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The Semantic Category of  
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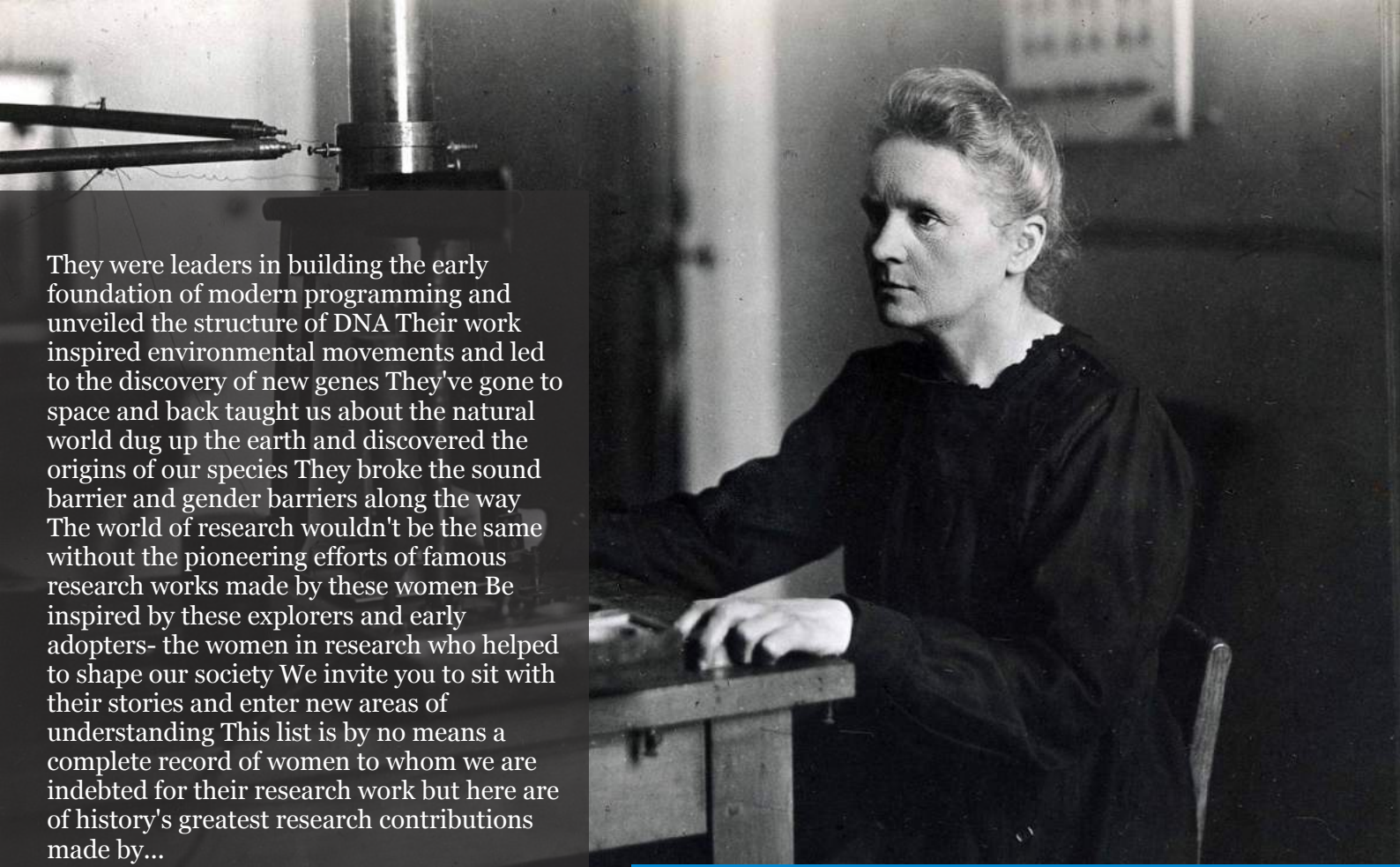
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# Modern Crisis 1: The Riddle of Varys

*Dr. Polyakov Oleg*

*State University of Aerospace Instrumentation*

## ABSTRACT

The article is preparatory in nature to consider one of the causes of the current crisis and possible ways out of it. The article considers two rights: the right to preferential distribution and the right to deferred exchange, which together form the basis of consumption in society. Three types of the right to preferential distribution are analyzed, which correspond to three possible types of capital, depending on which of these rights is given the right to violence. It is shown that these three distributive rights are in a state of pressure on each other and form a triad with negative feedback, which ensures the stability of the system and forms the basis of society in the form of a triad: ideology-politics-economics. In conclusion, the riddle of Varys is considered in relation to the topic under consideration.

*Keywords:* distributive law, the right to deferred exchange, capital, the triad, the riddle of Varys.

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**Keywords:** distributive law, the right to deferred exchange, capital, the triad, the riddle of Varys.

**Author:** Polyakov Oleg worked in the space industry, managed banks in St. Petersburg, headed investment work in the military industry. Currently teaches in St. Petersburg at the State University of Aerospace Instrumentation. In literary circles, he is known under the pseudonym Road Dust.

## АННОТАЦИЯ

Статья носит подготовительный характер для рассмотрения одной из причин современного кризиса и возможных путей выхода из него. В статье рассматриваются два права: право на преимущественное распределение и право на отложенный обмен, которые в совокупности создают основу потребления в обществе. Анализируются три вида права на преимущественное распределение, которые соответствуют трем возможным видам капитала в зависимости от того, какому из этих прав отдано право на насилие. Показано, что эти три распределительных права

находятся в состоянии давления друг на друга и образуют триаду с отрицательной обратной связью, которая обеспечивает устойчивость системы и формирует основу общества в виде триады: идеология-политика-экономика. В заключении рассмотрена загадка Вариса применительно к рассмотренной теме.

**Ключевые слова:** распределительное право, право на отложенный обмен, капитал, триада, загадка Вариса.

**Автор:** Поляков Олег работал в космической области, руководил банками в Санкт-Петербурге, возглавлял инвестиционную работу в военной отрасли. В настоящее время преподает в Санкт-Петербургском государственном университете аэрокосмического приборостроения. В литературных кругах известен под псевдонимом Дорожная Пыль.

## I. ВВЕДЕНИЕ

Мировой кризис в самом разгаре: кризис экономики, политический кризис, кризис морали и нравственности, кризис культуры... И вроде как ничего такого не случилось, чтобы вот так, глобально, по всем направлениям. Всеобъемлющий характер кризиса наводит на мысль, что кризисные проявления в различных областях фактически являются лишь симптомами, проявлениями какой-то более общей болезни, которая как раковая опухоль дает метастазы в различные сферы жизни.

В этой серии предпринята попытка сформулировать одну из версий этих событий и обсудить способы их нейтрализации. Само собой разумеется, что автор может ошибаться, что-то переоценивать или недооценивать. К тому же масштаб проблемы требует серьезных аналитических и статистических обоснований. Это предполагает длительное время и работу многих людей. Но кажется, что изложить

возможно не очень зрелые мысли в этих заметках сейчас значительно важнее, чем привести глубокую аргументацию через несколько лет.

Перед началом обсуждения следует сказать пару слов о законах, действующих в обществе. Различные отношения, движущие силы и тому подобные вещи, которые присутствуют в аналитических исследованиях, кроме своей кажущейся логичности должны обладать еще одним важным качеством. Общество (экономика, политика, идеология, государство и т.п.) - это не какой-то самостоятельный объект. Это плод деятельности людей. Законы общества действуют лишь постольку, поскольку они наполнены энергией людей. Это означает, что каждый день на планете тысячи и миллионы людей тратят свои силы на их воплощение. Почему? Потому что это им жизненно необходимо. Сами по себе эти законы не существуют, как бы хорошо и логично они не выглядели. Короче говоря, каким бы красивым и логичным не было утверждение, вывод или что-то еще, если для его реализации нет бескомпромиссных схваток, смертельных баталий, скорее всего это пустышка.

## II. КАПИТАЛ

Разные экономические школы несколько по-разному определяют понятие «капитал (от лат. capitalis — главный, доминирующий, основной). Не обращая внимание на некоторые различия, в целом — это совокупность активов, используемых для производства [1].

Являются ли, например, звезды капиталом? Пока нет. Они не используются для производства и не являются в силу этого активами. Между понятиями капитала и актива есть небольшое различие. Скажем, способность трудиться не является капиталом, но является активом (ресурсом). Мы продаем свой труд, и его покупают именно потому, что он используется в производстве и является активом, имеющим денежное выражение.

Такое понимание капитала сосредотачивает всё наше внимание на производстве, на том, что участвует в производстве и определяет его успешность. Таким образом, вся экономическая теория и экономическая жизнь современного общества построена и крутится вокруг этого самого производства. Пресловутые общественно-экономические формации, классы и прочее – это следствие отношений в производстве, отношений к средствам производства. Понятие капитала лежит в основе современной экономической теории. Очевидно, что там, где нет производства, там нет и капитала. Возьмем финансовый бизнес, например, банки. Сейчас во многих странах до 70% прибыли формирует финансовый сектор. Финансовый сектор разросся до невиданных масштабов, и является источником большинства проблем современной экономики. И где же здесь производство? Его нет. Тогда возникает следующий резонный вопрос: где же здесь капитал? Возможно кто-то скажет, что в качестве капитала здесь выступают деньги, а производством являются услуги по их размещению и продаже. Но исламский банкинг не продает деньги, поскольку в нем отсутствует ссудный процент. В исламском банкинге нет капитала? Все это немного странно и сильно настораживает.

## III. РАСПРЕДЕЛИТЕЛЬНОЕ ПРАВО

Для того, чтобы жить необходимы ресурсы. Получая ресурсы, мы удовлетворяем свои потребности в кислороде, в еде, жилье, знаниях, сексе, лечении и продолжаем жить. Один из главных фактов существования жизни состоит в том, что каких-то ресурсов всегда не хватает на всех. Когда мы живем сами по себе, и нам не хватает некоторого ресурса, мы либо отказываемся от этой потребности, либо, если отказаться от нее невозможно, умираем. У стайных живых существ это выглядит несколько иначе. Если ресурса недостаточно, то нужно каким-то образом организовать его распределение. Изначально надо понимать, что не существует справедливого способа распределения ресурса. Если в очереди на срочную пересадку сердца в больнице лежит

10 человек, а в наличии только три сердца, то семь человек умрут при любом способе «справедливого» распределения сердец и за пять минут до смерти они расскажут вам, что думают о вашем «справедливом способе». Итак, любое распределение ограниченного ресурса не справедливо.

Однако можно попытаться распределять ограниченный ресурс с точки зрения наилучшей выживаемости вида, поскольку индивидов много, а вид один. Обычно так и организуется жизнь в стае. Например, в волчьей стае лидером является самый сильный самец. Потомство первой волчихи стаи имеет преимущество и поддерживается всеми волками стаи. При нехватке чего-либо, скажем, пищи, в первую очередь страдают слабые особи, поскольку приоритет доступа к пище получают первые в иерархии стаи особи. Установленную иерархию в стае поддерживает вожак стаи, поскольку он самый сильный. С точки зрения вида, это весьма целесообразная схема организации потребления. Очевидно, что вместе с правом на преимущественное распределение благ, вожак стаи приобретает и определенные непростые обязанности: защита территории, организация охоты, забота о потомстве и т.д. Собственно, его и целесообразно сохранять в трудные времена именно потому, что он способен сделать много для своего вида. Организация баланса прав и обязанностей – важнейшая функция стайной жизни.

Но потребности нужно удовлетворять каждый день. Короче говоря, должно быть налажено распределение. Первый и самый простой способ распределения заключается в использовании грубой силы. Это, скажем так, ручное управление распределением. Особенность ручного управления в том, что приоритетность распределительного права может меняться в зависимости от ситуации. Но распределению подлежат слишком много ресурсов и происходит оно постоянно в каждой точке, где присутствуют участники условной стаи. При этом вожак может и отсутствовать. Поэтому распределение осуществляется несколько иначе, через

РАСПРЕДЕЛИТЕЛЬНОЕ ПРАВО доступа к распределяемому, которое является очень конструктивной идеей. Этим правом наделяется всякий участник. Это его метка. Именно с этого момента появления стабильности оно и становится по существу распределительным правом, но правом изменяемым. Поскольку теперь право соотнесено с участником процесса распределения, последний при желании может изменить результаты распределения в свою пользу, приложив для этого определенные усилия. Это означает, что в границы распределительного права должны входить и правила его изменения во времени, а именно, правила того, как назначать и как менять доступ к распределяемому. Например, можно подраться с вожаком и в случае победы изменить свое распределительное право. Другими словами, сила теперь используется лишь при необходимости изменения или восстановления нарушений распределительного права. С момента, когда распределение уже не есть просто карательная воля вожака, а свойство самого участника стаи, оно оформляется в распределительное право. Теперь это свойство самого участника, и оно поддерживается его жизнью в стае (его местом в иерархии) в том числе и вожаком стаи.

Люди, как стайные сухоносые обезьяны из семейства гоминид, имеют в отношении распределения те же проблемы. Как говорил Аристотель: "Дело в том, что распределительное право, с чем все согласны, должно учитывать известное достоинство, правда, [«достоинством»] не все называют одно и то же, но сторонники демократии – свободу, сторонники олигархии – богатство, иные – благородное происхождение, а сторонники аристократии – добродетель" [2]. Вот это право, которое мы предъявляем при распределении, здесь и будет называться капиталом. Оно говорит, что тебе можно, а что нельзя, и сколько можно, а сколько – нет. Поэтому мы можем даже сказать более сильную фразу: «Капитал – это право на преимущественное распределение». То самое «известное достоинство» как раз и означает

определенные социальные обязанности, сопровождающие распределительное право.

Предвидя недоумение читателя, связанное с изменением понятия капитала, хочу сказать следующее. Я прекрасно понимаю, что традиции делового оборота изменить практически невозможно. Кроме того, данное здесь определение капитала весьма расплывчато в том смысле, что его трудно измерить и даже оценить, это чисто качественное понятие. Традиционное понятие капитала нетрудно выразить в денежной форме и конструктивно использовать при проведении различных операций. Но всё же переименование хотя бы здесь кажется очень важным, и вот по каким причинам.

Во-первых, поскольку ресурсы всегда ограничены, любые разумные существа должны с какого-то момента ввести в свою жизнь капитал. Они это должны сделать хотя бы потому, что не желают перебить друг друга.

Во-вторых, необходимо отметить, что в фиксированный момент времени в обществе существует несколько различных видов распределительного права. Скажем, в семье преимущество при распределении может определяться возрастом, или как-то связано с одаренностью детей. Но всегда существует главный, известный всем членам общества вид распределительного права, и именно, будучи главным, он и является капиталом. Главный вид капитала в Великобритании – деньги, хотя быть королём тоже не плохо.

