje a un trabajador (sátira a un trabajador vendido) y LCI-LCO Liceo del grupo Engranaje, Viva el club del grupo DEPA. En éstas y en representaciones como El concurso (sátira del modelo económico-social y cultural autoritario) de Los de Alvear, en Juan y María (sátira al trabajo social oficialista) del grupo De Ahora, en Otoño 1981. Urgente respondan del grupo Refugio, en Uno nunca sabe de La Cantimplora, en Oda al hombre sencillo de Teatro Gente Joven, en Esto de jugar a la vida del grupo Excavación, en El fantasma de la creatividad del colectivo Cachillahueñe y en La realidad de Las Arpilleristas, los aspectos degradantes de la realidad poblacional son apabullados por la presencia de posibilidades de humanización depositadas en la propia capacidad creativa de los pobladores. La cesantía, la drogadicción y la prostitución juveniles, el abuso de autoridad, el alcoholismo, el servilismo laboral, la enajenación través del deporte, los problemas de abortos y la condición del homosexual (comportamientos aún muy estigmatizados en la sociedad chilena), el miedo, el desinterés, el consumismo y el anonimato, conviven y son superados por el trabajo colectivo y la solidaridad con un relegado en un taller de arpilleras (La realidad), con modos incipientes de resistencia física a la represión (recolección de piedras y neumáticos en Juan y María), con llamados a la unidad y a la acción común (El sindicato de trapo y Viva el club), con interpelaciones directas al público como un modo de estimular la conciencia crítica ("...¡Oigan! Mapocho?", pregunta un personaje de Tres cuentos pa' un Mapocho, insinuando que la crecida de las aguas del río Mapocho es sólo la causante indirecta de la tragedia que afecta a una familia de areneros que vive en la ribera del río), o con un llamado de atención a tomar posiciones en una

situación laboral ("Lo que es los trompas te dejaron solo ...ianda pensando ... dónde tenís que estar! ¡Con los de aquí o los de allá" le declara un personaje de Homenaje a un trabajador, a un compañero de trabajo que ha sido abandonado por los empresarios). De este modo, las prácticas cotidianas individuales y colectivas de los sectores populares, regidas por una concepción del mundo que es a la vez "humanizante" y crítica, son tipificadas en estas representaciones teatrales en un intento de totalizar la experiencia de la marginalidad poblacional. Estas tipificaciones las hace posible la propia capacidad del lenguaje de trascender la especificidad espacial y temporal de la experiencia cotidiana, a través de procesos de rearticulación de formas discursivas practicados por los propios pobladores.

Totalización de la experiencia y rearticulación discursiva

La posibilidad de objetivación de la experiencia la proporciona el lenguaje mismo. Este, mediante su capacidad de trascendencia e integración permite la superación del "aquí" y del "ahora", conectando zonas distintas de la vida cotidiana e integrándolas en totalidades significativas (tipificaciones). Pero además de poder trascender absolutamente la vida cotidiana, el lenguaje puede también "hacer presente" experiencias y significaciones que estén espacial, temporal y, socialmente ausentes del "aquí" y del "ahora". Como praxis fundamental del ser humano, el lenguaje incorpora continuamente al presente diversos periodos históricos del desarrollo de la humanidad, haciendo que la historia sea una "incesante totalización del pasado". La realidad humana es en este sentido, de acuerdo a Karel Kosik, "no sólo la producción de lo nuevo sino también una reproducción de lo viejo--una crítica y dialéctica. La totalización es el proceso de producción, de revivificación y rejuvenecimiento". En la práctica teatral poblacional, esta "incesante totalización de pasado" da origen a un formato de representación que incluye por lo

general a personajes que relatan su historia personal hasta el presente, o a uno o varios narradores que establecen el marco social de los acontecimientos relatando el pasado lejano o inmediato de los personajes. Usualmente, la integración de la experiencia acumulada al momento presente no es lineal ni aparece desconectada de la cotidianidad actual. Por el contrario, es un elemento vital que da sentido al presente, como es el caso de Juana, una vendedora de la vega, quien relata su experiencia en estos términos:

Juana: Y ahí empezó la vía. Vendíamos chocolate a la guerra no má poh. Había que arrancar de los pacos. Los cauros nos ayudan a dar guelto...vivíamos en una villa militar y pal golpe noh echaron a la calle. De ahí onde una hermana del flaco, pero ella le pegaa a los cauros. Después onde un primo; era una casa con gallineros de patos y de gallinas, pero la mujer noh cortaa la lu. Noh alumbramoh con la pura lu de la esperanza. Luego onde un pairino (Se ríe); era una pieza que bia sío almacén y tenía toaía la cortina. Cuando alguien salía o dentraa sabía hasta el vecino de la esquina; too salían a sapiar a la puerta. Después deso jui a un conventillo. Una Añuela arrendaa allí y poco después que lligamos paró las patas y aparecieron como por encanto sus parientes pa' comerle le'rencia. Después aonde estoy poh... ¡ah! ...saí que también estuvimos onde una amiga del flaco que era carrerista. Allí habían doh piezah; ella en las noches lligaa con sus jinnetitos (Irónica) a correr solitos ahí poh; se sentía too y en esa misma casucha, pa' un temporal el viento casi noh gñela el techo. Los otros asopao en la pieza de al lao y nosotros colgao de la viga... ya cuando el viento ía por Arica lligó la otra con su

juinetito a ayuar... (Silencio). Después al flaco le salió el permiso y se compuso un poco la cosa. Y ése es mi desafío; eso es mi vía. Luchar pa' darle a mi hijo lo que el flaco quería.

La experiencia vital de Juana, trabajadora de la vega y miembro de una familia de pobladores sin casa, resume más de una década de peripecias mudándose de un lugar a otro para concluir auto-definiendo su existencia en función de la satisfacción de las necesidades de su hijo a través de la "lucha" diaria. Juana no concibe el presente ni su actuar en él como una peregrinación o vía crucis que la llevará finalmente al paraíso, sino como un "desafío" que le exige "ahora" poner en práctica toda su capacidad creativa.

Pero tal vez donde se haya logrado una totalización de la experiencia poblacional de modo más explícito, sea en la representación La realidad. En ella, la dimensión temporal actúa como principio estructural que organiza la representación en tres escenas o partes claramente establecidas. La primera, llamada "El hambre", resume la imposibilidad de satisfacer la necesidad vital de alimentación en los años 1975-76, cuando aún no surgían organizaciones de apoyo en la comunidad. La segunda, denominada "Compartiendo el trabajo", sintetiza los inicios de la múltiples organizaciones de pobladores que se dan hacia 1978, y la tercera escena, llamada "Buscando la autonomía y perdiendo el miedo", engloba la experiencia poblacional de una década hasta el año 1983. En la escena "El Hambre", el pasado se hace presente a través de la intervención de tres narradoras que hablan así:

Narradora 1: Lo más negro que he vivido en mi vida hasta ahora, fue cuando quedamos sin nada, nada que comer, mis hermanas, yo, y los chiquillos de todas nosotras que eran como diez. Eso fue allá por el 75. Nunca había vivido una cosa así.

.....

También tuvimos que ir a la basura, donde cachureamos toda clase de cuestiones. Nuestro Unicoop como le decíamos, nos surtía desde pinturas para la cara hasta comida. Le sacábamos lo malo que tenía y la poníamos al fuego. Había que darle que comer a los niños. Hasta la hoja de la zanahoria se la comían. Esto es lo que nunca se nos va a olvidar.

Narradora 2.: El 75, la sección donde yo trabajaba salió completa.

Ahí, yo antes decía: "¿Yo trabajar de empleada? Nunca". Pero después empecé a sentir la necesidad, porque tengo un niño y soy soltera.

Narradora 3: Poco me acuerdo de lo que vino después del golpe. Estaba muy chica entonces. Me acuerdo que había que hacer cola en las panaderías. Un día mi hermana me dijo que la acompañara, y la acompañé. Le dijimos a una camioneta que nos llevara para afuera. Y salimos por la rotonda, y no se veía nadie en la calle. Solamente unos pacos había en la rotonda, porque estaba llena de muertos. Es lo único que yo recuerdo. Es lo único que yo vi.10

La escena termina con el tango "El mendigo", cuya última estrofa dice así: "¡Toma hijo estas monedas!/que te niegan hoy los ricos/¡Toma hijo esta limosna!/que te alcancen para un pan".