В-третьих, реализация любого права осуществляется через принуждение или даже насилие, которое реализуется силовыми органами. Но это принуждение теперь необходимо применять лишь при нарушении права. Невозможно ввести право на преимущественное распределение, не обладая способностью принудить к его поддержанию. Поэтому в любом обществе «владеть капиталом» означает «иметь право на насилие». Именно поэтому среди различных видов распределительного права в данный момент времени всегда есть один, главный.

Это так, потому что власть одна, и те, в чьих она руках, и определяют главное право, то есть капитал. Капитал, как право на ПРЕИМУЩЕСТВЕННОЕ распределение, по определению является выражением неравноправия и несправедливости, и, следовательно, жизнь в обществе любых разумных существ, основанном на распределительном праве, всегда содержит элементы неравноправия и несправедливости.

В-четвертых, для того, чтобы капитал функционировал эффективно, необходимо выполнение двух условий: стабильности и изменчивости. Стабильность создает привлекательность капитала, желание обладать им. Стабильность требует защиты капитала и, поскольку капитал поддерживается властью, власть и обеспечивает его стабильность, а также передачу его по наследству. Например, у животных часто право на распределение у потомства связано с тем, от каких родителей рожден член стаи. Наследование титула, наследование денег, система блата – это примеры реализации функции наследования для различных видов капитала. Изменчивость капитала означает возможность при желании изменить свой капитал. Для этого необходимо приложить определенные усилия: послужить верой и правдой королю, заработать в бизнесе или продвинуться по служебной лестнице. Но капитал можно и потерять, освободив место для других. Можно попасть в немилость к королю, разориться или быть отвергнутым начальством. Изменчивость капитала создает условия для его развития.

В-пятых, распределительное право предшествует любому производству, поскольку уже существует даже в стаях животных, где никакого производства нет. Как раз наличие распределительного права стимулирует появление производства. Когда дефицит какого-либо ресурса нарастает, это приводит к ужесточению дифференциации при реализации распределительного права, что стимулирует налаживание производства дефицитного ресурса. В этом смысле как раз распределительное право является «главным»

по отношению к традиционному понятию капитала. Вряд ли на площади выходят, чтобы наконец-то производить что-либо. На площади выходят, чтобы наконец-то иметь что-либо. Во все времена люди вкладывали свою жизненную энергию прежде всего в изменение правил распределения. Именно отношение к распределению крушит старое и рождает новое, заставляет производить и разрушать, приводит к кризисам и взлётам.

#### IV. ДЕНЬГИ

Видов ресурса много и все они нужны для жизни. Забота о необходимом для жизни – это забота каждого из нас. Есть множество причин, по которым ресурсы оказываются распределены неравномерно или неправильно. Кто-то хороший охотник, у кого-то проблемы с ресурсом здоровья, кто-то некрасивый и его девушки не любят и так далее. Короче говоря, для организации потребления необходимо определить не только право доступа к ресурсам, но и возможность их перераспределения. Это достигается обменом. Что делать, если нужно оружие, а кузнец сыт, а кроме куска мяса ничего нет. Так и появляются деньги. Деньги, как право на обмен. Причем не просто право на обмен, а право на отложенный обмен. Пока у меня есть кусок мяса, и оно не протухло, я могу его отдать тому, кто не делает оружия, и получить деньги – право на возможность обменять их ПОТОМ на то, что мне понадобится. По поводу денег в литературе сказано достаточно [1]. Их свойства хорошо известны и вытекают из их первоначального назначения: свидетельствовать о праве на ОТЛОЖЕННЫЙ обмен.

В качестве денег обычно выбирается какой-то конкретный актив, актив посредник, через который можно было бы осуществлять отложенный обмен. Понятно, что этот актив не должен портиться, изнашиваться и т.п. Во всяком случае, его «старение» должно быть достаточно медленным. Этот актив должен быть нужен всем либо в силу всеобщего признания его ценности, либо в силу его тотального применения в различных

хозяйствах. Этого актива должно быть достаточно, чтобы его хватало на всю систему обменов, объем которой зависит от объемов производства всех других активов. Другими словами, это должен быть большой актив, выдающийся актив. Может показаться, что количество актива не имеет значения: если его мало, то его соотношение с другими активами будет большим, а если много, то маленьким. Однако, если его соотношение будет большим, а его производство не слишком дорогим, это вызовет инфляцию (излишнее производство), а если маленьким, то может оказаться выгодным превращать деньги в самостоятельный актив. Например, если серебряные деньги будут иметь очень низкую стоимость, то их будет выгодно переплавлять в слитки серебра и поставлять на производство микросхем. Эти и другие ограничения показывают, что существует не так много претендентов, которые удовлетворяли бы всем необходимым качествам.

Разумеется, даже при наличии денег, прямой обмен активами может сохраняться. Далее, может быть несколько видов активов, удовлетворяющих описанным свойствам, и тогда они тоже могут использоваться в качестве денег, хотя таких активов не так уж и много. Золото, нефть, недвижимость, электрическая энергия, зерно, что ещё? Но зерно быстро портится, его надо отбросить, да и недвижимость без постоянных затрат ветшает. Понятно, что напрямую денежным активом обмениваться трудно. Не носить же с собой золотые слитки или бочки с нефтью? Их можно заменить справками, которые подтверждают право на обладание данным активом. Собственно, эти справки мы обычно и называем деньгами, а сам актив – обеспечением этих денег. Справки реальны лишь до тех пор, пока мы действительно можем, если потребуется, вместо них предъявить реальный актив.

Будучи отражением права на ОТЛОЖЕННЫЙ обмен, деньги по своей природе имеют тенденцию к накоплению. Это означает, что деньги связаны с производством и стимулируют его развитие поскольку развитие

производства, увеличивает активы, обмен и в конечном счете приводит к увеличению количества денег. К увеличению количества денег приводит также необходимость компенсировать вывод денег из оборота в процессе их накопления. Для того чтобы стимулировать возврат денег в оборот, необходимо создать их искусственное старение. Точнее говоря, справки, которыми мы пользуемся в качестве денег, должны со временем соответствовать все меньшему и меньшему количеству денежного актива. Это заставляет нас возвращать деньги в оборот, или на худой конец передать деньги тому, кто это сделает за нас. С другой стороны, это старение не может быть сильным, потому что тогда будет разрушено право на отложенный обмен. Другими словами, тот, кто сейчас обменял свой товар на деньги, должен иметь в обозримой перспективе, определяемой технологическим циклом производства, обменять эти деньги на адекватное количество другого товара.

Здесь нужно сделать важное замечание: право на отложенный обмен не имеет социального аспекта! В этом оно противоположно распределительному праву. Если я получил право на отложенный обмен, то оно принадлежит лично мне, я могу передать его другому, воспользоваться им сам, когда мне заблагорассудится, или не воспользоваться им никогда. Оно не морально, не социально и носит индивидуальный характер. Другими словами, это право является собственностью или имуществом.

Всё это очень простые и понятные вещи, и вроде бы не стоило это писать. Но это приходится делать, чтобы ясно зафиксировать два различных права: РАСПРЕДЕЛИТЕЛЬНОЕ ПРАВО И ПРАВО НА ОТЛОЖЕННЫЙ ОБМЕН. В целом эти два права и создают фундамент доступа к имеющимся активам. Другими словами, они образуют фундамент ПОТРЕБЛЕНИЯ. Все начинается с потребления и заканчивается потреблением, потому что потребление обеспечивает существование. Производство – это лишь способ обеспечить потребление.

Мы живем в обществе потребления, потому что в его основе лежит потребление. Все современные общества являются обществами потребления, которые используют разные варианты капитала. Даже коммунизм является обществом потребления. На его знамени написано: «От каждого по способностям, каждому по потребностям». Буквально это означает: «Делай, что можешь, и бери, что хочешь». Похоже, это общество суперпотребления с нулевой формой «необходимого достоинства» по Аристотелю.

И всё же, как они похожи, эти два права. Вроде бы тот, кто сумел накопить много права на отложенный обмен (на потребление), внешне выглядит, как тот, у кого большое право на преимущественное распределение. Чтобы не тратить время, мы не будем рассматривать это соотношение с древних времен по настоящее время. Скажем проще: «Распределительное право, как право на преимущественное распределение всегда выше права на отложенный обмен. Например, в средние века, титул был выражением «известного достоинства» по Аристотелю. Доступ к потреблению у галантерейщика Бонасье и короля существенно различны, даже если их накопления одинаковы. Король может взять и без денег или с деньгами в первую очередь. Это и показывает разную природу этих прав.

## V. ОБРАТНАЯ СВЯЗЬ

Рассмотрим два взаимосвязанных субъекта, связь между которыми заключается в оказании некоторого давления одного субъекта на другой. Чем больше давление на субъект, тем меньше его способность самому оказывать обратное давление. Если у двух субъектов А и В одинаковая способность оказывать давление  $P_A = P_B$ , то они при своем взаимодействии находятся в неустойчивом равновесии. Если по какой-либо причине  $P_A$  увеличится ( $P_A > P_B$ ), это приведет к уменьшению  $P_B$ , что в свою очередь будет способствовать еще большему увеличению  $P_A$  и далее еще большему уменьшению  $P_B$ . Это типичный пример положительной обратной связи, когда система идет в разнос. Легко



видеть, что любое четное количество элементов, взаимодействующих по кругу описанным образом, порождает положительную обратную связь.

Аналогичным образом, если рассмотреть три субъекта А, В и С с их энергией давления  $P_A$ ,  $P_B$  и  $P_C$ , то увеличение  $P_A$  приведёт к уменьшению  $P_B$ , что в свою очередь вызовет рост  $P_C$ ,

который приведет к нейтрализации первоначального роста  $P_A$ . Мы имеем типичный пример систем с отрицательной обратной связью. Любое нечетное количество элементов, взаимодействующих по кругу описанным образом, порождает отрицательную обратную связь, которая обеспечивает устойчивость таких систем к внешним дестабилизирующим воздействиям.

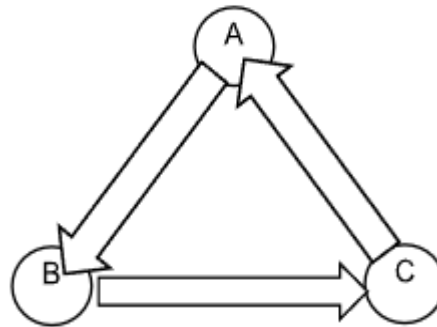


Рис. 1: Мультипликативная триада

Разумеется, при прочих равных условиях кольцо, состоящее из трех элементов, быстрее всего реагирует на дестабилизирующие воздействия и восстанавливает равновесие, поэтому в природе и обществе чаще всего используются самые динамичные системы с отрицательной обратной связью – триады. На

рис. 1 изображена описанная триада, которую мы будем называть мультипликативной. Этот тип триад для разных видов воплощения прекрасно описан в [3]. Там же их функционирование описано следующими соотношениями:

$$P_A = a/P_C, P_B = b/P_A, P_C = c/P_B, \text{ где } a, b, c - \text{ константы.}$$

Из этих соотношений следует, что  $P_A P_B P_C = abc = \text{const}$ . Другими словами, мультипликативная триада не порождает и не теряет энергию давления.

В тех случаях, когда давление имеет аддитивный характер, который обычно соответствует ресурсам (например, деньгам), триада выглядит так, как изображено на рис. 2 [4].

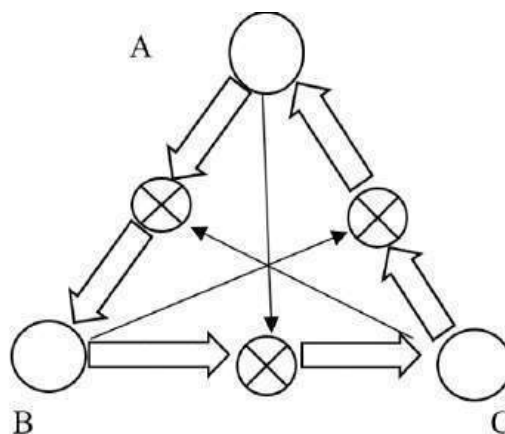


Рис. 2: Ресурсная триада

В ресурсной триаде изменение давления от одного элемента к другому производится через управление заслонками (перечеркнутые круги), которое производится через тонкие стрелки. Передача давления происходит также, как и в мультипликативной триаде.

Пусть, например, пропускная способность канала от А к В является функцией  $f(C)$ . Аналогично, пропускная способность от В к С – функцией  $s(A)$ , пропускная способность от С к А – функцией  $t(B)$ . Если в некоторый момент времени мы имеем распределение ресурса по величине  $P_A, P_B, P_C$ , то в следующий (единичный) момент времени мы получим следующие значения  $P'_A, P'_B$  и  $P'_C$ :

$$\begin{aligned} P'_A &= P_A + t(B) - f(C); \\ P'_B &= P_B + f(C) - s(A); \\ P'_C &= P_C + s(A) - t(B). \end{aligned}$$

Если теперь сложить правые и левые части уравнений, то получим

$$P'_A + P'_B + P'_C = P_A + P_B + P_C = \text{const}$$

Таким образом, ресурсная триада также не теряет и не создает энергию давления независимо от способа управления пропускными способностями каналов давления.

## VI. ТРИАДА ОБЩЕСТВА

Рассмотрим теперь, какие виды капитала функционируют в человеческом обществе. Другими словами, что берется в расчет при преимущественном распределении, и что впоследствии является меткой субъекта.

- Уже в стаях животных (например, волков) преимущественный доступ к распределению получают особи, приближенные к вожаку стаи. Они поддерживают вожака и обеспечивают функции регулирования между членами стаи. Также и в человеческом обществе есть люди, главной задачей которых является регулирование отношений между людьми. Мы очень условно, следуя традиции [3], назовем этих людей **ВОИНАМИ**. Обычно

меткой этих людей являлся титул или должность. Эта метка имеет персональный характер и ее нельзя без достаточных оснований передать другому человеку. Эту метку можно изменить, например, получить титул за верную службу, или повышение по должности. С другой стороны, можно попасть в немилость к высшим чинам и понизить уровень. Можно передавать этот капитал по наследству, используя систему связей и знакомств, соответствующих тому или иному уровню. Этот капитал для определенности мы будем называть бюрократическим. Из приведенного описания понятно, что воины формируют **ПОЛИТИКУ** в обществе.