La segunda escena, "Compartiendo el trabajo", es el correlato teatral de las múltiples organizaciones populares que surgen como un modo de enfrentar colectivamente la crítica situación económica, acentuada hacia finales de la década

del setenta. En la realidad cotidiana de los sectores populares comienzan a funcionar los "talleres laborales", los "comedores populares", las "ollas comunes", los "comprando juntos", los "huertos comunitarios", los "comités de agua", "comités de luz" y "comités de deudas", las "bolsas de cesantes" y los grupos "trabajo para un hermano". Son organizaciones que nacen en torno a una necesidad económica, pero que no limitan su radio de acción a ese aspecto, vinculando sus actividades a las esferas socio-política y cultural de la vida en las poblaciones. Surgen además, organizaciones de servicios como los "círculos de salud" (para terapia de grupos y rehabilitación de alcohólicos), los "jardines parcelarios populares" y grupos y centros comunitarios encargados¹¹ de organizar vacaciones y colonias escolares. Estas prácticas colectivas populares son tipificadas en la representación de la experiencia de un grupo de artesanas (arpilleristas), quienes comparten las frustraciones y beneficios cuando intentan buscar posibilidades de subsistencia de modo colectivo. Aquí, los narradores de la primera escena dan paso al diálogo simbólico de la praxis cotidiana:

Presidenta: ¡Oigan chiquillas! Mientras tanto la secretaria hace los papelitos, yo quería conversales qué podíamos hacer pa' no quedar sin arpillera. Qué solución podemos dar, porque yo creo que estamos mal. Los maríos no tienen trabajo. Mi marío se fue pa' la Argentina. La otra no tiene marío...

Mirta: Así que estai solita. Tú estai bien.

Presidenta: Estoy soltera. Pero tenemos que ver de alguna manera de adónde sacar plata, porque si no vamos a tener arpillera ...nadie está trabajando, los lavaos, Uds. saben... unas tienen lavaos, otras no tienen. Yo

pienso que tentríamos que hacer algo. ¿Qué opinan ustedes? ¿Qué podemos hacer? ...¿onces? ... ¿o recolectar botellas?...

María: ¿Ya van a empezar con las cuestiones ya!

Mónica: ¡Esta cuestión de las botellas es pura payasá no más!

.....

Presidenta: Bueno, ¿Qué vamos a hacer? ...¿Vamos a hacer la cuestión de la once? ¿La recolección de botellas, diarios? ¿O qué? ¡Díganlo ahora o callan para siempre!

María: Cualquier cosa, menos la campaña de botellas ... porque las viejas que tienen botellas son más apretá y no quieren dar...

Presidenta: Pero es buena la campaña de la botella...¿Sabís por qué se hace la campaña de la botella? Porque nosotras juntamos la botella, vendimos la botella, y en la misma tarde nos repartimos, y salen como cincuenta pesos pa' cada una.

Rosa: ... y no sirve pa' un kilito de pan.

.....

Yorya: ¡No estoy pa' juntar botellas! ¡Yo junto diarios!

Presidenta: ¿Chis! ¡Si no te van a dar nada por los diarios!

Yorya: ¡Pero igual no más! Alcanza pa'

huesos pa' hacer sopa.¹²

Con la última escena, "Buscando la autonomía y perdiendo el miedo", culmina el proceso de totalización de la experiencia poblacional, con un acto de solidaridad con un relegado que acaba de regresar de su "veraneo" involuntario, y una evaluación personal de lo que ha significado la participación en el taller a cada una de las arpilleristas. Se termina con una exhortación a "seguir luchando por la realidad y por la verdad", tratando de "llegar a la gente". Manolo, el relegado, deja constancia de la percepción de la realidad que tienen los propios pobladores, con estas palabras:

Manolo: Les doy las gracias, y quiero que sepan que no soy yo el único que he estado relegado. En estos momentos creo que ustedes, y muchos como yo, están en la misma situación. Vivimos relegados, en nuestras poblaciones, a no pensar, a no comunicarnos, a vivir con hambre, para poder seguir luchando en conseguir una vida más digna y libre para todos. Por eso quería darles las gracias.¹³

El carácter esencialmente oral de la cultura poblacional hace que el lenguaje utilizado en estas representaciones carezca de un alto grado de abstracción. Los conceptos se mantienen en un marco referencial situacional, que revelan extrema proximidad a la vida cotidiana.¹⁴ Sin embargo, la capacidad misma del lenguaje de trascender espacial y temporalmente la realidad, permite que estas totalizaciones de la experiencia poblacional viajen por distintas dimensiones de la misma, de tal manera que los relatos de las narradoras, la decisión de recolectar botellas o diarios, o la percepción de relegación colectiva que tiene Manolo, no son experiencias limitadas al plano individual de cada miembro que participa en la producción teatral misma, o de aquel o aquellos miembros de la comunidad local que han participado

en esas prácticas cotidianas. Por el contrario, estas totalizaciones se elevan a la esfera de las tipificaciones convirtiéndolas en comportamientos colectivos de los sectores sociales marginales. Son tipificaciones expresadas fundamentalmente a través de un discurso popular que rearticula otros discursos, incluido el discurso del autoritarismo. Este ha sido integrado en la voz de una visitadora social representante del gobierno en Juan y María, en la de una Inspectora General de un liceo LCI-LCO Liceo, en la voz de un representante de una empresa en Homenaje a un trabajador, y en la voz de los personajes de la sátira más punzante al orden social propugnado por el autoritarismo, El concurso. Es ésta la representación que revela más nítidamente el "modo de operar" dentro del campo del enemigo, del que habla De Certeau. Su objetivo es "educar entreteniendo", para lo cual se recurre a la utilización de conocidos personajes de la televisión y a otros que encarnan importantes valores en conflicto dentro de la sociedad chilena actual. El propósito del concurso es la elección de Mis Economía 1982, para el cual quedan sólo dos finalistas: Mis Libertad Mercado y Mis Justina Solidaria. Junto al animador del concurso, a Lamparito Jamones, a Gualo Reyes, a Rafaela Garrafa (todos nombres transformados de cantantes populares que le dan un tono jocoso) aparecen Mister Ronaldo Frioman (fusión de los nombres Ronald Reagan y Milton Friedman) y Juanito Cesantía, hijo de Mis Libertad Mercado. Excepto por este último, el animador y las dos concursantes, los demás son miembros del jurado. La representación se concentra en los momentos finales del concurso y luego de una serie de preguntas y respuestas en las cuales las concursantes exponen sus respectivos planteamientos (los potenciales beneficios de la economía de libre mercado versus la tragedia y futuro de la solidaridad), llega el momento de la decisión final. Aquí, en una caracterización muy elocuente del personaje, Mr Frioman intenta persuadir al jurado de que voten por Mis Libertad Mercado, diciendo:

Mr. Frioman: Mirren you les digou, que debemous elegir a Mis Mercadou, porque de esa forma vamos a ayudar a este país a que se haga famoso por haber elegido esta Mis Economía, y vendrán turistas, financistas, capitalistas, prestamistas. Por esou les pido con cariño que votemos por Miss Marketing.

A lo cual otro miembro del jurado, Lamparito Jamones, responde:

Lamparito: ¡Que no lo pueo creé! Tú eres más odioso que el hijo de Soleá, tú presionas oye, tú presionas.¹⁵

Al final del concurso, no se logra elegir a la ganadora pues momentos antes de que el animador dé a conocer la decisión del jurado, entra corriendo Juanito Cesantía a decirle a su mamá, Mis Libertad Mercado, que su hermanito Recesión se ha caído al tropezar en el "plano económico".

En representaciones como ésta, el simbolismo utilizado es evidente tanto en los nombres de los personajes como en la naturaleza del concurso. Se trata de la elección de un modelo económico impuesto desde el exterior y que tiene en jaque a ciertos valores tradicionales considerados parte de la identidad nacional, como es la solidaridad. Sin embargo, en este tipo de representaciones sobresale un hecho fundamental que forma parte de los distintos "modos de operar" dentro del autoritarismo. Esto es, la rearticulación de diversas manifestaciones del propio discurso autoritario, en este caso aquéllas aplicadas a la economía de libre mercado, para crear un discurso popular que explica simbólicamente el funcionamiento del sistema económico actualmente en vigencia. Mediante el doble proceso de consumo y producción de formas discursivas disponibles, se logra crear un discurso popular que deslegitima, por lo menos en el ambiente de los sectores populares, las concepciones y visiones de mundo propagadas directa e

indirectamente por el autoritarismo.

Intentar una comprensión definitiva de la significación social de esta práctica cultural popular es una tarea aún inconclusa. Sólo el distanciamiento histórico y la evolución del proceso social chileno podrán ayudarnos a comprender cabalmente cuál ha sido, y continúa siendo, la significación de ella. Por lo pronto, es necesario puntualizar de que el teatro poblacional producido entre los años 1978-83 constituye un intento de totalización de la experiencia cotidiana de los pobladores, que no se limita a situaciones vividas durante la última década, sino que se extiende a aquellas experiencias de las organizaciones populares en los años de Frente Popular. El pasado lejano e inmediato se integra y da sentido al presente, el cual se expresa simbólicamente a través de un lenguaje que mantiene un rasgo propio de una cultura oral: la proximidad a las prácticas cotidianas populares o ausencia de conceptos abstractos. Desde el punto de vista de la reconstitución del discurso popular bajo el autoritarismo, el teatro poblacional marca un hito fundamental. Constituye la recuperación para los sectores populares de la posición de sujetos de su propio discurso y la posibilidad de articular una visión de mundo centrada en la práctica creativa y transformadora de los mismos.