- Другая часть людей получает преимущественное право на распределение, потому что у них накопилось много права на отложенный обмен. Другими словами, меткой этих людей является количество денег. Поскольку эти люди имеют много права на отложенный обмен (много денег), значит они в свое время уже представили к обмену значительные активы (товар, ресурсы или услуги). Таким образом, эти люди занимаются взаимодействием людей с материальным миром и формируют **ЭКОНОМИКУ**. По этой причине условно назовем этих людей **ДЕЛЬЦАМИ**. Их метка (деньги) не является персонифицированной, поскольку деньги можно передавать на время или навсегда от одного к другому. Мы назовем этот вид капитала денежным капиталом. Это распределительное право также может меняться: можно обогатиться или разориться, можно передать его по наследству, поскольку деньги являются имуществом в силу своей способности превращаться в материальные виды имущества при завершении отложенного обмена. Дельцами являются также и обычные люди, которые предлагают к обмену свой труд.
- Есть еще одна часть людей, которые получают распределительное право за то, что владеют моделями мира в разных

областях. Рассмотрим следующих пример. Некое племя попало в ситуацию жестокой засухи: урожай гибнет, скот поить нечем. Никто не знает, что делать. Другими словами, ни у кого нет модели процесса и, следовательно, технологии выхода из ситуации. Старейшины племени решают обратиться к шаману в надежде, что шаман имеет модель и сможет на ее основе сформулировать технологию выхода из кризисной ситуации. Чем шаман отличается от обычного человека из племени? У него другой взгляд на мир - мистический взгляд. Это означает, что его модели мира отличаются от моделей членов племени, и возможно поэтому у него есть модель для этой ситуации. Итак, старейшины приходят к шаману и обращаются к нему за помощью. Шаман производит соответствующие ритуалы и сообщает, что причина засухи состоит в том, что нарушены некие правила поведения членов племени. Итак, шаман ответил на вопрос «почему» на основе своей мистической модели мира. За этим следует и технологическая часть: надо задобрить каких-то разгневанных духов. Он предлагает принести в жертву этим духам белого оленя. Племя реализует указанную технологию и ночью начинается гроза. В результате, все понимают, что у шамана есть модель и она дает правильные прогнозы, так что имеет смысл содержать его на тот случай, когда его прогнозы потребуются. Итак, обладатели моделей мира, необходимых для общества (священники, ученые, люди искусства и т.д.) также получают доступ к распределению. Даже в криминальном мире есть люди, которые поддерживают модели мира в этой области и получают преимущественный доступ к распределению. В России – это так называемые «воры в законе». Мы опять же условно назовем этих людей ЖРЕЦАМИ. Итак, ЖРЕЦЫ – это люди, живущие идеями. Они обеспечивают взаимодействие общества с миром идей и

поэтому формируют ИДЕОЛОГИЮ общества.

Каждый человек несет в себе признаки принадлежности к каждой из указанных групп. В разное время приоритет получают те или иные стороны его отношений в обществе: например, человек может быть реальным воином, участвовать в сражениях, а потом уйти в священники.

Рассмотрим теперь взаимодействие этих трех групп общества.

Отношения между людьми регулируются не произвольно. Это регулирование должно приводить к достижению каких-то целей. Достижение целей всегда предполагает существование некоторой модели, в рамках которой определено это целевое состояние. Модель позволяет прогнозировать реакции на различные воздействия и в силу этого обычно, если есть модель, известно текущее и целевое состояния, можно определить путь из текущего состояния в целевое. В современной традиции мы называем этот путь технологией (достижения цели). Итак, для того, чтобы управлять людьми нужны хоть какие-нибудь модели, а значит, воины находятся в зависимости от жрецов – носителей этих моделей, поскольку воины реализуют технологии, порождаемые этими моделями. Эта зависимость носит характер давления в том смысле, что жрецы постоянно указывают воинам, какие действия правильны, а какие нет, куда должны быть направлены усилия, кто соответствует своему положению, а кто нет. Итак, политика в обществе базируется и зависит от идеологии.

Дельцы при своем взаимодействии с материальным миром получают метку капитала в процессе обмена товаров и услуг на деньги и денег на товары и услуги. Это взаимодействие между людьми. Итак, получение метки на владение денежным капиталом является актом человеческого взаимодействия, которое регулируют воины, так что воины оказывают давление на дельцов через регулирование их деятельности. Итак,

экономика зависит от политики через политическое регулирование экономических отношений.

Наконец, жрецы получают свое распределительное право через признание дельцов в широком смысле слова. То есть дельцы при взаимодействии с материальным миром убеждаются в правильности тех или иных моделей жрецов и через свое признание создают их капитал. Это хорошо видно из приведенного выше гипотетического примера с племенем и шаманом. Действительно, известным авторитетным ученым можно стать лишь в силу признания в научном мире, известным священнослужителем – через признание паствы, вором в законе – через признание в криминальном мире. Признание и отвержение – это механизм давления дельцов на жрецов.

Итак, триада общества выгладим следующим образом: идеология (жрецы) давит на политику (воинов), политика (воины) давит на экономику (дельцы) и экономика (дельцы) давит на идеологию (жрецы), так что на рис.1 мы могли бы заменить А на идеологию, В на политику и С на экономику. В итоге мы получаем устойчивую систему, стабилизированную отрицательной обратной связью. В обществе действует три взаимосвязанных вида капитала – три права на преимущественное распределение различной природы. Как было показано выше, каждое право для своего поддержания периодически может требовать насилия. Наличие возможностей применения насилия у более, чем одного права означает конфликт (гражданскую войну) в обществе, который разрешается победой одной из сторон при сохранении другой. Победа означает, что в обществе право на насилие сохраняется только у одного вида капитала при сохранении других. Тот вид капитала, который обладает правом на насилие, мы будем называть главным в общественной триаде и располагать в верхней вершине триады.

Из трех описанных видов капитала самым незащищенным является капитал жрецов,

который основан на признании. Ценности жрецов не от мира сего, поэтому они наиболее уязвимы. Например, в обществах, где правят воины, они пытаются обезопасить себя от давления жрецов. Жрецы часто подвергаются гонениям, обструкции или другим видам воздействий. В результате общество начинает вырождаться в двухэлементную схему, что приводит к возникновению положительной обратной связи. Такая же проблема возникает и в обществе, где правят дельцы, когда дельцы, чтобы обезопасить себя от давления воинов пытаются ослабить их (deep state). Возникающая положительная обратная связь периодически приводит к политическим или экономическим кризисам в зависимости от главенствующего вида капитала. Кроме того, и сами общества сближаются по признаку главенствующего капитала. Такое взаимодействие кажется им ближе, понятней и эффективней. Это же проявляется и при столкновении интересов обществ: общество, где правят дельцы пытается для разрешения проблем прежде всего использовать санкции, поскольку их сильной стороной является экономика, а общество, где правят воины, применяет силу, поскольку его сильной стороной является политика.

Из изложенного понятно, что устойчивое функционирование любого общества должно подразумевать гармоничное развитие всех видов капитала. Кроме того, сами элементы триады для своей устойчивости также должны функционировать, основываясь на триадном принципе, хотя во вложенных триадах роль источника давления берут на себя другие силы. В качестве примера в [4] рассмотрен триадный подход для организации промышленности.

## VII. ЗАГАДКА ВАРИСА

В качестве заключения рассмотрим загадку Вариса из сериала «Игра престолов» [5]. Кратко суть загадки состоит в следующем. В одной комнате сидят три больших человека: король, священник и богач. Между ними стоит человек с мечом. Каждый из больших людей приказывает ему убить двух других. «Убей их»,

говорит король, «ибо я твой законный правитель». «Убей их», говорит священник, «ибо я приказываю тебе это от имени Бога». «Убей их», говорит богач, «и все это золото будет твоим». Вопрос: кто из них останется жив, а кто умрет?

Терион (участник сцены) утверждает, что всё зависит от человека с мечом, от его предпочтений. На этом основании Варис делает вывод, что власть - это условность, основанная на вере человека с мечом. Наши рассуждения действительно показывают, что место расположения власти – это публичное соглашение в обществе о том, кто из обладателей различного капитала имеет право на насилие. В этом случае человек с мечом скорее всего заранее знает, чьи приказы следует исполнять, потому что в этом случае он не будет наказан и получит в награду нечто самое ценное в этом обществе на данный момент (деньги, титул или благословение Господа). Если человек с мечом не имеет никаких представлений о публичных соглашениях в обществе, что будет тогда?

Давайте, представим себе, что в комнате три человека с мечом, а еще лучше, если людей с мечом заменит пистолет в руках каждого из трех персонажей. Если два персонажа направят свои пистолеты друг на друга, то третий будет абсолютным победителем, подобно китайской притче о мудрой обезьяне, наблюдающей с горы схватку двух тигров.

Если же участники откажутся делать кого-то абсолютным победителем, то второй персонаж, на которого направлен пистолет первого, должен будет направить свой пистолет на третьего персонажа. В свою очередь, третий персонаж во избежание уже описанной ситуации со вторым персонажем должен будет направить пистолет на первого участника. В итоге никто не может выстрелить, потому что любая попытка сделать это приведет к гибели стрелка. В самом деле, первый выстреливший убьет убийцу своего убийцы. Итак, они будут оказывать давление друг на друга угрозой смерти, но должны сохранять друг друга, чтобы оставаться

живыми. Другими словами, если участники загадки достаточно умны, вряд ли они будут обращаться с подобными просьбами к человеку с мечом, а тем более просить его убить сразу двух участников.

В завершении этой статьи я предлагаю читателю изменить содержание загадки Вариса. В овальном кабинете сидят три человека: Трамп, Маск и Венс. Какому персонажу из триады на сегодняшний день они соответствуют по своему внутреннему состоянию и выражаемым интересам? И, что они могут сказать человеку с мечом? Конечно, это шутка. Но в каждой шутке всего лишь доля шутки...

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# Dialectical Tensions between Consciousness and the Psyche: Contributions from Phenomenology and Existential Psychoanalysis

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## ABSTRACT

The aim of this article is to point out the contributions of phenomenology and existential psychoanalysis to the development of an in-depth analysis of psychic dynamics and their relationship with consciousness. In this sense, we will use a classic case from the literature contained in *Studies on Hysteria* by Sigmund Freud in collaboration with Josef Breuer, the case of Anna O. The return to a classic clinical case has allowed us to rework the relationship between consciousness and the psychic in the light of developments made by phenomenology and existential psychoanalysis. Freud's discoveries, in collaboration with Josef Breuer in the historical context of the 19th century, enabled important advances to be made with regard to psychic dynamism as a qualitatively distinct phenomenon from neurological determinations. Freud thus paved the way for research and clinical intervention in a utterly new sense, linked from then on to the historicity of the subject. Re-analyzing the findings of Anna O.'s clinical case in the light of phenomenology and existential psychoanalysis has allowed us to grasp the dialectical tensions between consciousness and the psychic, which we believe were underdeveloped by Freudianism, and in this way, to recover the important theoretical status of consciousness in the constitution and transformation of the psychic, as well as to postulate a new way of defining the psyche based on the notion of exis psychic.

*Keywords:* phenomenology; existential<sup>1</sup> psychoanalysis; phenomenological clinic.

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# Dialectical Tensions between Consciousness and the Psyche: Contributions from Phenomenology and Existential Psychoanalysis

Tensões Dialéticas Entre Consciência e Psíquico: Contribuições da Fenomenologia e da Psicanálise Existencial.

Dr. Fernando Gastal de Castro

## ABSTRACT

*The aim of this article is to point out the contributions of phenomenology and existential psychoanalysis to the development of an in-depth analysis of psychic dynamics and their relationship with consciousness. In this sense, we will use a classic case from the literature contained in *Studies on Hysteria* by Sigmund Freud in collaboration with Josef Breuer, the case of Anna O. The return to a classic clinical case has allowed us to rework the relationship between consciousness and the psychic in the light of developments made by phenomenology and existential psychoanalysis. Freud's discoveries, in collaboration with Josef Breuer in the historical context of the 19th century, enabled important advances to be made with regard to psychic dynamism as a qualitatively distinct phenomenon from neurological determinations. Freud thus paved the way for research and clinical intervention in a utterly new sense, linked from then on to the historicity of the subject. Re-analyzing the findings of Anna O.'s clinical case in the light of phenomenology and existential psychoanalysis has allowed us to grasp the dialectical tensions between consciousness and the psychic, which we believe were underdeveloped by Freudianism, and in this way, to recover the important theoretical status of consciousness in the constitution and transformation of the psychic, as well as to postulate a new way of defining the psyche based on the notion of exis psychic. Our aim is, therefore, to develop a dialectical understanding between consciousness and the psychic that recovers the essential role of the contingency of*

*consciousness in the constitution of the psychic, as well as to apprehend in a new way the conditioning role of the psyche and its symptoms in the face of lived experiences.*

**Keywords:** phenomenology; existential<sup>1</sup> psychoanalysis; phenomenological clinic.

**Autor:** Instituto de Psicologia, Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro.

## RESUMO

*O objetivo deste artigo é indicar as contribuições da fenomenologia e da psicanálise existencial para o desenvolvimento de uma análise em profundidade da dinâmica psíquica, bem como, de suas relações com a consciência. Nesse sentido, nos valeremos de um caso clássico da literatura contido em *Estudos sobre a Histeria* de Sigmund Freud em colaboração com Josef Breuer, o caso de Anna O. O retorno a um caso clínico clássico nos permitiu reelaborar as relações entre consciência e psíquico à luz de desenvolvimentos realizados pela fenomenologia e pela psicanálise existencial. As descobertas de Freud em colaboração com Josef Breuer no contexto histórico do século XIX, permitiram importantes avanços no que diz respeito ao dinamismo psíquico como um fenômeno qualitativamente distinto face às determinações neurológicas. Freud desse modo, abriu o caminho para a pesquisa e a intervenção clínica*

<sup>1</sup> Uma primeira versão deste texto foi originalmente publicada como capítulo de meu livro *Estudos de Psicanálise Existencial* (2012), pela editora CRV. O texto que se segue foi revisto e atualizado conforme os objetivos da atual publicação.

em um sentido totalmente novo, ligado desde então, a historicidade do sujeito. Reanalisar aqui os achados proporcionados pelo caso clínico de Anna O. à luz da fenomenologia e da psicanálise existencial nos permitiu apreender as tensões dialéticas, ao nosso ver pouco desenvolvidas pelo freudismo, entre consciência e psíquico e, por esse caminho, recuperar o importante estatuto teórico da consciência na constituição e transformações do psíquico, como também, postular uma nova forma de definir o psiquismo a partir da noção de *exis psíquica*. Nosso objetivo concentra-se, portanto, em desenvolver uma compreensão dialética entre consciência e psíquico que recupere o papel essencial da contingência da consciência na constituição do psíquico, bem como, apreender de forma nova, o papel condicionante do psiquismo e seus sintomas, face às experiências vividas.