NOTAS

¹ María de la Luz Hurtado y Carlos Ochsenius, Teatro la Feria (Santiago de Chile, Serie Testimonio. Maneras de Hacer y Pensar el Teatro en el Chile Actual, Centro de Indagación y Expresión Cultural y Artística, CENECA, 1979).

² Michel de Certeau, The Practice of Everyday Life (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1984; ³trans. S.F. Rendall).

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Santiago, Chile y Latin American Studies Program, University of Minnesota, 1981).

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Carlos Ochsenius, Agrupaciones Artístico Culturales No-Oficialistas y Expresión Teatral. Esbozo de Periodización: 1973-1982 (Borrador de discusión, Centro de Indagación y Expresión Cultural y Artística, CENECA, 1983).

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9 En la vega las papas queman, Yuri Cáceres, grupo "La Puerta", Renca, 1983. Manuscrito no publicado.

10 La realidad, grupo "Las Arpilleristas", zona oriente. Manuscrito no publicado.

11 Sobre diversas prácticas y experiencias de organizaciones populares consultar Luis Razeto Las Organizaciones Económicas Populares. Una Estrategia Frente a la Crisis (Programa de Economía del Trabajo, PET, Academia de Humanismo Cristiano, 1983), Riet Delsing et al. Tipología de Organizaciones y Grupos de Mujeres Pobladoras (Documento de trabajo No. 17, SUR, abril 1983),

Vicente Espinoza Tipos de Acción Poblacional y Movimiento Popular Urbano en Chile (Documento de trabajo No. 18, SUR, mayo 1983), Critian Parker Gumucio et. al. "Aspectos de Convivencia Cotidiana en la Vida Poblacional" y "El Problema de la Supervivencia. Elementos de Racionalidad en la Acción Social" en Rasgos de Cultura Popular en Poblaciones de Pudahuel (Arzobispado de Santiago, Chile, Vicaría Zona Oeste, sin fecha).

¹²La realidad, op. cit.

¹³La realidad, op. cit.

¹⁴Walter J. Ong Orality and Literacy. The Technologizing of the Word (New York: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1982).

¹⁵El concurso, grupo "Los de Alvear", Población Digna Rosa de Pudahuel, 1982. Manuscrito no publicado.

The Irony of Women: Reflections of Irigaray
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In Book 3 of the Iliad, Helen joins Priam and other Trojans who are looking from Troy's walls out over the battlefield. When asked who one of the Greek warriors is, she calls him "Agamemnon, . . . once my kinsman, slut that I am." She then wonders about her past life, asking, "Did this ever happen?" (lines 178-80). Helen's ironic distance from her past in Greece also, ironically, distances her from her present life in Troy, for-- if Agamemnon was never her kinsman, Menelaus never her husband--then the present war in Troy has no justification, no foundation. Borrowing imagery from Luce Irigaray, we can say that the Greek and Trojan men have built their war on Helen and, if she is in doubt, their whole erection starts to sag.

I begin with Helen's question in part because it illustrates the entanglement of female and male discourse: a (largely) fictional woman's speech is quoted aloud by a (barely less) fictional blind man, whose words are repeated by some men, written down by others, translated by others, and printed by still others, then mentioned aloud to me by a man, and finally written down and read aloud by me, a woman. Has male discourse inserted itself into the female, or has female discourse enveloped the male? Women cannot write or speak a language wholly separate from that of men. But this fact threatens feminism, for to criticize patriarchy in its own terms, in its own language, is difficult, if not impossible. I shall be exploring how Irigaray offers irony as a response to the challenge.

Another reason I begin with Helen's question is that it exemplifies two ways in which to approach what, drawing on the conventional duality of the genitive, I call "the irony of women"-- irony as a feminist trope appropriate for use by women and irony as a trope representing women in patriarchy. Helen is using an ironic perspective,

and in addition she herself is ironic: a Greek at the heart of Troy, a woman embedded in a largely male war, a single face that has launched a thousand ships, a representative of the love that brings death. Mihoko Suzuki has pointed out that Helen and her literary analogs, such as Cressida, are characters of "dynamic and complex ambiguity" but are "reduced to ... static emblem(s) of doubleness, "projections of men's own ambivalence" (484A). In Helen's rich ambiguity I find the possibility that she herself uses irony; in her flattened role as emblem, I find her reduction to an ironic figure.

I would like to talk first about irony as a figure for representing women and then, moving through the thought of Irigaray, go on to irony as a figure to be used by women. I do not believe that all women or only women connect with irony, nor that women connect with irony more naturally than men do. The link between women and irony comes, not from nature, but from deeply internalized cultural values and sign systems.

I. Dames--who can figure them?

Discussions of irony conventionally begin with skirmishes in the ongoing debate about how to define it. A nominalist investigating the ways in which the word "irony" is actually used would probably find the instances have little in common besides referring to a type of difference, an incongruity of expectation, meaning, or knowledge--three categories that themselves invite a certain suspicion. What interests me more is why the word so stubbornly repels definition and yet (or therefore) exerts a continuing fascination. The status of irony resembles the status of women--you can't live with them, but you can't live without them. As I discuss the analogy, bear in mind that I am talking about women in a patriarchal society, not some eternal essence of femaleness.

Simone de Beauvoir explained how, in such a society, both sexes tend to regard man as self and woman as other. Similarly, a standard meaning

resembles the self in its primacy and unity, while an ironic meaning resembles the other in its disturbing elusiveness. In linguistic terms men and standard discourse are perceived as the basic, "unmarked" form, while women and ironic discourse are perceived as the modified, "marked" form. Women lack a proper name (Irigaray, "This sex which is not one," 101), and irony lacks a proper meaning. According to Irigaray, one must listen to women "differently in order to hear 'an other meaning' which is constantly in the process of weaving itself, at the same time ceaselessly embracing words and yet casting them off to avoid becoming fixed, immobilized" ("This sex which is not one," 103). It is no coincidence that Adrienne Rich is writing about women in the book she entitles On Lies, Secrets, and Silence. Soren Kierkegaard locates irony in negativity; women, too, are the negative, the blank of castration, the empty hole, the silent gap between words.

As Jacques Derrida explains in his critique of speech act theory, the very existence of non-standard language reveals that standard language has the potential to deviate. Just as computer calculations need zero as well as one, so without the possibility of ironic meaning the very phrase "standard meaning" would lack meaning. Masculinity needs femininity against which to define itself; men need women.

But the difficulty of defining irony makes it threatening: we can more confidently assert, "This is ironic" than "This is not ironic." Even people aware of expressing more than one meaning may not know which lies at the "origin," which they "really" mean. Similarly, women's mocking gaze, the laugh of the Medusa (Cixous), is frightening. Dresses threaten men, while pants do not threaten women; masculinity can be castrated, while femininity has nothing to lose. I do not mean that women are especially rebellious, just that their very existence brings otherness that wilts the fantasy of homosocial repetition. In Virginia Woolf's terms, women belong to a "society of outsiders," itself an ironic phrase. And

physiology gives birth to what may be the first dramatic irony--men are less likely than women to know who fathered which child.

Just as it is difficult to locate women, inside or outside, so it is difficult to locate irony. Semiotic context matters a great deal here, for irony is not a simple property that a text either possesses or lacks for all time. The person who receives an ironic message may have as much importance as the person who sends it. Because women have traditionally and metaphorically played roles of silence, reception, and receptiveness, concentrating on the receiver of irony draws attention to the female aspect of the trope. To the extent that women are "resisting readers" (in Judith Fetterley's phrase), they are ironic readers.

Women's two lips, genital or oral (Irigaray, "When Our Lips Speak Together"), curve into an ironic smile, a groove, a place where the earth dips, causing an upright man to stumble. He fears the abyss of women, the mise en abyme of uncontrolled irony. Women place a persistently irritating wrinkle in smooth patriarchal uniformity. As Irigaray compares women to short circuits in a system (Speculum of the Other Woman 142), so in Madeleine L'Engle's A Wrinkle in Time the shortest distance between two points turns out not to be a straight line but a wrinkled one. The novel draws an example from the domestic world--pucker a piece of cloth and you will understand. Responding with mockery to oneness or phallic singularity, wrinkles are also the lines that ironic laughter traces on a face.

II. Those three women aren't spinning--they're ironing

Women themselves can be not just ironic, but ironists. Not just represented by the trope, they can use it and get pleasure from it themselves. In presenting the irony used by women, I shall describe it more specifically than I have so far, not in order to reduce it, but in order to enrich perception of its possibilities. Although the

descriptions become increasingly complex, I do not mean to rank them or even to assert that they are mutually exclusive.

I was speaking of wrinkles. But wrinkles are to be ironed out and, ironically, it is often women who do the ironing. It was women who bound girls' feet in China. Tilly Olsen has said, "It is no accident that the first work I considered publishable began: 'I stand here ironing, and what you asked me moves tormented back and forth with the iron.'" (162). The iron repasses, passes, makes another pass, doubles, redoubles; Penelope weaves and unweaves. In Olsen's story the mother's ironing represents both how economic and social circumstances have flattened her and how she has flattened her daughter. Yet the daughter springs back through humor, by imitating "happenings or types at school" (170). And the mother narrates a story. Wielding words or wielding an iron indicates a woman's power, although she sometimes uses it against other women.

Remember that wrinkles can be ironed in as well as ironed out. In fact, as those of you with experience know, it is hard to do one without the other. Luce Irigaray is acutely aware of this irony. She finds much of her particular irony in the relationship between patriarchy and feminism. Just as she brings the duality of female sexuality into dialogue with the phallic singularity of male sexuality ("This Sex Which Is Not One" 100), so she often plays with the doubleness of discourse as it simultaneously represents patriarchal dominance and feminist questioning.

In Speculum of the Other Woman, a resisting reading of Western thought, she discusses the various ways in which women are used by men as mirrors to reflect themselves, to reflect on themselves, to speculate, to specularize. A mirror image poses no threat, for it glorifies while remaining dependent and inferior. A man looking at a woman may see only himself, in that he sees what he projects onto her.

But as Irigaray twists Jacques Lacan's theory of the mirror stage, she curves the metaphorical

mirror into a concave surface that reverses images from top to bottom as well as from left to right. Such a concave mirror is a burning glass, which focuses light and turns it into heat, transforming the vision of men into the touch of women ("This Sex Which Is Not One" 101).

She develops "mimicry" ("mimétisme") as part of her conception of women's discourse as a mirror image of men's. Mirrors not only repeat; they reverse. A woman can repeat a man's words verbatim, giving them an ironic twist simply by the way she quotes them. Because women may be unable to escape completely from the patriarchal system of language and thought, Irigaray suggests that at first women may have to assume deliberately the imitative role that they have traditionally been assigned ("Pouvoir du discours, subordination du féminin," 73-74). Through such an action, which transforms subordination into affirmation, they can begin to work for change. The book Speculum itself acts as a mirror in several ways, as Gillian Gill has noted (unpublished introduction). For instance, the book quotes and imitates the language of male thinkers so that the language ironically criticizes itself. In one section on Plato and in the section on Plotinus, Irigaray merely juxtaposes quotations, employing the contiguity she associates with female aesthetics ("This Sex Which Is Not One," 104). Silence is a traditional mark of women's subordination, but when Irigaray adds nothing between the quotations her very silence comments powerfully, implying that nothing further is necessary to condemn them.

When Irigaray uses what might be called her own words, she moves to another kind of irony, exemplified in titles that have both a patriarchal and a feminist meaning. While not as literally repetitious as quotation, the practice is still a kind of mimicry. Consider the title Speculum of the Other Woman. A patriarchal reading of the title yields "speculum of the other, i.e. woman; the other, who is woman." But a feminist reading transforms the title into "speculum of the other woman, the new woman, the one who differs from the

patriarchal one." The title disrupts by ironically reflecting.

In order to understand the transformation more fully, we must look into the other part of the title, "speculum." The Latin word for mirror, it also suggests intrusive gynecological examinations. By introducing the mimicry mentioned earlier, Irigaray has self-reflectively both imitated patriarchal mirroring and added feminist mirroring. She performs the same transformation in the title of the book This Sex Which Is Not One. A similar kind of irony characterizes The Daughter's Seduction when Jane Gallop self-consciously uses parentheses to insert and embrace, to open and close, to protect and imprison, to marry and divorce.

A variety of other techniques can create female irony. A quick review of some of them will suggest paths for further exploration. Asking questions, for example, made Socrates into a female figure, a midwife, and gave the mistresses of salons ironic power as well. Every day women use questions to lubricate conversations with men and, by keeping them rolling, practice both submission and control. Helen's question, "Did this ever happen?", while not addressed to anyone else, again is tentatively incendiary.

Similar irony is heard in the apparently flighty speech of "les voleuses de langue" (Herrmann), such as the Duchess of Denver, mother of Dorothy Sayers' character Lord Peter Wimsey. Free indirect discourse became a central ironic technique in the work of Jane Austen and of Gustave Flaubert, who--ironically--referred to himself as the female "Madame Bovary."

As Irigaray has contrasted women's erogenous heterogeneity with the singularity of male sexuality, so literary multiplicity itself can act ironically, as it does in Les Guérillères, by Monique Wittig. And, although modernist writing by authors of both sexes often features multiple points of view, it seems that current women writers in particular often present a protagonist in regular, ironic alternation between first- and

third-person narration.

The simultaneity of a text's feminist and patriarchal effects raises the question of audience, or of reader response. The preceding examples enable a woman to use words in such a way that they have one meaning for her and another for the man who is listening or reading. In this way irony can give a woman's opinion while placating a male audience. This practice has special appeal when women writers move from relatively private genres, such as diaries and letters, to more public ones, whose readership almost always includes men.

In a more complex context, the woman's audience may consist of another woman as well as a man. If the women share certain values, irony can serve as a code between the two of them. Critics have begun to write about women's codes. For instance, Annis Pratt mentions the "drowning" effect, in which acceptable sounds are used to drown out subversive ones. Susan Sniader Lanser tells of one woman who describes her marriage in a letter to another woman; the letter seems to express contentment but reveals anguish when one reads only every other line.

An example that will reward close examination appears in Doris Lessing's novel The Marriages between Zones Three, Four, and Five. Not only do women employ an ironic code in a man's presence, but one woman teaches the code to the other while they are using it. Al-Ith, queen of a feminist utopia, has been forced to marry Ben Ata, king of male-dominated Zone Four. In his land she becomes friends with another woman, Dabeeb. Dabeeb and her suffering countrywomen occasionally celebrate secret song festivals that both nourish their sisterhood and defuse their discontent. Al-Ith suspects the existence of the "underground movement" (104) and remembers having heard a song that might come from the festivals. Curious Al-Ith asks her husband to have Dabeeb come to their pavilion. There Dabeeb sings different versions of the song but, because of Ben Ata's presence, disavows knowledge of the version that is just for

women, the version that Al-Ith heard.

By ironically responding most explicitly to the queen's indirect questions and most evasively to the direct ones, Dabeeb schools Al-Ith in the Zone Four women's conversational code. The two become most intimate when referring to secret songs by the domestic metaphor of clothing. The queen asks:

"When you make dresses for ordinary wear, do you always make copies for special occasions?"

A brief pause.

"Nearly always, Al-Ith."

"It must be nice wearing a plain dress and thinking of the one that you'll wear on a special occasion."

"Yes, it is. But, of course, we don't have all that many special occasions." (108)

All three characters are tense, for the king has taken Dabeeb as his mistress. In spite of the tensions, the two women achieve such rapport through eye signals, rhythmic drumming of fingers, double meanings, and barely perceptible nods, that it is the king who comes to feel jealous. The code not only excludes him but binds the women more closely.

Disruptive and elusive, irony is sometimes so extreme in degree if not kind that it spills out of a code-based model and causes more generally frightening incongruity or negativity. Here women speak as what Julia Kristeva calls "a new type of dissident." In this sense, irony pervades the disturbing endings of The Mill on the Floss and La Princesse de Clèves, as discussed by Nancy K. Miller. Negativity is taken to its extreme by the female figure of Folly, ironically praised by Erasmus. When Helen asks if her past life ever happened, the tentativeness of the question forms softens it, as I have said, but her ironic stance places her, too, so radically, so negatively on the outside that the earth gapes open in a

terrifying fissure.

So far my discussion may have irony sound like a powerful weapon for women's liberation. But irony is a two-edged sword; ironing in often irons out. When Irigaray practices her mimicry, she might be an Eliza Doolittle, controlled by a ventriloquist Pygmalion. Further problems arise when coded irony addresses a particular audience. The lone woman who uses irony to deceive a man may preserve her self-respect but fails to challenge his power. And a code always runs two risks: an unintended audience may decipher it, and the intended audience may fail to decipher it. Less controlled irony runs still more risks, for its danger increases with its power. For instance, that great ironist, the Marquise de Merteuil, is punished with grotesque disfigurement (Laclos). And Marilyn Monroe and Socrates, both experts, developed the irony of passive aggression into a art form, but their very negativity led them into self-destruction, if not suicide.