**Palavras-chave:** fenomenologia; psicanálise existencial; clínica fenomenológica.

O caso de Anna O. pode ser considerado um marco na história da investigação dos fenômenos psíquicos por duas razões: primeiro, pela descoberta do dinamismo psíquico como algo que transcende os limites da consciência e que se impõe pela força de seus afetos, sob a forma de *exis psíquica* (Castro, 2012), capaz de constranger o sujeito a paixões que escapam ao domínio de sua vontade. Segundo, pela descoberta, não menos importante, da função incontornável da consciência, enquanto elemento chave na constituição do sentido das experiências afetivas, bem como, das possibilidades de metamorfose da existência concreta. A análise fenomenológica que se segue do caso de Anna O.<sup>2</sup> visa explorar as tensões entre estes dois aspectos fundamentais.

Anna O. contava 21 anos quando passou a apresentar uma série de sintomas psíquicos relacionados à doença de seu pai, sendo tratada por Josef Breuer de dezembro de 1880 à junho de

1882 que, por sua vez, reconhecia em sua paciente um caso clássico de histeria (Jones, 1989).

Anna O. apresentava características incomuns para uma mulher de sua época. Era alguém de grande vitalidade e inteligência, falava além de sua língua natal, o francês, o inglês e o italiano. Aprendia as coisas com uma impressionante rapidez, segundo o relato de Breuer (Freud, 2020)<sup>3</sup>, possuía dotes poéticos, uma fértil imaginação, era bela e atraente, possuía uma solidariedade para com os pobres e doentes e, ainda, um forte desejo de evadir-se de seu ambiente familiar de mentalidade fortemente conservadora. Tornou-se mais tarde, a primeira assistente social da Alemanha, dirigiu um orfanato para meninas judias, fundou um internato para abrigar meninos carentes, engajou-se na luta contra o tráfico de mulheres, fez viagens a Rússia, Polônia e Romênia, fez intervenções na *Société des Nations* em Genebra e, quando morreu em 1939, tinha se tornado uma mulher célebre e estimada (Van den Berg, 1980).

Aos seus vinte e um anos de idade, porém, uma das maneiras que Anna O. encontrava para escapar à monotonia e passividade de sua condição de mulher no interior de uma família conservadora e com uma mãe severa, era através da imaginação. Em sua vida cotidiana, ao mesmo tempo que se ocupava com afazeres domésticos, entregava-se sistematicamente a devaneios (*ser teatro particular*, como dizia) nos quais se imaginava vivendo outra vida. Tal fato apresenta uma importância capital, pois evidencia a maneira singular como vivia e afrontava sua situação, caracterizada por: um desejo constituído pela falta de *ter outra vida* e de *ser outra* face às prescrições morais conservadoras de sua situação, correlativamente, por um *pro-jecto* (Heidegger, 1989; Sartre, 1996b) constituído por

<sup>2</sup> Nossa análise está baseada fundamentalmente no relato de Josef Breuer sobre o Caso de Anna O. que faz parte de *Estudos sobre a Histeria.*, mas também utilizamos como bibliografia complementar o Capítulo XI, v.I de *A vida e a obra de Sigmund Freud* de Ernest Jones e *Les grands courants de la psychanalyse* de J.H. Van den Berg.

<sup>3</sup> Daqui em diante, a cada vez que fizermos referência aos *Estudos sobre Histeria* de S. Freud em co-autoria com Josef Breuer, utilizaremos o modo abreviado E.H, seguido do número da página, quando for necessário.

atos irrealizantes<sup>4</sup>, que buscavam no plano do irreal, a possibilidade de satisfação da falta vivida.

Nada de patológico nesse aspecto. Conforme o relato de Josef Breuer (EH,2020), antes da doença de seu pai, Anna O. nunca havia demonstrado os sintomas que passou a apresentar. De sorte que, a unidade formada pelo sujeito, enquanto falta de uma vida futura em negação a vida existente, e pelo *pro-jecto* enquanto fim fundamental a ser perseguido, encontrava sua forma de realização no plano do irreal. Algo compreensível quando se considera a situação da mulher judia no interior daquela Vienna de fins do século XIX. Uma cidade provinciana, conservadora, com valores aristocráticos, que fazia questão de esconder as diferenças sociais através de uma arte e de uma arquitetura do simulacro e, ainda, com uma forte influência da igreja católica na educação e na orientação espiritual da população (Mezan, 2006). Soma-se a este conservadorismo, o antissemitismo da pequena burguesia e dos partidos cristão e pangermânico que atribuíam aos judeus a culpa pelas dificuldades econômicas (Mezan, 2006). E, por fim, uma cidade de mentalidade vitoriana, o que significa, a presença de uma discriminação sexual violenta contra a mulher e, ao mesmo tempo, de um pudor exagerado conforme os costumes cristãos. Segundo o livro de Jules Michelet, *De l'amour*, tido como exemplo da mentalidade vitoriana da época, a mulher neste contexto social era um ser fraco, doente, nervoso, vulnerável e sonhador por natureza, enquanto o homem, ao contrário, um ser robusto, são e sexualmente selvagem (Van den Berg, 1980).

Considerando a situação subjetiva, familiar e social-histórica de Anna O. temos, portanto, que o sentido de seu *teatro particular* (E.H, 2020) não era o de um simples devaneio a que se entregava em função da monotonia de sua existência ou de uma pretensa natureza feminina. Ao contrário,

era uma saída existencial encontrada por uma mulher judia de vinte e um anos diante de uma realidade social e familiar extremamente limitante. Em outros termos, o *monótono* (E.H, 2020) da realidade doméstica e social vivido por Anna O. possuía um caráter negativo: era a falta de possibilidades de ser para uma determinada mulher, dentro do conservadorismo e do antissemitismo daquela Viena de meados do século XIX, objetivados no espaço familiar pelo caráter severo de sua mãe (Jones, 1989). Além disso, seus *devaneios* (E.H,2020) não se constituíam em uma pura fuga desta realidade limitadora de seu desejo, mas sim uma *negação da negação* (Sartre, 1960), ou seja, um *pro-jecto totalizante* que tinha por finalidade ultrapassar monótono de sua situação e satisfazer a falta-de-ser através de atos irrealizantes no plano do imaginário.

No entanto, tal *negação da negação* confronta-se em determinado momento, com a necessidade de cuidar do pai que adoece gravemente vindo a falecer um ano depois e a quem Anna O. era extremamente afeiçoada. Tal transformação de sua situação sociofamiliar mostra-se, portanto, desencadeadora de uma contradição entre duas tendências antagônicas e codependentes. Por um lado, o medo de perder o pai e de não ser suficientemente atenta às suas necessidades, seguido por forte sentimento de culpa. Por outro, seu *desejo-projeto* de evadir-se da monotonia familiar e de ter outra vida. Isto significa que sua práxis ao buscar no imaginário a satisfação da falta vivida, confronta-se com uma antítese, qual seja, a forte exigência de cuidado do pai doente, que se impôs como atividade necessária, quer dizer, como futuro-único que obrigava Anna O. a cumprir os deveres da nova situação e renunciar a seu desejo-projeto fundamental.

A força desta contradição começa a manifestar-se sintomaticamente no meio da madrugada do mês de julho de 1880, ou seja, tão logo iniciara a doença de seu pai (EH, p.58). Nesta madrugada o pai da paciente sente uma febre alta acrescida de uma necessidade cirúrgica, conforme o médico da família. Face a esse polo objetivo expresso pela gravidade da situação de saúde paterna e pelo seu risco de vida, corresponde polo subjetivo,

<sup>4</sup> Segundo J-P. Sartre notadamente nas obras *L'imaginaire* (1996a) e em *L'Idiot de la Famille* (1972) a irrealização designa um conjunto de condutas pelas quais uma existência lança-se ao imaginário como maneira de escapar a facticidade de um real extremamente limitante.

constituído pela experiência de Anna O. relativa à gravidade da situação, que se manifesta por sua ansiedade face a febre alta paterna, pela forte tensão em relação ao médico que estava por chegar e, ainda, pelos riscos da cirurgia a fazer.

A partir dessa nova configuração de sua situação, constituída essencialmente, pela unidade *sujeito emocionado* (a paciente Anna O.) face a *situação emocionadora* (febre alta, cirurgia paterna, risco de vida), torna-se compreensível o sentido da experiência vivida pela paciente quando se encontrava sozinha diante do pai, sentada à cabeceira de seu leito. Anna O. vive neste momento, uma experiência imaginante caracterizada pela *consciência intencional* (Sartre, 1996b) de uma cobra que se dirigia a seu pai como se fosse mordê-lo. A presença da cobra em imagem e a ameaça de morte que esta representa, constituem o objeto emocionador (Sartre, 1995) e o sentido da emoção vivida por Anna O. Correlativamente, seguindo o caminho da descrição fenomenológica (Husserl, 1986), podemos observar que o polo noético caracteriza-se pela certeza da experiência imaginária, certeza esta vivida a partir da totalidade de seu corpo presenciando o perigo e paralisando por inteiro. Anna O. não consegue mover-se e seu braço fica dormente e insensível. Na sequência, logo após o desaparecimento do objeto em imagem que a perturba [a cobra], a paciente mostra-se aterrorizada com o que lhe havia acontecido. O relato fornecido por Josef Breuer nos permite, por hipótese, afirmar que o terror da paciente se caracteriza pela consciência [reflexiva] de si (Sartre, 1996b) que apreende sua experiência pré-reflexiva imaginante. Seu estado de terror, portanto, mostra-se neste momento seguinte, por um lado, formado pela consciência de si mesma vivendo o descontrole emocional paralisante de seu corpo e, por outro, pelo desespero de não conseguir compreender o que tinha lhe acontecido.

A esse primeiro acontecimento, sucederam-se outros que foram constituindo, pouco a pouco, a situação contraditória entre o desejo-projeto vivido e a força dos imperativos sociais e morais sob os quais se encontrava. Em um momento seguinte o pai de Anna O. lhe pergunta as horas e

ela não consegue responder, pois não enxerga com nitidez devido a uma crise de choro. Numa outra situação, quando se encontrava sentada à cabeceira da cama do pai doente, ouve uma música vindo do vizinho e sente o desejo de evadir-se para onde vinha a música. Noutra, Anna O. encontra-se absorvida em seus devaneios não percebendo o pai que entrara no cômodo e outra ainda, na qual Anna O. não ouve o pai a pedir-lhe uma taça de vinho ou a reclamar de um ataque de sufocação. Em todos estes acontecimentos observa-se uma totalização de suas experiências (Castro, 2012) que se opera pouco a pouco: na situação face a cobra imaginária Anna O. tenta socorrer o pai e não consegue; quando este lhe pergunta as horas e ela não percebe por estar absorvida em seus devaneios, realiza uma consciência de si como sendo alguém negligente e culpada. O mesmo ocorre quando deseja estar junto à música vinda do vizinho, condenando com veemência seu desejo de evasão.

De sorte que, a “incubação latente de sua histeria” (E.H, p.58), evidencia uma tensão dialética entre consciência e psíquico: Por um lado, encontramos a consciência desejante e projetante buscando evadir-se da condição feminina limitante e, por outro, a totalização como negligente e culpada em função da necessidade de assistir e cuidar do pai doente. A cada momento em que Anna O. experimenta a falta de ter outra vida e projeta-se em direção ao irreal com forma de satisfazer seu desejo, sofre com a consciência [de si] de estar sendo negligente por não assistir ao pai doente. O desejo, enquanto experiência pré-reflexiva (Sartre, 1996b) daquilo que falta e, correlativamente, o pro-jeto como direção futura, passam a ser apropriados por Anna O. como algo *mau*, próprios de um *ser negligente*. Ou seja, a consciência reflexiva que a paciente realiza em relação às suas experiências pré-reflexivas caracteriza-se por um ato condenatório de seu desejo-projeto, capaz de objetivar para si um *ser mau e negligente* como síntese de suas experiências passadas. Dessa maneira, a consciência reflexiva de Anna O., ao voltar-se sobre suas próprias experiências pré-reflexivas vividas, apresenta-se como consciência constituinte de uma *exis psíquica*

(Castro, 2012), ou seja, um ato intencional que resulta na objetivação de um ser determinado<sup>5</sup>. Neste sentido, o ato reflexivo realizado pela paciente de Josef Breuer caracteriza-se por um momento no qual, seu movimento no mundo constituído por um desejo-projeto de evasão, objetiva-se para si como *ser mau e negligente*, adquirindo a forma de uma contrafinalidade inerte (Castro, 2012). Tal processo, resultante da dialética entre sucessivos atos da consciência reflexiva sobre as experiências pré-reflexivas adquire, nesse sentido, o status de um *ser mau e negligente* como síntese do passado e do futuro que passa a exercer a força de sua contrafinalidade sob a forma de *exis psíquica*.

Tal *exis psíquica* mostra-se dessa maneira como o resultado de uma dialética entre a consciência como atividade concreta e intencional e a objetivação da *exis psíquica* que retorna à paciente e impõe-se como *ser dado*, ou seja, como totalidade que Anna O. é sob a forma psíquica. Ao consideramos as formulações de Sartre (1960) sobre o prático-inerte, podemos defini-lo como objetivação no mundo da práxis que se volta contra si sob a forma de contrafinalidade, ou seja, como objetivação de uma atividade prática no mundo concreto que, por sua vez, passa a impor à existência singular suas exigências e determinações, ou ainda, o peso de seu ser. Tal é a noção sartriana de matéria trabalhada (Münster, 2008), como objetivação da subjetividade e, ao mesmo tempo, retorno sobre o sujeito sob a forma de determinação da vida social e material a impor-se sobre as possibilidades de existência. Um grupo de trabalhadores, por exemplo, que rompe com a passividade e passa a lutar contra o aumento do custo de vida, do desemprego e da

injustiça social, precisa em determinado momento, estabelecer certas regras, funções, tarefas coletivas, ou seja, precisa instituir uma forma de organização social interna para continuar a enfrentar os desafios de sua luta. De sorte que, nesse momento, o grupo, enquanto práxis coletiva e combatente (Sartre, 1960), ao romper com a impotência e a passividade serial, vê-se na necessidade de instituir sua própria estrutura, ou seja, objetivar como resultado da práxis comum, um campo prático-inerte que, por sua vez, determinará para cada um, certos limites e possibilidades da ação concreta. Podemos, nesse caso, considerar que, a práxis comum do grupo de combate produz em um determinado momento de seu processo uma *exis social* que passa a condicionar a vida do grupo internamente. É, portanto, na dialética permanente entre *práxis* e *exis* que compreendemos tanto as transformações sociais, bem como, a burocratização das estruturas que tornam a colocar os sujeitos subordinados às estruturas sociais e materiais constituídas.