Irony can help women survive in patriarchal society, but--for the reasons just mentioned--it cannot solve their problems. Irigaray is painfully aware of the feminist dilemma: how can women challenge patriarchal discourse from inside it? Do women have no choices other than the double bind of duplicating traditional language or remaining silent? Irony, as proposed and employed by Irigaray and others, can only take women so far from the double bind. Irony often offers some relief from the dilemma but also serves as a figure for the dilemma itself.

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LA TENTATION DE ST. ANTOINE:
Flaubert and the Menippean Satire
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I: Levels of Dialogue

Mikhail Bakhtin's meditations on the nature of language postulate the importance of the semantic and the axiologic, of the historic and the sociological. Language is ultimately seen as relational--an interlocking network of relationships among speakers, the spoken, and listeners; among writers, the written, and readers--and words themselves articulate both an intersubjectivity and an intertextuality.

Bakhtin's dialogic principle is illuminating when applied to Flaubert's Tentation de St. Antoine, a difficult text to grasp with traditional methods of literary criticism. For Jonathan Culler it is a "catalog of stupidity", where Anthony "escapes any standard of vraisemblance one might wish to apply to him". The only apparent reason the reader can find to explain these ridiculous temptations, says Culler, is that Anthony "is alone, and bored, and has nothing better to do". As Culler indicates, we do not get very far if we try to analyze St. Anthony as a character in a narrative, like a Julien Sorel or even a Frédéric Moreau. The dialogic principle is far more productive.

La Tentation de St. Antoine is structured by dialogue on multiple levels. Externally, the 1849 version of the St. Antoine is Flaubert's reaction to the Breughel Temptation he had seen in Genoa in 1845, as well as a more mature re-thinking of his own adolescent mystery play Smarh, which itself harks back to Goethe's Faust, and to the puppet shows of the Rouen fair where the child Gustave yearly saw St. Anthony and his pet pig cavort.

The 1856 re-working of St. Antoine is, on the one hand, a gesture of defiance towards Maxime du Camp and Louis Bouilhet, who had advised Flaubert not to publish the Tentation since they had found it ill-conceived and badly written; while on the

other hand, the 1856 version constitutes the much-needed antithesis to the bourgeois world of Bovary, in which Flaubert had constantly claimed he was suffocating since 1851.

Once again Flaubert renounces finishing the Tentation, this time on his own initiative, and Salammbô will be his response to Bovary. But in 1869, trying no doubt to escape from the bourgeois world of Frédéric Moreau, Flaubert takes up Anthony's trials and tribulations once more, and brings his 30-year-old dream to fruition in 1872, with the feeling that he has indeed succeeded at last. This may be open to question, but the final version of the Tentation stands as an irradicable, if often indecipherable, answer to Breughel, Goethe, Madame Bovary, L'Education sentimentale, the 15-year-old Gustave who wrote Smarrh, and the Flauberts of 1849 and 1856 who had also tried to deal with St. Anthony's story--as well as to Du Camp and Bouilhet.

Internally the work is a dialogue. The Tentation looks like a play. As Foucault points out, the speakers' names are set out in bold-face type in capitals, and the stage directions are in small print and separated from the theoretically spoken text. Flaubert had originally conceived it as a work for the stage.

The hermit, who is all alone as befits his role as hermit, talks to myriads of people, gods and monsters during the course of one single, supposedly solitary night. Among his interlocutors are his own former girl friend Ammonaria, his former disciple Hilarion, the Queen of Sheba, Helen of Troy, Apollonius the Magician, the Emperor Constantine, the Goddess Isis, and a Hindu gymnosophist, to name only a few. Antoine also listens and responds, sometimes negatively, sometimes less so, to innumerable Christian heretics and various pagans who also dialogue and argue among themselves. The Chimera engages the Sphinx in conversation, and the allegorical figures of Death and Lust discuss their respective attractions and advantages.

Ultimately in this tower of Babel, Antoine's

"good side" will do verbal battle with his "bad side"; real, that is legitimate, canonized Christianity will confront a proliferation of mostly gnostic heretisms, and the entire Christian heritage itself will be called into question by idolatrous paganism, oriental mysticism, and finally philosophic and scientific materialism.

II: The Menippean Satire

Bakhtin has had many disciples, commentators, and codifiers. One of the earliest and most interesting of these is Julia Kristéva, who in 1966 wrote an article entitled "Le Mot, le dialogue et le roman", published in 1969 in the collection Sēmeiōtiké. Kristéva, extrapolating from and expounding upon Bakhtin's theories, encapsulates the history and analyzes the structural and thematic characteristics of an ancient form known as the menippean satire. Descended from the carnival tradition, of which one might say it is the literary progeny, the menippean satire was one of the many forms which was the European polyphonic novel. Bakhtin's exemplary polyphonic novelists, direct descendants of the menippean satirists, are of course Rabelais and Dostoievski. Kristeva adds the names of Kafka, Joyce, Proust, Bataille, Sade, and even Lautréamont. Flaubert does not figure in this list. To illustrate here and there a theoretical development, Bakhtin lifts an occasional example from Bovary or the Education sentimentale, but does mention the St. Antoine. Kristéva makes no reference whatsoever to Flaubert in her article. Perhaps Flaubert, often viewed as the epitome of the bourgeois litterateur--by himself, by Sartre and others--is somehow unworthy of so subversive and so revolutionary a form as the carnivalistic menippean satire. Be that as it may, Kristéva's description of the ménippée form could serve as a characterization of the Tentation de St. Antoine.

I should like to specify several of the more strikingly appropriate features of the ménippée mentioned by Kristéva. Menippean language constitutes not only an affront to proper etiquette,

but also a brutal profanation of the sacred. Politically and socially subversive, the menippean satire combines a phantasmagoria of mystic symbolism with a macabre naturalism. Adventures take place in brothels, thieves' dens, taverns, fairs, prisons, the middle of erotic orgies, or sacred cults. The "ultimate" problems of existence are discussed, often during symposiums displaying encyclopedic erudition, often from unexpected viewpoints which change the scale of observation--such perhaps as a position on the devil's back careening through the heavens. Pathological states--reverie, dreams, madness--are a structural part of the text, and call into question the very notions of identity, causation and totality. The ménippée is a genre made up of the contrasts and abrupt changes typical of carnival: there are highs and lows, rises and falls, virtuous courtesans, generous brigands, free slaves--and tempted saints.

Bakhtin himself writes at length, and explicitly, of the total freedom with which space and time (Bakhtin's "chronotope") are treated in the menippean tradition. I shall briefly quote Bakhtin here, since his description could be applied word for word to the St. Antoine:

The entire world and everything sacred in it is offered to us without any distancing at all, in a zone of crude contact, where we can grab at everything with our own hands. In this world. . . the subject moves with extreme and fantastic freedom; from heaven to earth, from earth to the nether world, from the present into the past, from the past into the future. . . The heroes of the absolute past, real-life figures from various eras of the historical past. . . and living contemporaries jostle one another in a most familiar way, to talk, even to brawl...

Finally, Northrup Frye also analyzes the

menippean satire, and his analysis adds to those of Kristéva and Bakhtin an element which is particularly important with respect to the St. Antoine. Frye maintains that the ménippée "presents us with a vision of the world in terms of a single intellectual pattern"; the St. Antoine then is life studied in terms of the concept of "temptation". It is a "dissection" or analysis of temptation, and Frye suggests that we substitute the name "anatomy" for the rather unwieldy "menippean satire". The Temptation of St. Anthony then becomes the Anatomy of Temptation.

It would be "tempting" for us now to conclude that Flaubert chose an ancient, pre-medieval form to represent the pre-medieval mind of his saint and of the world in which he lived. This is naively true to a certain extent; reconstructions of exotic times and exotic places constitute a considerable part of Flaubert's oeuvre. The St. Julien represents medieval christendom in the same way that Hérodiad represents Macherous during the first century AD and Salammô Carthage at the height of her power, just before the rise of Rome.

The Tentation, as a depiction of fourth century monachism, resembles the St. Julien, Hérodiad and Salammô; but what is more important, these latter works resemble the Tentation. Each is structured by powerful menippean elements: dream sequences, encyclopedic, "magpie tendencies" (to use Northrup Frye's expression), mystic symbolism and macabre naturalism, carnivalism. The opening scene of Salammô and the closing scene of Hérodiad, essentially the same orgy done twice by Flaubert, are coena, that is, carnival/symposium sequences. There are many other examples, and many can also be found in the "modern" texts; in Bovary, the Education sentimentale, and obviously in Bouvard et Pécuchet, the narrative elements have been stripped off, and what remains is the menippean skeleton. It is as if Flaubert carried his menippean tendencies to their logical extreme at the end of his career.

Attackers of the St. Antoine, from minor 19th century literary critics to Paul Valéry, have

never failed to notice the inadequacies of Anthony's character, finding him too weak a vessel to float a novel. Precisely. The Tentation is not a representation of the mind of a pre-medieval saint and of his world. It is non-referential, and can be said to represent only other language - an intertext. Character and local color, while apparently important, are actually subordinate to intellectual themes. The ménippée is a genre of ideas. Kristéva calls it a "pavage de citations", a sort of catalog of the journalism of its times. Its discourse exteriorizes the political and ideological conflicts of the moment and articulates contemporary social and political thought.

Jean Seznec, and after him Foucault, have masterfully studied the vast, almost limitless, intertext of the St. Antoine. Seznec actually shows how every image, even those of the most bizarre monsters, is derived from some ancient or medieval theological text or from abstruse and scholarly 19th century works of history or philosophy. Foucault logically calls the St. Antoine a "bibliothèque fantastique". Whatever we may think of the St. Antoine as a book to read, Flaubert's genius was to have taken the ancient and medieval monsters, or the early Christian heretic perversions, or some oriental mystic philosophies, and to have made them significant for the 19th century. He transformed an exceedingly esoteric intertext into actuality. Every image in the book retains its historical authenticity even while it is recharged with contemporary meaning. Seznec says the St. Antoine is a deversoir, a catch-all, a point of confluence, where great themes of the 19th century meet and cross. Reading the Tentation we think of Hugo's mysticism, Nerval's syncretism, Taine's determinism, Renan's biblical exegesis.

Where Flaubert differs from all the others is in his refusal to conclude. Flaubert did not think highly of what he called the human "rage" of wanting to draw conclusions. Whence, perhaps, one should conclude that no one got the last word in the verbal free-for-all which is the Tentation de

St. Antoine. If Christianity is as vulnerable and ephemeral as Greek and Roman paganism, materialism and transformism are no less illusionary than Christianity. As the sun comes up and the clouds roll dramatically back in the final passage of the book, science vanishes in the light of day.

III: Dialogic Truth

The structure of the final temptation scene - that of the parade of monsters and its culmination in Antoine's discovery of the cell, which he calls the "birth of life and the beginning of movement"- does not differ from the structure of the other temptation scenes. After fighting off the temptation of suicide and that of lust, Antoine briefly meditates on the nature of Substance and the infinite varieties of its forms. Wishing, rather nostalgically, that he might see what he calls the "primordial figures" which link one form to another and all forms together, he sinks into a reverie out of which are materialized the Sphinx and the Chimera, who head up the procession of the monsters. He watches fascinated, obsessed, becoming increasingly emotionally involved, until his passion bursts forth in the famous lyrical passage on Matter, often cited as proof of Flaubert's own pantheism:

J'ai envie de voler, de nager,
d'aboyer, de beugler, de hurler. Je
voudrais avoir des ailes, une carapace,
une écorce, souffler de la fumée, porter
une trompe, tordre mon corps, me diviser
partout, être en tout, m'émaner avec les
odeurs, me développer comme les plantes,
couler comme l'eau, vibrer comme le son,
briller comme la lumière, me blottir sur
toutes les formes, pénétrer chaque
atome, descendre jusqu'au fond de la
matière, --être la matière!

Whereupon the sun comes up. The perorations suddenly cease, and Antoine returns to prayer.

This structure of: reverie to hallucination

mounting passion and involvement to action or vocalized reaction, breaking off finally in response to an unexpected physical sensation (here the perception of light as the sun pierces the clouds), is observable throughout the book. It is the very structure of temptation as analyzed by Flaubert.

Despite this similarity in structure, critics and scholars have often been "tempted" to view the final episode of the monsters as conclusive in one way or another. As examples of those who have "succumbed to this temptation" I cite Foucault, for whom it is indicative of Antoine's failure to attain sainthood, and Culler, who sees in it a statement of Spinozist pantheism. I prefer to read the episode as just another in a long series of temptations. Its position at the end of the book would seem to give it a certain compositional or structural weight in the whole, but La Tentation de St. Antoine is a work which really has no end, nor any beginning. After the last page Antoine is, and we are, back where we started. We should suffer through the whole dreadful thing again and again, as we suspect Antoine has done, and will continue to do. Or, we could read it backwards, taking the episodes in reverse order. Or, we could start in the middle and read outwards in both directions. It would make little difference.

In the 1849 version, the monsters constitute no sort of climax. Placed about 3/5 of the way into the book, they follow the Sphinx and the Chimera as they do in the 1872 version, but the important episodes of the flight on the devil's back, the dialogue of Lust and Death, and the gotterdammerung of the Greek and Roman pantheons all come after.

If one examines closely the structuring of both the 1849 and 1872 versions and makes comparisons, one begins to feel that Flaubert organized the huge amounts of material he had originally generated around what he had chosen to be the three major episodes: that is, 1) the Christian heretics, 2) the death of the pagan

gods, and 3) the monsters. He made cuts and rearrangements in order to highlight them.¹⁰ Set apart from the whole, they form a striking triple parallel. Each of these scenes illustrates what Brombert has called the "viscous" side of life.¹¹ The principles of change and transformation, so essential to each of them, are present in a disgusting sort of seething, seeping, oozing of one form into another. In any case, the monsters, although not less important than the heretics or the gods, are not significantly more important.

Without betraying the work as a whole, it is then impossible to decide whether or not science and philosophy get the upper hand over religion, whether or not Antoine's piety has actually come through the crucible of temptation unscathed. Foucault says no, but this is not clear. Flaubert says Antoine returns to prayer--that is all we know.

The St. Antoine is a true menippean satire, that is inherently dialogic. The ménippée, as a literary continuation of the carnivalistic tradition, knows no absolutes, no totalizations. Carnivalistic truth is non-logocentric. There is no one truth. Truth is relative, relational, all-inclusive, or to use Kristeva's similar yet more appropriate term, non-exclusive. Visions of the Buddha, or of gnostic sado-masochistic sexual practices, or of the cold and empty macrocosm, do not preclude prayer. Prayer, if not necessarily a more legitimate response to life in the world, is certainly as legitimate as all the rest--or as illegitimate.

And it must be emphasized that St. Anthony makes no synthesis out of all he has seen and heard. The very structure, or non-structure, of the text belies synthesis. We have only metonymy, more or less arbitrary associations and juxtapositions. In fact--difference. True dialogue is not the Hegelian dialectic. Oppositions are never absorbed into a totalized unity, but continue to exist side by side. Difference is never effaced in a text which manifests the many within the one in the guise of the splintered sects

within Christianity, as well as the one among the many in the guise of Christianity itself within the multiple varieties of religious and philosophic experience. The fully realized potential of menippean thought in the Tentation de St. Antoine is the simultaneous manifestation of both religious and intellectual experience in conflict with theology, and indeed the harmonious revelation of the Law and its Transgression.¹²

NOTES

English translations from the text of The Temptation of St. Anthony are by Kitty Mrosovsky (Ithaca, New York, 1980).

Transpositions into English from Julia Kristéva's "Le Mot, le dialogue et le roman" are my own.

¹Jonathan Culler, Flaubert: The Uses of Uncertainty (Ithaca, New York, 1974), pp. 180-1.

²I have not read every word attributed, however problematically, to Bakhtin. The Tentation may be mentioned somewhere. I must say that I do not think so.

³M. M. Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination (Austin, 1981), p. 26.

⁴Northrup Frye, Anatomy of Criticism (Princeton, 1957), pp. 308-312.

⁵Jean Seznec, Nouvelles Etudes sur la Tentation de St. Antoine (London, 1949). Introduction, pp. 1-6.

⁶All preceding references to Kristéva's work on the ménippée from: Julia Kristéva, "Le Mot, le dialogue et le roman," Sémeiôtiké (Paris, 1969), pp. 165-6.

⁷Seznec, p. 5.

⁸Michel Foucault, "Fantasia of the Library," Language, Counter-Memory, Practice (Ithaca, New York, 1977), p. 107. Cf. The whole of Part V of the essay. Foucault finally grants sainthood to Bouvard and Pécuchet, but denies it to Anthony.

⁹Culler, p. 183.

¹⁰The 1849, 1856, 1872 texts of La Tentation de St. Antoine, all established by Bernard Masson

in the Flaubert: Oeuvres complètes (Paris, 1966)¹¹

Victor Brombert, The Novels of Flaubert: A Study of Themes and Techniques (Princeton, 1966), p. 208.