De maneira análoga, a consciência singular ao voltar-se sobre si mesma, objetiva-se como *exis psíquica*. Anna O., através de sua consciência reflexiva [de si] apropria-se de suas experiências desejantes de evadir-se da monotonia familiar e objetiva-se como *sendo má e negligente*, nos termos de uma *inércia psíquica* que exercerá sua contrafinalidade a consciência, determinando seus modos de ser e estar no mundo. Josef Breuer (E.H, 2020), nesse sentido, relata modificações de humor rápidas, que de súbito levam a paciente a uma profunda angústia, a queixar-se de uma *escuridão na cabeça*, a não conseguir pensar, a ficar cega e surda e a ter a experiência de um *eu mau* que a forçava a comportar-se de determinada maneira. Nestes momentos, Anna O. alucina, mostra-se teimosa, indolente, rabugenta, desagradável, agressiva e as pessoas ao seu redor se parecem a figuras de cera, sem qualquer ligação afetiva com a paciente, e tudo isso, em contraposição à experiência de seu *eu real* (E.H, 2020) vivido quando se comportava nos limites da normalidade estabelecida. A força da contrafinalidade da *exis psíquica* constituída faz Anna O. sentir-se “*invadida por seu eu mau*”

<sup>5</sup> O argumento aqui desenvolvido está baseado na tese de J-P. Sartre sobre a *transcendência do ego*, conforme exposta em *La transcendence de l'Ego e em L'être et le néant*. Nesse sentido, a noção de *exis psíquica* corresponde àquela de Ego enquanto um ser transcendente à consciência. Porém, nossa opção por falar de *exis psíquica* e não simplesmente de ego, busca enfatizar o caráter *prático inerte* (Sartre, 1960) do ser psíquico capaz de estruturar-se nos termos de uma contrafinalidade. Em suma, fizemos aqui uma aproximação entre as noções fenomenológicas contidas em *O ser e o nada* (Sartre, 1996b) e em *A transcendência do Ego* (Sartre, 1992) com as noções dialéticas contidas na *Crítica da razão dialética* (Sartre, 1960).

(E.H, p.59), o que evidencia a experiência de contrafinalidade da *exis psíquica* como antítese de sua consciência desejante-projetante, que a fazia *padecer seu ser* a partir de uma série de comportamentos e afetos que se automatizam.

Por outro lado, a *exis psíquica* constituída pelo *ser mau e negligente* caracteriza-se como ser negativo, na medida em que, torna-se parte de um projeto totalizante mais amplo de má-fé (Sartre, 1996a), origem, por sua vez, da cisão vivida pela paciente entre seu *eu mau e negligente* e seu *eu real e bom*. Encontramo-nos aqui, diante de um duplo movimento: a *exis psíquica* é tanto um produto da consciência intencional e reflexiva que unifica uma série de experiências pré-reflexivas dando a essa unificação a consistência de um *ser mau*, como também, revela-se como antítese de um *eu real e verdadeiro*, conectado ao projeto de ser de uma filha cuidadora e solidária com a doença de seu pai. Tal projeto totalizante de má-fé difere essencialmente da mentira (Sartre, 1996b) na medida em que, esta implica a tríade formada pelo sujeito que engana, pelo o outro que é enganado e por um terceiro elemento, o objeto da mentira. Mentir, nesse sentido, é esconder algo verdadeiro de algum outro. Diferentemente, as condutas de má-fé caracterizam-se pela tentativa de esconder algo verdadeiro de si mesmo. Existe uma verdade em termos existenciais, relativa ao fato de Anna O. ter desejado-projetado evadir-se da situação familiar enquanto cuidava do pai. Existe, ainda, a verdade também existencial, no fato de seu desejo-projeto ter sofrido uma alteração profunda ao ser apropriado pela consciência reflexiva e constituído a *exis psíquica*, vivida por Anna O. como experiência de ser má e negligente. Logo, o projeto totalizante de má-fé consiste, na negação-repressão para si mesma destas verdades existenciais da experiência íntima e, ao mesmo tempo, na afirmação de outro ser como verdadeiro, real e bom. Um projeto, portanto, em que o sujeito busca dissimular a verdade a respeito de si mesmo, projetando-se em direção a um ideal constituído em termos de dever-ser moral (Sartre, 1996b). A paciente de Josef Breuer busca nesse sentido, invalidar a verdade vivida de ser má e negligente como algo próprio de si mesma, ao apegar-se a um ideal de

ser-filha conforme as exigências e necessidades de seu contexto social e familiar e suas estruturas imperativas capazes de definir os destinos de sua existência.

Tal processo, no entanto, é gerador de duas experiências contraditórias, capazes de conduzir Anna O. a um *impasse*, como essência da *exis psíquica* constituída. Por um lado, possui a certeza de ser má e negligente, vivida através da contrafinalidade da *exis psíquica*. Por outro, Anna O. lança-se para um projeto de dissimulação, constituído pelo esforço prático de acreditar que seu único eu real e verdadeiro é o de ser boa filha em conexão com as estruturas morais de sua situação. Ocorre que, tal projeto totalizante implica um esforço constante por parte daquele que o pratica de convencer-se da própria dissimulação, conduzindo o sujeito ao aprofundamento do sofrimento vivido. Ou seja, o esforço da paciente de convencer-se que *não é o que é* [“não é seu projeto desejado de evadir-se” e “não é a filha má e negligente”] implica certa consciência das verdades que busca dissimular, própria de um esforço ininterrupto de convencer-se que seu único e verdadeiro “eu” *não é mau mas bom*.

Está, portanto, formado o *impasse* nos termos de uma contradição não-dialetizável (Legrand, 1993). Quer dizer, a *exis psíquica*, por um lado, afirma sua força afetiva como contrafinalidade, levando Anna O. a experiência de ser má, que inclui suas alucinações, teimosias, indolências, agressividade e total isolamento para com as pessoas ao seu redor. Por outro, seu projeto de má-fé, busca dissimular de si mesma tal verdade existencial e apoiar-se num ideal de boa filha. Esse duplo movimento conduz a paciente a um esforço contínuo e renovado de manter seu *pro-jecto*, ou seja, de convencer-se que seu eu real é ser boa filha e solidária com seu pai, enquanto que seu eu mau, nos termos de sua *exis psíquica* constituída, não faria parte de si mesma.

O *impasse*, portanto, enquanto contradição não-dialetizável, aparece como fruto de um projeto totalizante de má-fé que se aprisiona em duas possibilidades mutuamente excludentes e, ao mesmo tempo, complementares. Anna O.,

segundo o relato de Josef Breuer, mantinha enquanto vivia seus delírios, alucinações e demais experiências de ser má e negligente, “a persistência de um pensamento claro” como se “um observador estivesse sentado num canto de seu cérebro a contemplar sua loucura” (E.H, p.78). Ou seja, a contrafinalidade da *exis psíquica* não se caracteriza por uma experiência totalmente inconsciente de si, nem tampouco, seu projeto de negação em direção ao pretense eu real e verdadeiro mostra-se algo voluntário e planejado. Seus gestos e experiências não são calculados nem resultam de uma atitude voluntária e a *exis psíquica* constituída não se apresenta como uma totalidade diretamente acessível a uma consciência lúcida em relação ao impasse vivido. A contrário, a *exis psíquica* é vivida como tal enquanto consciência *cativa* (Sartre, 1996) do ser psíquico a impor sua contrafinalidade, e como tentativa de negação do mesmo, pelo projeto totalizante de má-fé que crê nos fins projetados de ser boa, buscando dessa forma, identificar-se com o dever-ser moral estabelecido. Encontramos neste nível da experiência, o caráter *cativo e crente* da consciência as suas determinações, que fornece uma chave compreensiva à contradição não-dialétizável, ao revelar a metamorfose da alienação social em autoalienação psíquica.

Portanto, a experiência de “duplo eu” (E.H, 2020), um real e adaptado e outro mau e negligente, configura-se como expressão de uma contradição não-dialétizável totalizada por um projeto de má-fé que unifica uma situação insustentável e sem saída. Por um lado, Anna O. vive seu ser mau como unificação das experiências desejáveis que se objetivavam em termos de culpa e negligência na forma de contrafinalidade da *exis psíquica*. Por outro, vive o *eu real* formado por um projeto totalizante de má-fé enquanto negação da *exis psíquica* constituída, em direção a um ideal de seriedade (Sartre, 1996b) adaptado as necessidades da situação social e familiar. O caráter não-dialétizável desta contradição portanto, aparece justamente na maneira como está formada a unidade contraditória que a constitui. Para manter a crença em um *eu real* a paciente precisa dissimular de si mesma a verdade vivida de sua *exis psíquica*. Porém, quanto mais

realiza o esforço de dissimulação, mais fortalece a contrafinalidade da *exis psíquica* como verdade dissimulada. Em suma, a maneira como a unidade contraditória entre seus dois eus está formada, faz com que a existência de um seja a base para a existência do outro. O *eu real*, encontra suas bases na dissimulação do *eu mau* formado pelas experiências de culpa e negligência, enquanto o *eu mau* constitui-se como ser negado que necessita de um *pro-jecto* de má-fé que o dissimule e, ao mesmo tempo, o conserve através da crença no ideal de seriedade.

Podemos dizer assim, que o impasse entre os dois eus mostra-se uma saída encontrada por Anna O. para uma situação de tensão vivida diante de uma modificação do mundo em que se encontra. Um *pro-jecto* que inventa uma saída de má-fé diante da contradição entre seu desejo-projeto de ter outra vida e evadir-se da monotonia familiar e a dura realidade que se impõe com a doença paterna que, por sua vez, exige da paciente um futuro necessário de forma imperativa. Tal tensão na unidade eu-mundo exige uma saída na medida em que a doença paterna avança, bem como, na medida em que se multiplicam as experiências de culpa e negligência. A totalização da *exis psíquica* mostra-se, portanto, uma forma específica de resolver a tensão por intermédio de um *pro-jecto* de má-fé que se torna *cativo e crente* dos componentes da situação que se encontra. Uma totalização (Sartre, 1960) capaz de conduzir Anna O. ao *impasse* como essência de sua neurose, ou seja, a uma contradição não-dialétizável entre a *exis psíquica* e o *ideal de dissimulação* que co-existem em sua existência concreta sob a forma de impossibilidade de superação e portanto, como aprofundamento do seu conjunto de sintomas e sofrimentos.

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Como afirmamos ao início deste artigo, o caso de Anna O. pode ser considerado um marco na história da investigação psicológica pela descoberta também da consciência significativa, como dimensão da existência concreta a dar sentido as suas experiências, bem como, responsável pelas possibilidades de transformação de si mesmo. É importante considerar que não nos interessamos aqui em discutir a cura de Anna

O. Nosso objetivo é indicar as contribuições da fenomenologia e da psicanálise existencial para o desenvolvimento de uma análise em profundidade da dinâmica psíquica bem como de suas relações com a consciência. Nesse sentido, analisaremos a sequência de experiências de compreensão (Laing, 1982) vividas pela paciente, que se iniciam com sua impossibilidade de beber água (E.H, 2020)

Apesar de ser uma época de calor intenso, Anna O. sentia uma forte repulsão nos momentos em que tentava beber um copo d'água, a ponto de não conseguir saciar-se e ver-se obrigada a matar sua sede comendo frutas. Em certa sessão terapêutica, descreve a Josef Breuer o fato desencadeador deste sintoma. Anna O. relata que, certa vez, havia entrado no quarto de sua dama de companhia e presenciado seu cão bebendo água em um copo que depois foi bebido pela dama, o que, por sua vez, a afetou profundamente, provocando uma enorme sensação de nojo e repulsão, bem como, uma forte cólera que buscou conter como forma de manter sua cordialidade. Anna O. não somente descreve a Josef Breuer a cena geradora de sua impossibilidade psíquica de beber, mas, ao fazê-lo, revive a emoção sentida no momento. Conforme relata Breuer, depois de haver descrito a experiência que tinha ocasionado o sintoma, este desaparecera. A “cura pela fala” (E.H, p.69), conforme expressão de Josef Breuer, pode ser compreendida, do ponto de vista da fenomenologia e da psicanálise existencial, como um ato de *compreensão da existência face a situação vivida e desencadeadora do sintoma* em questão (Castro, 2012). A fim de continuar nossa análise fenomenológica das possibilidades de metamorfose da existência concreta, convém aqui abordar a noção de compreensão.

*Compreender* implica adotar uma consciência reflexiva (Sartre, 1996b) a respeito de sua própria situação. Podemos falar, por exemplo, de uma compreensão geográfica a partir de um mapa que olho na rua quando estou perdido. Através da observação do mapa compreendo onde *eu estou*, me situo no mundo em tal lugar, longe ou perto de tal endereço ou de tais pessoas, a certa distância do ponto de ônibus que pode me conduzir de volta à minha casa, etc. Compreender, portanto, implica uma consciência reflexiva de *mim mesmo*

*situado* no espaço social-urbano em que me encontro e que, por sua vez, transforma minha experiência de estar-perdido no meio da cidade em uma atividade orientada. A especificidade, no entanto, da compreensão vivida por Anna O., é de que ao invés desta ser geográfica, ela realiza-se sobre sua *exis psíquica* constituída.

Para entender a compreensão vivida e realizada por Anna O., faz-se necessário considerar dois modos da consciência apreender suas próprias experiências pré-reflexivas em relação ao mundo. Podemos falar, conforme Sartre (1996), de uma consciência reflexiva impura e cúmplice e outra, purificadora (Castro & Ehrlich, 2016). Quando Anna O. entra no quarto de sua dama de companhia e presencia o cão e, em seguida, a dama de companhia a beber no mesmo copo, toma como objeto de sua consciência a experiência imediata de repulsão vivida, realizando, por este ato, uma consciência-de-ser-quem-tem-nojo-do-copo-d'água. Tal consciência reflexiva [de si] realizada por Anna O. extrapola os limites da experiência momentânea de repulsão, fazendo com que objeto [o copo d'água] e sujeito [Anna O.] unifiquem-se em uma nova síntese. Sua consciência reflexiva [de si] não se contém em simplesmente ser consciência de sua própria repulsão pelo cachorro e pela dama de companhia bebendo água em um mesmo copo. Anna O. realiza, nesse sentido, uma passagem da experiência imediata de repulsão à constituição de uma *exis psíquica* na qual apreende-se como sendo-alguém-que-tem-nojo que compromete seu passado e seu futuro. Ao mesmo tempo, ocorre uma transformação do sentido do objeto copo d'água que, de algo possível de matar a sede transforma-se em algo nojento. Desta forma, objeto e sujeito unem-se através de uma nova síntese: ao invés do objeto 'copo d'água' ser algo bebível para o desejo de Anna O. de saciar sua sede, este passa a ser algo nojento com a paciente transformando-se em alguém que tem nojo. Observa-se neste caso, a força realizante da consciência reflexiva *impura* ao apropriar-se da experiência pré-reflexiva de repulsão. Além deste ato da consciência reflexiva impura que unifica de forma totalmente nova o sujeito Anna O. ao objeto copo d'água, a continuidade da situação revela-se



permeada por novos atos de consciência que se fazem *cúmplices* (Sartre, 1996) com a *exis psíquica* constituída. Ou seja, uma vez constituída a nova unidade *ser que tem nojo-objeto nojento*, a paciente passa a adotar face a si mesma uma atitude cúmplice que se restringe a aceitar a *exis psíquica* como um ser dado, ou seja, a assumir-se sendo quem tem nojo no passado e no futuro.

De uma maneira diferente, quando Anna O. recupera a situação em sessão terapêutica com Josef Breuer e descreve a cena que desencadeou sua impossibilidade de beber, encontramos uma consciência reflexiva *purificadora* (Sartre, 1996b; Castro & Ehrlich, 2016), capaz de levá-la à compreensão face à situação geradora de seu sintoma e a uma possibilidade de metamorfose de sua relação com o objeto. Ao descrever o acontecimento para Josef Breuer, Anna O. recupera e revive o momento de sua relação com o copo d'água no qual este havia se transformado de um objeto bebível em algo nojento, bem como, o momento em que ela transformou uma fugaz experiência pré-reflexiva de nojo em *exis psíquica*. A consciência reflexiva purificadora realizada por Anna O. recupera a experiência pré-reflexiva e imediata de repulsão em presença do copo d'água e o sentido dado por ela a tal objeto e a si mesma. Ao recuperar sua experiência pré-reflexiva, a paciente chega a uma *intuição* (Husserl, 1986) de si mesma como tendo vivido apenas um momento de repulsão diante de um copo d'água específico que estava sendo bebido pelo cachorro e pela dama de companhia, ou seja, recupera o nojo não como manifestação de uma *exis psíquica* constituída, mas como pura experiência imediata de repulsão diante de algo nojento. Ao mesmo tempo, tal consciência purificadora ao recuperar a verdade vivida no plano pré-reflexivo, produz uma nova negação em relação a *exis psíquica* constituída pela reflexão impura e cúmplice e ao sentido dado ao objeto como algo essencialmente nojento. É como se Anna O. dissesse a si mesma que sua experiência imediata de repulsão não a fazia necessariamente alguém que não suportava beber e, nem tampouco, fazia do objeto algo essencialmente nojento. Ou seja, *compreende* a si mesma como tendo vivido um simples momento de repulsão em

função de uma situação específica na qual tal objeto aparece a ela como nojento. Em suma, *des-essencializa* sua relação com o objeto, abrindo outros possíveis para si mesma.

Nesse sentido, as possibilidades de realização de uma consciência reflexiva purificadora dependem da recuperação pela consciência *em sua situação*, ou seja, do fato de Anna O. haver recuperado seu ato significativo dentro da situação em que viveu o nojo por tal objeto. Faz-se importante considerar neste nível, a importância crucial da descrição fenomenológica (Castro, 2019) do acontecimento desencadeador do sintoma, enquanto trabalho clínico sobre os componentes concretos da situação real e vivida e sobre a maneira como o sujeito projeta-se a partir desta. Ao recuperar em sessão psicoterapêutica tal acontecimento desencadeador de seu sintoma, Anna O. presentifica o passado [certo dia específico em que entrou no quarto de sua dama de companhia e viveu tal experiência de repulsão], o lugar em que se encontrava [no quarto de sua dama de companhia], o outro com que compartilha a situação [a dama de companhia com quem não simpatizava] e os objetos de seu entorno [no caso, o copo d'água sendo bebido pelo cão e pela dama de companhia]. A consciência purificadora presentifica também, além deste conjunto de elementos da sua situação, aquilo que foi vivido por si mesma [a repulsão pelo copo d'água] e, ainda, a forma singular como significou a experiência pré-reflexiva vivida [o nojo]. Tal recuperação da existência concreta em situação, enquanto condição de possibilidade para a realização da consciência reflexiva purificadora, permite a Anna O. uma *compreensão* daquilo que lhe aconteceu, na forma de um ato sintetizante capaz de [re]unificar a situação, o sentido constituído e o sintoma produzido a partir de um novo horizonte de possíveis que se instaura. É possível concluir a partir desta análise preliminar, que a *compreensão* mostra-se capaz de não somente [re]sentir o processo de constituição da *exis psíquica*, mas também de instaurar um novo processo temporal à existência de Anna O. no qual o nojo [passado] deixa de orientar os destinos [futuros] de seu presente. A compreensão, portanto, de Anna O, restrita aqui para fins de

nossa análise, ao seu sintoma de não conseguir beber água, revela-se, portanto, como uma consciência reflexiva purificadora que, resgatando a experiência pré-reflexiva vivida em situação, conduz à apreensão sintética do que foi vivido e àquilo que a paciente fez de si mesma. Compreensão esta, que conduz à paciente de Josef Breuer a uma nova *projeção de si* (Sartre, 1960), no sentido prático de transformação de suas possibilidades de ser e de agir no mundo. Como sustenta Sartre (1960, p.105) “compreender é modificar-se”.

O mesmo processo é válido para os demais sintomas que foram objeto de trabalho psicoterapêutico, conforme Anna O. recuperava com Josef Breuer os acontecimentos que os haviam desencadeado. O seu *braço paralisado* (E.H, p.71) foi compreendido como um braço que paralisou na situação em que se encontrava muito angustiada diante da cabeceira de seu pai que sofria com febre alta e estava prestes a ser operado. A sua *tosse nervosa* foi compreendida como uma tosse produzida no momento em que reprimiu seu desejo de dançar e culpabilizou-se fortemente por isso. Enfim, a cada sintoma que Josef Breuer passou a aplicar seu método, produz-se uma nova compreensão de si de Anna O. face ao acontecimento gerador do mesmo, desencadeando novas formas de projetar-se para o mundo que unificam *consciência e exis psíquica* a um novo campo de possíveis. Nos encontramos neste nível do processo vivido, face à metamorfose de uma contradição não-dialetizável para uma nova ordem de contradições agora dialetizáveis, ou seja, capazes de negar o *impasse* constituído e possibilitar um futuro aberto ao presente que até então inexistia.

A compreensão da existência em sua situação conduz Anna O. à retotalização (Sartre, 1960) de seu *projecto de má-fé*, na medida em que, a consciência purificadora em sua situação, alcança a experiência pré-reflexiva naquilo que ela é ou foi e naquilo que ela pode vir-a-ser e ainda-não-é. A consciência purificadora revela-se, portanto, um ato da existência para-si que recupera a verdade da experiência pré-reflexiva, nega a *exis psíquica* constituída pelo projeto de má-fé e, desta forma, retoma a capacidade de temporalização e

historicização perdidas. O acontecimento passado, gerador do sintoma, é assim objetivado e compreendido como algo contingente e não como algo necessário, como algo *vivido* e não mais essencialmente determinante, permitindo um novo campo de possíveis à existência concreta.

\*

A análise fenomenológica do caso de Anna O. nos permitiu apreender duas importantes descobertas para o domínio das relações entre consciência e psíquico. Por um lado, aquela referente à existência da *exis psíquica*, como transcendendo os limites da consciência, e capaz de impor a esta a força de sua contrafinalidade. Uma importante contribuição da fenomenologia e da psicanálise existencial, neste sentido, permitiu revelar o psíquico como produto de um projeto de má-fé que retorna sua inercia contra a consciência e a totaliza. A força da contrafinalidade da *exis psíquica* possui desta forma, como outra face essencial o *pro-jecto totalizante*, próprio de uma sociedade alienante (Castro, 2020) que retira das existências concretas a consciência da própria contingência, restando alternativas limitadas, que aprisionam a liberdade à inercia. Logo, o projeto de má-fé enquanto atividade temporal e subjetiva, objetiva-se e automatiza-se como *exis psíquica* que retorna à consciência fazendo-se cativa do impasse em que se aprisiona. A consciência impura e cúmplice de Anna O. significa as diversas experiências de desejo-projeto de ter outra vida como partes de um *eu mau*, totalizadas por um projeto de má-fé em prol de um *eu real*, constituindo assim o impasse como contradição não-dialetizável, essência de sua neurose. De sorte que, a *exis psíquica* ao ser totalizada por um projeto de má-fé, objetiva-se na tensão contraditória entre dois eus, que adquirem a força de um objeto inerte, capaz de comprometer passado, presente e futuro num automatismo temporal autoprodutor de si mesmo, limitando as possibilidades da consciência em projetar novas possibilidades de ser.

Por outro lado, nossa análise também permitiu colocar em evidência outro aspecto que nos parece essencial, qual seja, a existência de uma consciência purificadora capaz de recuperar sua

contingência, negar a *exis psíquica* constituída e dar-se novos possíveis existenciais, ultrapassando os limites do projeto de má-fé em que se realizava. A capacidade de Anna O. voltar-se sobre si mesma, compreender a ligação entre a contingência de suas experiências pré-reflexivas, a *exis psíquica* constituída por um projeto de má-fé, evidencia as possibilidades de metamorfoses da estrutura psíquica constituída e as potencialidades do sujeito.

A tarefa, portanto, que se impõe a uma teoria do psíquico bem como, a uma clínica psicanalítica, é integrar dialeticamente o caráter contingente e significativo da consciência ao caráter inerte da estrutura psíquica e assim transpor tanto as limitações de uma psicologia existencial que desconsidera em nome da liberdade, o automatismo psíquico constituído, como também, as limitações do obscurantismo estruturalista (Fougeyrollas, 1983) que relega à consciência um papel insignificante. Os desafios que se colocam a partir destas considerações portanto, são compreender e adentrar cada vez mais em profundidade os nexos e as tensões entre a consciência na sua busca contingente de projetar seus próprios fins e as determinações das contrafinalidades alienantes que tendem a despossuir a existência de seu caráter de sujeito. Novas possibilidades práticas e teóricas se desvelam, desta maneira, como um promissor campo de pesquisa.

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# “History” as a Pet Subject of Theorists vs. What Historical Researchers Do

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## ABSTRACT

The present article challenges both postmodern and later philosophy (or theory) of history for neglect of analysis of what historical researchers actually do. Historical research is focussed on problems and their solutions, just as research of natural scientists. Since the 1960s, theorists of history have tended to think that what historians do is equal to write history in a narrative form. Sometimes, these theoreticians even deny the past as a reference. Neither these theorists (here called Narrativist) nor newer anti-Narrativist theorists (three examples are discussed) have examined what historical researchers do when they deal with problems and seek new knowledge. Finally, a brief discussion between two historical researchers (on Mao's strategy) is analysed as an example of the actual formation of new knowledge in history.

*Keywords:* philosophy/theory of history, research, overview, narration, empathy, inference to the best explanation. Perhaps you could use them.

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**Author:** Professor Emeritus, Uppsala University.

## I. PAST, HISTORY, AND HISTORIOGRAPHY- WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

One of many remarkable things about so-called philosophy (or theory) of history is that the distinction between the past and presentations of the past is often treated as an enormous difficulty that historians have not observed (Hayden White and his many followers)<sup>1</sup>. Some theorists even want to deny that there is/was a past apart from the narratives about it, because it is no longer

<sup>1</sup> See White 1978/85, esp. 81-100, and White 1987, esp.42-57; also, see Ankersmit 1994, esp. 97-124; Jenkins1991, esp. 68-70; see also Ankersmit 2012, passim. On White's influence, see H. Paul 2019.

observable. Transferred to each person's own history, this seems ridiculous. I feel quite certain that I sat down on my desk-chair less than half an hour ago. Presently, I sit there writing this text, but the act of placing my body on the chair is no longer observable. It is part of my past, in the same way as my birth, my matriculation examination, and my first wife's decease. As an observer I cannot tell about all of them (my birth!), and only as an engaged participant I refer to other parts of “my past”. But it would be senseless to deny that the history of my changing body from my first remembrance of it up to the present is more than just a story.

Philosophising about history in the sense of the past is something that has roots in the Antiquity (e.g., the Bible, Book of Daniel, esp. ch. 2. 7, and 11). Theorising about history (the past) got a systematic form through Giambattista Vico in his book commonly known as *La Scienza nuova* (1725).<sup>2</sup> His line of thought was followed and varied by G.W.F. Hegel, Karl Marx, Oswald Spengler and Arnold Toynbee, to mention some of the most known, but there is no strict borderline between philosophy and (social) theory when it turns to the general development of mankind. Much could be said about such varieties of “theories of history”,<sup>3</sup> but this is not the topic of the present article.

History in its other sense, the sense of historiography, is a popular “art” to have meanings about. Hayden White and Frank Ankersmit (more about them in the next section) have left as their legacy the notion that historiography is a variety of art, in the sense that

<sup>2</sup> G. Vico, *Principi di una scienza nuova d'intorno alla commune natura delle nazione* (1725), where he wanted to give a foundation for a new science about the common nature of all nations and their development.

<sup>3</sup> See further Torstendahl 2015a, 174-187, 198-201.

its presentations are representations of the same kind as novels or paintings and should be analysed as such. They agree that there are some rules for writing history that distinguish history works from novels but insist that works on history are entirely fabricated in the mind of the historian and cannot be taken as depicting “the past”. They mean that truth (or falsity) is not applicable to history works. Some later theorists have tried to distance themselves from postmodern thoughts by re-introducing empathy and feelings as guiding principles for an engaged historiography, brushing up thoughts of Robin George Collingwood, Michel Foucault, Theodor Adorno and Herbert Marcuse in different forms.<sup>4</sup> The distance to White is, however, not great, for in his last years he also transformed his “philosophy of history” by giving to it a moral direction as a guide for actions in the present and future.

Many contemporary analysts of historiography agree with White (and followers) that historiography is something different from science because it has not the same relation to the outside world. History is deemed to be dependent on the author’s mind and is by necessity (taken as a logical premise) narrative in form and therefore, different historians produce different opinions on past occurrences. These conceptions are still current and dominant among those who write under the label philosophy (or theory) of history. Only rarely discussants point out that very seldom the usual conception of history in philosophical works is based on the research works of professional historians and their methods and arguments.

This article will try to deepen out this line of criticism. The following section is devoted to an analysis of the concepts used by others and those used by me in the later sections. The third section relates a couple of interesting efforts to link up theory of history with current historical research and their shortcomings. The fourth section presents an alternative approach to the analysis of historiography. The fifth section presents my conclusions from the analysis.

<sup>4</sup> For some examples of such reasoning, see section 3, below.