¹²Cf. Kristéva, pp. 150-3, 160-4, 166-8 for a complete discussion of menippean, "carnival" truth. Cf. "Le Texte clos," Sémeiôtiké, pp. 113-42.

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Marguerite's Persona in La Navire: False Vision
and Distorted Platonism
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Generations of scholars have contributed to the discussion of Marguerite de Navarre's Platonism, but there is a consensus on at least one issue. From Emile Telle and Abel Lefranc to the more recent works of Robert Marichal, Marcel Tetel and Philippe de Lajarte, critics agree that Marguerite fails to accept all the tenets of Renaissance Platonism and vie with one another in exploring the degree of deviation.¹ In the Heptameron, which has often been mined for Ficinian influences, Platonizing rhetoric is no guarantee of moral superiority. Parlamante's enthusiastic summary of progression from the love of man to the love of God is subsequently opposed by Oysille's more pessimistic evangelism. Within the tales there are contradictions between the verbal declaration of lovers who claim to respect the imperatives of parfaict amour and their sexual behavior. Platonism in the Heptameron can be utilized by cynical speakers or accepted by idealistic discussants. Since it is articulated by a series of voices that must be interpreted and identified, Marcel Tetel's evaluation may well be the most helpful:

The form of Platonism that really pervades the Heptameron in every part is that of the Socratic banquet, the expression of the unfathomable multiplicity of human conduct without any fixed conclusion.²

In La Navire Marguerite's use of Platonism is similarly complex, although the multiplicity of human conduct has been reduced in scope and the banquet has become a dialogue. The poem was composed after the death of François I^{er} in 1547 and, therefore, belongs to a period which may have seen some work on the Heptameron as well as the com-

position of Les Prisons. It begins as François descends from heaven to comfort Marguerite because her spiritual and physical well-being is threatened by excessive mourning. The interlocutors are related to celestial and terrestrial points of view, with François representing spiritual wisdom and Marguerite sinful humanity. A major difference between Navire and the earlier Dialogue en forme de vision nocturne, which also featured a terza rima conversation between mournful Marguerite and a spectral relative, lies in the characterization of the persona. In 1524 she is a sober figure of limited emotional range and vitality. She is also a passive interlocutor who echoes the Biblical rhetoric of her spiritual mentor. In the Navire Marguerite devotes much more space to the psychology and emotional reactions of her persona. Comparisons detail her astonishment, her spiritual inertia, her confused sensations of grief and joy. Because she is a stubborn sinner who rationalizes her behavior by twisting the conventions of Ficinian Platonism, she also has her own distinctive language.

The persona's Platonism does not take the form of any systematic discussion of truth, beauty or the world soul. Instead, she is content to exploit a few metaphors and basic concepts. In her opening statement to François I^{er} she refers to parfaict amour and to the innocence and constancy of her affection:

Es-tu celluy par qui l'eau trouble et
noire
Sans nul espoir, il y a quatre mois,
Parfaicte amour de larmes m'a faict
boire?

Es-tu celluy que plus que moy j'aimois
Et aymeray et ayme si tres fort
Que amour, enfans, nous lya d'un cymois?
Et ses liens prindrent tousjours
renfort,
Tant que l.
faicte

Toujours croissante et plus fort que la
mort?

Characteristically, the persona's discourse betrays something other than the idealistic love she asserts. Deviations from the normal word order in the first strophe emphasize the drinking of tears. Instead of being crystalline drops of moisture, they are black and opaque. This ugly distillation of grief owes more to despair and to the courtly tradition than it does to Platonic idealism. Even the innocent and presumably predestined love symbolized by cymois in the second tercet undergoes a dysphoric transformation as the sequence progresses to corde and chesne. For the persona, parfait amour is linked to terms that evoke either constraint (chesne) or suffering (l'eau trouble et noire, larmes). This is not parfait amour as it is defined by Ficino, Castiglione, Heroet or Marguerite's interlocutor in the Navire. François links parfait amour with caritas and with unending joy. He also warns the reader of Marguerite's faulty vision and the distorted rhetoric that it generates:

Mais faux amor, qui le mal nomme bien
Et le bien mal, unist l'ame et la serre
Par un cruel et aveugle lien (v. 94-96)

The persona's valorization of black tears and François' commentary on her inappropriate definition of parfait amour indicate that her Platonizing is to be regarded with some suspicion. As the dialogue continues, she, nevertheless, makes a more determined attempt to adapt Platonic vocabulary to her purposes, explaining that nature compels her to mourn the division of the brother-sister androgyne (v. 373). Reinforcing the androgyne are multiple allusions to the nobler senses of the body, which, according to Ficino,⁴ respond to the beauty of the celestial Venus. Marguerite's love for François is nourished by reason, sight and hearing, although not in that order and not with equal involvement of all three

faculties. It is clear that she has seen and admired both the physical and moral beauty of the brother whom she praises throughout the Navire. She has been guided by the wisdom he shared with her during their frequent conversations so that the loss that causes her the greatest pain is that of his wise conversation--saint devis, bon propos, saige entretien.

Emphasis on seeing and hearing proves that there is nothing unseemly in the persona's attachment to François, but she is still unable to reach beyond the creature to the Creator who is the source of all his virtue. Ironically, moreover, she laments the loss of his advice while resisting the wisdom provided by his spectral presence. She challenges her celestial visitor, suggesting that while she may have listened to him during his years on earth, she did not retain what she heard. The nobler senses of sight and hearing reveal the spiritual potential of the persona, but are not sufficient in themselves to raise beyond a possessive sibling love. If she is to progress, she must be guided by reason. Reason is, indeed, the indispensable component of any Platonic or Neoplatonic progression from beautiful bodies to the Supreme Good. Throughout the Navire, nevertheless, the persona views reason as an enemy of love and of the morbid sorrow which she cultivates.

Deprived of the physical presence of her brother, the persona turns inward, not towards divine reminiscences as would be appropriate for a dedicated Platonist, but towards the shadow-world of purely human memories. In doing so she rejects the present and all its potential in favor of stagnant contemplation of the past. Her conduct reveals no affinity with the cognitive and mystical dynamism inherent in Ficinian philosophy. As she continues to defend her melancholy, moreover, the gap between Platonic idealism and her carnal perspective expands:

O fort amour, qui sa memoire a painte
 Au plus profond de mon cueur et mon ame,
 Ne permect pas que jamais soit

estaincte.

Ne que raison amoindrisse la flame
Dont le feu fut par nature allumé
Et augmenté par vertueusee flame. (v.
277-82)

The negative character of forte amour emerges through the association with memories that have been painted in the depths of her heart. While Petrarchism exalts the power of memory and of images which can be contained within or engraved upon the heart, the Platonism which the persona invokes in her defense does not always deal kindly with paintings. In the tenth book of The Republic, to cite but one example, paintings are said to be thrice removed from the reality they represent. In the Navire forte amour entertains the persona with mental images of the physical appearance of a deceased brother, silencing those rational faculties which should listen to his spiritual admonitions. The persona's paintings thus have a negative value. They represent the triumph of yesterday over today, cultivation of memory rather than response to reality.

Without analysing its philosophical role at this point, we can see that Platonism is a tool which allows Marguerite to develop the character of her persona. The Ficinian terminology activates a code with which the contemporary reader was likely to be familiar. Conformity with this code--reliance on the positive senses of sight and hearing--demonstrates the spiritual dignity of the persona. Deviation from the code, signaled by semantic and thematic conflicts in her statements, underlines her carnal perspective. Finally, frequent exclamations of grief, far from reflecting the transcendence and generosity of Neoplatonic love--bind her to the body and to death:

Las! venez tous, et que chacun se range
Pres de ce corps digne que vous pleurez
Et demandez que Dieu de mort nous venge,
(v. 1285-1287)

Helas! Helas! j'ay de pleurer matiere,
 Non pas sur toy mon frere, qui es bien,
 Mais que ton corps est enclos en ta
 biere. (v. 958-960)

Since the Navire is a dialogue, the character of the persona and of her Platonism is also defined through interaction with François. Her declarations of love are set against the admonitions of her celestial brother so that the Navire offers constant opposition between Marguerite and François, -distorted Platonism and authentic, if selective Platonism. Marguerite's parfait amour contrasts in the early tercets with François' identification of parfait amour and caritas. Her idolization of François leads her to address him with the hyperbolic epithet mon soleil (v. 125), while François describes God as vray soleil (v. 417), evoking the Platonic distinction between the world of material reality and the more perfect realm of ideas. Platonic dualism of this kind continues as François contrasts Marguerite's preoccupation with his decaying body--corps de fange et de boue (v. 329)--and the risen body of the Savoir--vray corps (v. 812). It also emerges in his frequent exhortations:

Las! venez tous, et que chacun se range
 Pres de ce corps digne que vous pleurez
 Et demandez que Dieu de mort nous venge.
 (v. 1285-1287)

Helas! Helas! j'ay de pleurer matiere,
 Non pas sur toy mon frere, qui es bien,
 Mais que ton corps est enclos en ta
 biere. (v. 958-960)

In keeping with her sinful perspective, Marguerite prefers descent into the tomb to spiritual ascent, and clings to her morbid grief. She endows her tears with a perversely nutritive value:

Separe toy hors de chair ... (v. 331)

Laisse ce corps par la mort abatu ...