## II. CONCEPTUAL PREMISES FOR THE ANALYSIS

History, in the sense of what has been the case or what has taken place in the past, is not what this article is concerned with. It will deal only with history in the sense of presentations in words. Pictures might have been included, but I have not worked with examples of art that are not based on a previous written narrative. First-hand painted sources which are not just complements to written reports are rare but are for instance, represented by very old cave paintings and engraved pictures in stone caves in Spain and France.

History as written presentations is not at all uniform. People working with the philosophy of history mostly take examples from one or some books with comprehensive histories of something: a comprehensive history of Spain, the history of Enlightenment in Europe, a history of the Tudors on the English throne, or something similar. Most often they avoid histories of economic or social content. They frequently find that the “histories” that they work with are narrative, and they argue that their choice is strategic, because the authors are often well known professors of history. This demands a comment on professionalism.<sup>5</sup>

In many occupations schooling is required to be acknowledged as a “member” of the occupation before practising as a professional. A barrister or a solicitor are typically used as examples together with physicians, but many other occupations have joined their type of link between a theoretical education and a practice with specific requirements: nurses, school teachers, engineers, journalists, are among them and there is a vague boundary between them and train or lorry drivers, stock brokers, estate agents, and several others. Quite as lawyers and physicians all the other mentioned occupational groups practice their occupation when they are asked by other people to do so or with them as patients or clients.

<sup>5</sup> In previous books and articles, I have gone into the difference between practicing professions and academic professions more in depth. See esp. Torstendahl 2015b. See also Torstendahl 2015a, 7-17. The following two paragraphs summarise the essentials of what I have presented in these publications.



Professionalism among academics staying in the learned world is of a specific sort, or often of two sorts. A professional physicist may write a book on physics from Newton to Einstein or, if the physicist is bold, a book on the physics of the creation of the universe. Such an author will probably have interesting views on the subject. Yet, the first type of book may be found deficient by a researcher on history of science, for instance, in its concentration on a few famous scientists, and omitting the production of their disciples. The second approach, the bold overview, will probably, beside applause, lead to many critical comments within the profession of physicists for simplifications of serious problems and taking a debatable stance to many other problems. Both these types of presentations would fall outside the sphere of professional physicists, as they go beyond the scope of their profession, even if reviewers can admit that non-professionals might find the such books interesting and informative.

A professional physicist practices as such only in research work on physical problems, not in a presentation of physics. Likewise, professors of history practice as historical researchers only when they work as researchers on historical problems. Both physicists (or other scientists) and historians practice as professional researchers only when they try to create new knowledge by treating problems that they approach with methods recognised in their disciplines. (They may act as professional teachers when they write books of other sorts on matters within their discipline.) If they want to use a new method, they have to fight for its acceptance in the disciplinary community before any results won by such methods will be accepted. In physics such new methods are common, and the validity is regularly discussed for and against.<sup>6</sup> In history such discussions are rare. Two examples may be mentioned: the discussion about source criticism in Sweden from 1910 to the 1950s (in its origin a discussion about which conclusions should be drawn from source criticism, later a “school”

<sup>6</sup> A striking example is the Swede Hugo Alfvén’s theory of the northern light as a product of space plasma and the magnetosphere, which was discarded by the Englishman Sydney Chapman with a lot of scientists involved on both sides. (See Lindqvist 2023, 363-399.)

fight); and the discussion about “new economic history” (or cliometrics or econometric history) in the US and Europe during the late 1950s-1960s.<sup>7</sup>

An important difference between researchers in the natural sciences and (the discipline of) history is, however, the *nature of the problems*, which they state as important to solve. In the natural sciences these are generally related to the validity of a theory, either a theory already in use, or a theory existent as a hypothesis and in need of verification. In the historical disciplines the problem is usually the *interpretation of a certain set of data* which may be taken as evidence for a hypothetical explanation or understanding. On some occasions but rarely, historians like scientists seek verification of a hypothetical *theory*. Both in sciences and in history there is a body of knowledge, which is taken for valid and, given this accepted body of knowledge, the new theory or interpretation must be shown to be compatible with it. If the news is found not compatible, it is either judged to be false, or a wider problem opens up for the scientist/historian, namely to show how to solve the conflict with (a lot of) statements taken for true in earlier research.

Thus, my first analytical point is that scientific research and historical research show a great but not total similarity, if research is kept apart from overviews. Researchers in both fields strive to solve problems. In both cases the solution requires empirical evidence to be accepted. The empirical evidence can be bridged to the solution of the problem, which is initially raised only within the brain of the researcher. This bridge-building partly consists of conceptualisation of observations, which makes it possible to treat the problem either as a logical problem or as something that is similar to certain other empirically verified (theory-bound) knowledge or structurally connected with such verified knowledge. This bridge-building has to be confirmed by other researchers in their research directly (through repetition of the same) or indirectly (through tests of compatibility with the

<sup>7</sup> Fogel & Engerman (eds.) 1971, especially the editors’ introduction, 1-13.

solution of adjacent problems). This holds for both sciences and history.

My second analytical point concerns the internal structure of the so-called philosophy of history. The protagonists of historiography as an object of study most often take “history” as denoting all sorts of presentations of the past. In many cases “history” is stated to be narrative by its nature. The subtitle of one of Hayden White’s books is “Narrative Discourse and Historical Representation”, where one of the chapters is called “The Question of Narrative in Contemporary Historical Theory”, but there is no chapter on what role narrative plays in contemporary *historical research*. Sometimes theorists even hold that a definition of any way to “present past occurrences” must contain a “narrative”.<sup>8</sup>

When a difference is made between historical presentations that are made to summarise earlier results (either for a wide public or for the use as state of the art) and research presentations aiming at bringing the searchlight to new knowledge produced, the presumption of narration as central for “history” in general is not true. Of course, in stating a problem the historical researcher has to present a background which may have important narrative parts, but the discussion of and solution of the problem are not narrative (see further section 4, below), even if they are summed up in a conclusion by relating them to a pre-existing narrative and clarifying the corrections, which the new knowledge implies in the narrative. Likewise, the astronomer states not only the new information provided by his telescope, but how this information fits in or changes the earlier conception of certain space phenomena.

A third analytical point is the connection between single observations and the written text given as “new knowledge”. This connection is created in each single case through a bridge of concepts. When the problem is formulated as related to a

theory, the theory also furnishes the main conceptual framework. When the problem has no direct connection to a theory, which is not seldom the case in historical works dealing with individual human actors, the main instrument is to use a quasi-psychological interpretation of the situation in question. Many theorists of history insist that such “understanding” is a more general instrument for historians, but this type of understanding is hard to grasp in precise formulations.<sup>9</sup>

The analytical distinctions made in this section are based on a rather extensive reading of books and articles. In short, philosophers of history as they come to the fore in book-reviews and articles in the most current (American/British) journals in the field<sup>10</sup> do not give a lead to any other bridge between “historical facts” and interpretations than empathy with an author who is in most cases dead and must be the object of another historical investigation for any interpretations of his psychology. My knowledge of theoretical journals in other countries is sparse and mostly confined to *Historia da Historiografia* (Brazil) and *Storia della Storiografia* (Italy), both partly with articles in English. These two journals concentrate on the history of historiography rather than its theory, but they have articles of both these kinds. It must be stressed that many general historical journals also publish articles on the theory of history/historiography. Leading journals in big countries do this rather regularly. However, the content of such articles is much the same as in the journals specialised in the field of philosophy of history.

As far as my knowledge goes neither the American/British, nor the other journals have ever discussed the distinction between history as presentation of past occurrences and history as presentation of research products creating new knowledge.

<sup>8</sup> White 1987. Hayden White is one example, but by no means the first. Theorists of history have varied the theme of historiography as a narrative discipline since the 1960s (Arthur Danto). See further Cernín 2020, 34 pp here esp. 9-12. On Cernín’s important article, see below, section 3.

<sup>9</sup> I will come back to understanding in the next section, when I discuss Ahlskog 2021.

<sup>10</sup> In the first hand I refer to *History and Theory*, *The Journal of Philosophy of History*, and *Rethinking History*.

### III. EFFORTS TO LINK THEORY OF HISTORY TO CURRENT HISTORICAL RESEARCH

In this section, two articles and a book will be compared. Their authors have a similarity in their approach to the subject matter of historiography namely, they stress that this subject needs to be treated with a consideration of what message historians convey not only in their texts but through inferences from their material. The three texts are not selected as the result of a careful study of many texts on historiography, but rather as efforts that I have found in recent philosophy of history to link theory of history with current historical research.

The three texts are written by Mariana Imaz-Scheinbaum, Jonas Ahlskog, and David Cernín, all of them tackling the problem of the writing of history and how it ought to be understood. They do not intend to prescribe how it ought to be done, though a historian reading the articles will easily find some implied objectives in their sorting out different theoretical approaches. I will treat their articles in the enumerated order.

Mariana Imaz-Scheinbaum (University of Mexico, Mexico City, and University of California, Santa Cruz) has written the article “Beyond truth: an epistemic normativity for historiography”.<sup>11</sup> The central point in the development of her argument is contained in the third and fourth sections of her article<sup>12</sup> treating two magistral works on “the discovery of America”, S. E. Morison’s *The European Discovery of America: The Southern Voyages*, from 1974, and E. O’Gorman’s *The Invention of America*, from 1958. Imaz-Scheinbaum compares the books by the two authors in their relation to the concept of discovery. According to her, Morison takes the idea of discovery for granted and has collected sources that concern Columbus’ voyage starting in 1492 in order to tell the story of a great discoverer, while O’Gorman, according to her, from the very beginning has another approach focussing on the concept of discovery and its function in this

context. She even quotes O’Gorman saying the following: “Our problem ... is to question if the facts that have been understood until now as the discovery of America, should be kept understood in such a way” (260).

As a historian, I would say, that Morison’s approach to his topic is “just” to produce a coherent narrative of Columbus’ intentions and pattern of actions using all available material on exactly these aspects. No problem, no search for “new knowledge”. O’Gorman is justly praised by Imaz-Scheinbaum, though she does not emphasize the word “problem” from his text. He wants to solve a problem and through this he wants to contribute to new historical knowledge. However, his problem is vast and this invites Imaz-Scheinbaum to an interpretation turning into “understanding”.

In spite of the fact that two historical works are given a central place in Imaz-Scheinbaum’s article, the impression is that they have been chosen to illustrate a philosophical thesis rather than to analyse what historians do. The philosophical thesis is that history in any form other than pure enumeration of factual statements, requires a specific sort of understanding or reorganisation of archival findings in conceptual forms. In this way she wants to attach to the tradition of understanding in a form, which she calls reorganisation (after Catherine Elgin) and which she praises O’Gorman for, while she blames Morison for not doing this. “It is important to remark that after reading *The Invention of America* one does not learn something new about the sources or about Columbus, rather we learn to see what we already knew in a new and original way.” (262)

Imaz-Scheinbaum’s analysis ends up in a conclusion where she maintains: “My epistemic account takes the idea of understanding and reorganization as essential concepts that enable us to evaluate contending historical views. It aims at recognizing new and insightful ways that historical material can be reorganized to improve our understanding.” (263) It would be hard to find any historical researcher, who would oppose such a thesis. On the contrary, very many

<sup>11</sup> Beyond truth: an epistemic normativity for historiography”, in *Rethinking History* 2022, Vol. 26, No. 2, 250–266.

<sup>12</sup> Imaz-Scheinbaum 2022, 258-263.

historians have had exactly this purpose, that is, to reconceptualise findings.

Jonas Ahlskog (University of Åbo Akademi, Turku, Finland) has written the book *The Primacy of Method in Historical Research*.<sup>13</sup> The title of Ahlskog's book promises something that many historians would like to see: a philosophically based discussion of the methods used in historical research. It is true that Ahlskog's discussion is much more oriented to methods than Imaz-Scheinbaum's, but partly the philosophers discussed are the same. He states his objective in the following way: "In contrast with the trend of focusing on temporality, retrospectivity and narration, the present book claims that all of our relations to the past in historical research are most fundamentally mediated by the logical commitments of history as method, not by concepts of time and literary form... [P] erhaps most controversially, the book claims that contemporary philosophy of history still has much to learn from classical work in the field by R. G. Collingwood, Michael Oakeshott and Peter Winch." (12) In this way the author emphasizes a distance to the postmodern school, but at the same time claims a closeness to its predecessors in the empathetic school of understanding. The front against the postmodernists in historical theory (Hayden White and Frank Ankersmit and others) combined with a proximity to empathetic philosophy of history forms also a link between Ahlskog's reorientation of the theory of history and that of Imaz-Scheinbaum.

The first two chapters after the introduction describe the development of important branches of philosophy of history from the middle of the twentieth century to its end. In the first of these chapters Ahlskog presents the philosophy of historiography of Karl Popper and Carl G. Hempel, and justly observes their opposite positions to the work of historians, where Popper discards the possibility of any scientific history, claiming that it is always fettered by the ideological standpoints of the historian. At the

<sup>13</sup> *The Primacy of Method in Historical Research. Philosophy of History and the Perspective of Meaning*. New York & London: Routledge, 2021.

same time Hempel tries to show an affinity between scientific explanations and those of historians, although he sees the latter as only explanatory sketches. It is worth noticing that Ahlskog does not give any corresponding presentation of the dominant philosophers on history on the contemporary European Continent, Wilhelm Dilthey, Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer, whose thinking on understanding went in quite other directions.

The second of the preliminary chapters is devoted to the postmodern theories of history. The background is found in Arthur Danto's dictum: "It is just because we do not have direct access to the past that we have history to begin with: history owes its *existence* to this fact: it makes history possible rather than impossible." (Danto 1965/68, 95). Therefore, all historical writing can be the object of sceptical conclusions about historical knowledge. "Where there are no synthesizing narratives there is no historical knowledge," as Ahlskog summarises this view.

The idea of narration is the main topic of Ahlskog's third chapter. Narration as a necessary form for history-writing was taken up by Hayden White in his *Metahistory* (1973) and by Frank Ankersmit, who also shared Danto's explicit view that the difficulty of not being able to directly observe their objects of study is confined to historians. According to White, representation was the mode of historiography, and it was closer to art than to science. Ahlskog also points out that these narrativists made a difference between individual statements (made on singular actions or events) and "a higher level at which raw data are integrated into a synthetic whole (narrative)", in Ahlskog's words. Ahlskog also observes that Ankersmit has said that it is easy to say true things on individual data in the past but that such true statements do not constitute history (that is, history defined as narration).

Later narrativists have made temporality more complicated, Ahlskog contends. Their main idea is that historical narratives are structured not by past events themselves but rather by the story or narrative form of literary fiction and by the culturally specific concepts that historians use for

representing past events. As a consequence, later narrativists have not made “individual narrative sentences” the object of analysis but rather whole monographs, in Ahlskog’s analysis.