(v. 847)

Haulce ton cueur ... (v. 850)

Choosing nutritive metaphors of a more positive character, François mentions the bread of the Eucharist and describes Christ's transformation of death into honey or a sweet morsel. In each instance he directs attention outwards and upwards to the Deity who has chosen to share the life of his children. The fact that Marguertie metaphorically consumes herself--thrives by drinking her own tears--reflects movement away from God and obsession with the self:

Ma douleur m'est ung savoureux pain (v.

246)

... larmes, souspirs et cris

Seront mon boire et agreable mectz. (v.

248-49)

Service to the dead king combines with self-assertion in a manner totally opposed to that of the selfless, truth-seeking Platonist.

The persona, however, is not a static character, and the role of distorted Platonism as a tag which permits the reader to recognize her false vision is, therefore, circumscribed. The persona gradually recognizes that her parfaict amour is, in effect, forte amour and admits that, while justified in loving her extraordinary brother, she has not given God his due. Rather than abandon her prolonged mourning, she finds new justification for her endless tears by replacing her distorted Platonism with an equally misleading Christian discourse:

C'est moy, c'est moy que de lermes le
sers

Et serviray, tant que l'oeil en la teste

Me fera veoir le moindre de ses serfs.

(v. 289-91)

Accepting the idea that her veneration of François

has been a bit excessive and love of God insufficient, she views her sorrow as a form of divine punishment. The chalice, however, is still not the Eucharistic cup recommended by François. Its character corresponds to that of a tear-filled cup provided in the opening verses of the Navire by parfaict amour. Its bitter comments recall the previous emphasis on self-destructive tears. Even the emphatic placement of vouloir at the hemistich is suspect, suggesting an all too convenient correspondence of human desire and divine justice.

The persona can be an authentic speaker only when, in the concluding tercets of the poem, she is spiritually enlightened. This enlightenment occurs in a series of strophes drenched in solar imagery. The persona watches her brother ascend into heaven until her view of him is cut off by dazzling light. She is forced to close her eyes because of the intense sunlight, but her inner vision is at last able to function. The carnal point of view yields to the spiritual, and the persona sings the praise of truth (v. 1141-1149).

How much does the persona's dramatic conversion owe to the Platonism which appears in her discourse as well as that of François? Does the Neoplatonic aspect of the Navire lead to what might be described as the theological center of the text or is it merely an esthetic device that identifies the persona as a false speaker? Although the final strophes in which she watches her brother rise towards heaven might suggest the Platonic ascent from earthly goodness, conversion is not a function of Renaissance Platonism. François, the spiritual authority in the Navire, avoids any reference to the Ficinian scala d'amore. He recommends instead a ladder derived from orthodox medieval piety:

Or, prent sa croix pour faire ung
 eschauffaut
 De terre au ciel, et aussy pour
 destruire
 Ton ennemy qui est cruel et cault. (v.

From the very beginning of the Navire, moreover, it is clear that François is not in the pure Ficinian tradition. He blends his Platonic distinction between spirit and matter with variety of Biblical phrase and metaphors. He reproaches his sister for not having profited more from her Scriptural study and, as the dialogue progresses, places greater emphasis on the principle of sola fides and the centrality of Christ. In this context it would appear that François' rigid distinction between matter and spirit may very well be those epistles which had already inspired several pieces in the Marguerites de la Marguerite des Princesses. In his suspicion of reason and cultivation of mystical openness François conforms both to Pauline doctrine and to the tradition of medieval Platonism passed down by Augustine, Bonaventure, pseudo⁶ Dionysius and members of the groupe de Meaux. The path which Marguerite is to pursue as she waits for expected reunion with her brother requires passionate faith, spiritual emphasis, a sort of religious quietism which conflicts with the active Neoplatonic quest for truth. In this regard, moreover, the Navire is theologically consistent with Marguerite's earlier religious poems. From the Dialogue en forme de vision nocturne to Les Prisons, she is far more likely to convey spiritual progress through metaphors involving the rope which draws the soul into heaven than she is through the ladder motif with its implications of individual effort and initiative. In spite of the Neoplatonic elements which enter her vocabulary, hers is a spirituality of grace and passivity found in Scripture.

Platonism in the Navire never occurs in a pure or systematic fashion. It is distorted and diluted in the discourse of Marguerite who combines references to parfaict amour and the androgyne with a morbid Petrarchan interest in her own suffering, and made to harmonize with a Pauline perspective in the authoritative discourse of François. Distortion and dilution of Platonism

betray a lack of confidence in its philosophical validity and an awareness of its esthetic value. In this regard Marguerite anticipates the Pléiade. Not too much later in the century Du Bellay will decorate his sonnets with fashionable references to the winged soul or the androgyne. Claiming that the idea of the highest good corresponds to the physical image of the lady, a clear betrayal of Platonic concepts will not daunt him or his colleagues.

Marguerite's Platonism, however, serves a higher cause than that of praising a fictional love-object. It defines the sinful perspective of the persona, enabling Marguerite to achieve a degree of psychological depth with ease and concision. It also helps to measure the distance between Marguerite's exploitation of poetic dialogue in the 1520's and the 1540's. The Dialogue en forme de vision nocturne had no Platonic overtones. It was a catechetical dialogue in which Marguerite's late niece Charlotte instructed her aunt, exploiting Biblical metaphors relating to grafting and vines. The passive role of the persona eliminated any ideological conflict so that attention was directed to authoritative answers concerning the nature of prayer, free will and grace. In the 1540's Marguerite abandons the catechetical approach and builds her dialogue much as a Petrarchan poet constructs a sonnet, around a series of conceptual and metaphorical oppositions. The dialogue depends initially on the juxtaposition of contrasting definitions (parfait amour-faux amour) and subsequently on Plato-Pauline dualism (corps-vray corps: soleil-vray soleil). These basic oppositions are complemented by others that proliferate as the dialogue continues--contrasts between the Eucharistic chalice and the tear-filled cup, time past and time present, inner vision and carnal vision, the wrathful Diety of the Old Testament and the tender Savior of the New Testament. The result is not a Socratic dialogue with an exchange of carefully-reasoned arguments pro and con, but a lyrical dialogue that is flexible enough to accommodate both the courtly

praise of François--the formal planctus that occupies approximately one-third of the text--and the religious message that consoles the tearful persona.

Notes

¹ Abel Lefranc, Marguerite de Navarre et le platonisme de la Renaissance (Paris: Champion, 1914), Emile Telle, L'oeuvre de Marguerite d'Angouleme, reine de Navarre, et la querelle des femmes (1930; rpt. Geneva; Slatkine, 1969), Jules Gelernt, World of Many Loves: The Heptameron of Marguerite de Navarre (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1966), pp. 43-65, Marcel Tetel, Marguerite de Navarre's Heptameron: Themes, Language and Structure (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1973), pp. 7-10, Philippe de Lajarte, "L'Heptaméron et le ficinisme: rapports d'une texte et d'une idéologie," Revue des Sciences Humaines, 37 (1972), 339-371, Pierre Sage, "Le Platonisme de Marguerite de Navarre," Travaux de Linguistique et de Littérature de l'Université de Strasbourg (1969), 65-82.

² Marcel Tetel, Marguerite de Navarre's Heptameron, p. 9.

Marguerite de Navarre, La Navire, ed. Robert Marichal (Paris: Champion, 1956), pp. 239-40. All quotations are taken from this edition.

³ "Des lors il est manifeste pour chacun que de ces six puissances de l'âme, trois, le toucher, le goût, et l'odorat concernent plutôt le corps et la matière que les trois autres: la raison, la vue et l'ouïe sont du domaine de l'esprit." Marsilio Ficino, Commentaire sur le Banquet de Platon, trans. Raymond Marcel (Paris: Les Belles Lettres, 1956), p. 137.

⁴ Examples of Pauline influence and Pauline antithesis can be found in the Miroir de l'âme pécheresse and the Discord de l'esprit et de la chair.

⁵ Robert V. Merrill and Robert J. Clements provide a thoughtful analysis of Pléiade Platonism

in Platonism in French Renaissance Poetry (New
York: New York University Press, 1957)