Leaving narration, the next chapter (4) of Ahlskog’s book focusses on Michael Oakeshott’s separation between what he called the practical, everyday life use of the past and the historical, professional use of the past. Ahlskog comments Hayden White’s use of Oakeshott’s distinction: “If professional history is a disinterested study of the past for its own sake, then this will, according to White, make history irrelevant for our existential and ethical concerns.” (78) A page later he says: “In conclusion, I contend that Oakeshott’s theory does provide a useful conceptual distinction between two different attitudes toward the past. Nevertheless, the distinction is misleading to the extent that it suggests an absolute separation between practical and historical engagements with the past.” (79) It will seem that he takes up a compromising position between the two theorists of history without paying any attention to what the historical professionals do or think about their practice.

Further in his analysis, Ahlskog states that Oakeshott has emphasised (in later works) that there are both practical and historical uses of the past. He called them for modes of understanding, that is, different only in their application to certain data, but both constructions in the mind of the user. Ahlskog’s opinion is that White, when he refers to Oakeshott, has totally misunderstood the distinction, when he uses it to discredit historical professionals (81-83). “Hence, Oakeshott would definitely not think, as White does, that one could criticize history for not being relevant to practice.”(83)

Finally, in an interesting analysis over several pages that cannot be adequately related here, Ahlskog examines a multitude of concepts relating to historiography (generally called “history” in his text, probably because the everyday references to the past, called practice, are included in its denotation). His analysis in this connection constitutes a philosophical discourse, and its relevance for the practice of historical

professionals in their research work is not discussed or shown, even if it is obviously taken for granted.

David Cernín, (University of Ostrava, Czech Republic), has written the article “Historical Methodology and Critical Thinking as Synergised Concepts”<sup>14</sup>, which gives still another but, in some respects similar approach to a philosophical analysis that claims to analyse historical methodology.<sup>15</sup> His own presentation of the aim of the article includes the following statements: “The post-truth era is plagued by numerous pseudoscientific theories and narratives that took root in various disciplines. History and historical knowledge belong to the enterprises abused today. ... This paper aims to sketch a solution to this threatening situation with the help of contemporary philosophy of historiography. It is argued that it is necessary to move from historical narratives to the process of historical inquiry itself.” (p. 1, Abstract) In the actual article: “This paper focuses on the case of history as a specific scientific discipline as well as a frequently abused source for legitimatization of political narratives. ... [P] hilosophers have been aware of an uneasy relationship between historical theories or narratives and ideological colouring.” (2-3) Therefore, the author follows the philosophical discussion from Hempel and Popper to the narrativists and further to the critical reaction to the narrativists approach, he says. (3)

In the main part of the article Cernín starts out with stating: “There are many unresolved issues in historical discourse that are deeply under-determined by present evidence and contending theories or explanations are bound to exist. This pluralism endemic to history can be seen both as a fatal flaw of the field as well as the condition necessitated by its subject matter.” (4) However, he also says that it would be an exaggeration to contend that historians usually are of different meanings about their topics. One part of his

<sup>14</sup> Cernin 2020.

<sup>15</sup> The three contributions have been presented here in inverted order of publication, so Cernín has not had the opportunity to read Ahlskog’s book before his own article was published, which should be stressed as there are some similarities between these two contributions.

references for such judgments on the historical discipline (or possibly all historical works without specific reference to the academic discipline) consists of earlier historians and theoreticians of historiography such as, Aviezer Tucker and Jouni-Matti Kuukkanen,(4) but the bulk is a summary of two discussions in the Czech society, one during the national revival in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and the other in post-Soviet times.(5-6) Both these examples refer to a very varied sort of historical and ideological narratives and descriptions of Czech experiences plus conclusions drawn from them. Academics seem to have played a role, but it is unclear exactly what their role was and to which extent research was involved.

The rest of Cernín's article is a discussion of the development of the theory of history in three different phases: by Popper and Hempel as a realist and empiricist approach; by Danto White and Ankersmit as "narrativism" of different structures, where White represents the ultimate step that "historical narratives are created deliberately by historians" and not found in their material (9-10); and finally, a return to inquiry, where the main role is played by Leon J. Goldstein in Cernín's presentation. Goldstein made a distinction between the historians' books and descriptions, which he called "the superstructure of history, and the process of historical inquiry itself — the infrastructure of history". "This infrastructure entails the essential features of the discipline of history, namely the intellectual activity of historians in which the historical past is produced, interaction with evidence, source criticism, and uncovering of historical knowledge." (14) This important aspect was neglected by both narrativists [= White, Ankersmit] and neopositivists [= Hempel and Popper], Cernín says, when they focussed on the content and the writing. Goldstein was quite aware that much historical research led to narrative presentations, but his interest was directed mainly to the infrastructure. (15-16)

Goldstein insisted on devoting himself to the epistemological issues, and he meant that historians, while dealing with present evidence were construing the historical past, as opposed to

the real past, for which he showed little interest. Thus, he was a constructionist but not a relativist in Cernín's interpretation. Yet, it is important, as Cernín also points out, that even if identical data can be used as evidence for different theories by historians of different traditions or schools, they never deny intersubjectivity and use discussions for clarification of debatable research points. Through a discussion of contemporary history and its methods and materials Cernín tries to find out a sort of compromise between Goldstein's approach and the narrativists.

Although I completely agree that Goldstein very much deserves the attention that Cernín draws to his analysis of a difference between the superstructure and the infrastructure of history writing, I must insist that Goldstein's analysis, with its conceptual distinction between real past and historical past, is still another one of several such efforts from theorists of history to examine "history" in the sense of presentations of the past.

To conclude this section of the present article the result is a great similarity between the three presentations by Imaz-Scheinbaum, Ahlskog, and Cernín. They argue that they want to explore the methods and arguments of historians, but the result is disappointing, as they rarely discuss any research text, and when they do (Imaz-Scheinbaum does) it is hardly the details of any historian's argument (Goldstein's infrastructure) that is followed, but rather the narrative encapsulation of the historical results.

A striking common trait for the three articles by Cernín, Imaz-Scheinbaum and Ahlskog is that all three have a perspective that goes out from philosophy of history. In spite of what they say about the importance of the practice of historians, their analyses of historical practice are conceptually determined by earlier philosophical solutions. Thus, they do not analyse the details of the professional practice of historians and how this practice relates to their presentations of a problem of history. The three authors only rarely approach the conceptualisation of a specific historical problem versus actual evidence that is brought up by a historian. Imaz-Scheinbaum touches this kind of question but drops it,

probably as a consequence of her selection of a very complex historical problem as the basis of her analysis. Nor does any of the three authors scrutinise the variety of problems that historians raise and what this variation means for the problem-solving, even though Cernín mentions a number of different types of topics in historical studies. They write about what historians (in general) do, but such generalisations say little of each individual case of problem-solving, if these are as different as historical problems usually are. Thus, little lead for the analysis of what professional historians do and how they reason is given by the three analysed articles.

#### IV. MAO'S POLITICAL STRATEGY AS A PROBLEM: FROM SCHRAM TO KNIGHT

The fourth section of the present article is devoted to an effort to exemplify what an analysis of historical research might mean. Only one example is given, a discussion about the complex situation of China and of the Chinese Communist party and its leader before, during and after the Chinese revolution. Only two of many researchers are presented, and their standpoints to problems and new knowledge are given an analysis.

##### *The authors*

Stuart R. Schram (1924-2012) and Nick Knight (1947- ) were professors, and for a period the former was the supervisor of the second during his studies. Schram started as a graduate student of physical science. He was recruited to the group preparing the nuclear bombs and left the U.S. after the war. He began studying political science in the U.S., wrote a dissertation at the SciencePo in Paris, and published a book on *Protestants and Politics in France* (Paris, 1954) before he took up studies on Chinese history and the Chinese language. In 1967 he moved to London, where he became a professor at the School of Oriental and Asian Studies.<sup>16</sup>

About Nick Knight I have found less data. He is Australian, born in 1947 and graduated from an Australian university before he studied for Schram at SOAS in London. From 1981 to 2008,

<sup>16</sup> *Wikipedia*, Engl.ed., article Stuart R. Schram (accessed 14 Oct., 2024)

he was professor of Asian Studies at Griffith University, Brisbane, Australia.<sup>17</sup>

I will confine my analysis here to one book of each of the authors, For Schram I have selected *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (1963, rev. ed. 1969). For Knight I have taken his *Rethinking Mao. Explorations in Mao Zedong's Thought* (2007).

##### *Stuart R. Schram*

Schram became a renowned researcher on Mao Zedong in 1966 with a biography about Mao. In *The Political Thought of Mao Tse-tung* (1963/69) his studies got a more distinct direction. In the first sentences of the introduction to the latter book lies a research program. "Ideas grow out of history; they also shape history. ... We may ... treat a man's thought as a key to understanding his acts and intentions" (Schram 1969, 15). Schram fulfils his program through the whole book by detailed analyses of the content of every published article by Mao that he found and translated. The first article from 1917 is an indication of how Schram worked. He states that, beside nationalism and a "martial spirit", a third theme of Mao's article is "the importance of conscious action and individual initiative". This third theme contradicts the emphasis on organisation which Mao also stressed. "For half a century, Mao has been torn by the conflict between an ideal of spontaneity and the will to impose the discipline necessary for effective action" (23).

Schram continues with a meticulous examination of every article he could find that Mao has written. His comments are often very striking, showing what he has got from one source or another, what is typical Leninism and what is incompatible with it. His archivistic work is impressive and also his linguistic comments and his analysis from a political science perspective. He has published both Chinese original texts and translations of them, later collected in a series of books under the title of *Mao's Road to Power: Revolutionary Writings 1912-1949* (7 vols. published by him 1992-2005, additional 3 volumes were published after his death). This work has served as a basis

<sup>17</sup> *Wikipedia*, Engl. ed., article (professor) Nick Knight (accessed 14 Oct., 2024)

for many other researchers and made him regarded as an outstanding scholar. Yet, one may ask if the detailed work of Schram could result in something that was indeed Mao's thinking. Nick Knight thinks that the answer is no. His book is called *Rethinking Mao. Explorations in Mao Zedong's Thought* (2007).

Mao Zedong<sup>18</sup> (1893-1976) was born in an upstart landowner's family, had a materially privileged youth, and got a good education. His early confrontations with his father made him seek other people who might serve as models for him, both in Chinese history and among politicians of nationalist and social radical ideas. He did not swallow Marxism when he first met it. These short sentences may serve as a condensed version of Mao's background. He was also a prolific writer of articles in different journals and conference reports, almost always with a political aim in mind. Strategic considerations formed a dominant theme in many of these articles. It is easy to understand that both Schram and Knight could be absorbed of the objective to clarify what was in fact the thinking behind Mao's strategy – letting alone all condemnation of harsh methods and evil intentions that many other Western researchers of the same time (1960s and 70s) saw as fundamental characteristics of Mao as a politician.

What, then, did Mao really want to carry through and which were the means that he enjoined his followers to use? This can be said to be the problem raised by Schram. He does his job as a historian foremost as a close reader of different texts by Mao, but he does not forget to put these texts into their varying contexts of broad audiences in mass meetings and journalism or a limited audience in political committees or organs.

To solve this problem Schram uses a very rare method, nearest equivalent to archaeologists commenting on stone inscriptions from the Antiquity After a narrative introduction extending over one-third of the book, follow a few entire

texts and many extracts from Mao's speeches and articles sometimes equipped with brief comments by Schram. Here, Schram goes into the texts and comments (in footnotes) on minor points as well as important ones, closely following the original wording and explicating what it may mean. More audacious conjectures of connections between Mao's words and deeds one may find in the 150 pages of introduction. However, in that context they serve also as guidance for the semantics that is carried through in the choice from of Mao's writings that fills the remaining 300 pages of the book. This practice of dividing Mao's texts from interpretations of his thoughts or his strategy for actions is also, according to my impression, carried through in his main work in seven volumes mentioned above, though I have not done any meticulous study of this matter.

Letting Mao present his thoughts and plans in his own words seems to be Schram's main and real method. However admirable his interpretations of Mao's writings may be, the substantial research news is what he presents as a lead for understanding in the introduction.

#### *Nick Knight*

Knight's book *Rethinking Mao* (2007) is in many ways both like and unlike Schram's. It is more traditional in its way to organise the results of his research in chapters (initially often journal articles). There he discusses and draws conclusions about Mao's thoughts. The endnotes, which directly refer to texts by Mao or to texts by other researchers in a strict and conventional way, are more like an appendix to each chapter. However, Knight seldom quotes Mao directly, while Schram's book (and his big work in seven volumes on *Mao's Road to Power*) is full of texts and excerpts (both in Chinese and English) that quote what Mao has said or written. This means that Knight wants to convince the reader through his own formulations, which may be checked in his references, while Schram is eager to let the reader judge if the author's conclusions are correct by confronting readers with the material that he thinks provides evidence for his standpoint.

<sup>18</sup> As most modern researchers on China, I use the pinyin transliteration of Chinese names. Mao was born long before the pinyin system had become standard, and his personal name Zedong appears in several forms in the literature.



In two chapters Knight discusses the methods used by himself, Schram, and other researchers. He is critical to “the various ways, in which the field of Mao studies has constructed its object.” Further, he says that as a first characteristic stands out

“... (an often implicit) endorsement and application of an empiricist epistemology that takes for granted that knowledge of Mao derives through experiencing the ‘reality’ incorporated in texts, whether those by Mao, by others about Mao, or which purport to capture the ‘political contexts’ in which the Mao texts were written. Experience, undiluted by the values and theoretical perspectives of the Mao scholar, is the privileged medium through which the ‘truth’ is achieved. As I have argued, such an assumption is without logical foundation. The second, and related to this acceptance of empiricism, is a disinclination to explore the theoretical and methodological issues that arise in the project to study Mao. The result has been a field characterized by a poverty of theory.” (Knight 2007, 40)

Exactly what sort of theory historians of Mao ought to incorporate in their work is not specified by Knight. His emphasis on empiricist epistemology, as the primary object of his criticism, makes the reader think that he has found Schram’s approach too credulous, but a closer examination makes this improbable. On one point he is explicit. He discards Schram’s interpretation of a Chinese traditional ideology as playing an important role in Mao’s thinking.<sup>19</sup> In other places, it seems rather to be Schram’s presentation of an overview first and then a detailed approach to the sources that Knight opposes. In the same way as Schram, Knight tries to analyse Mao’s thinking about specific themes, but Knight explicitly discusses the sources in relation to different possibilities brought forward by other researchers. He frequently stresses that his interpretations are provisional. The sources used by Knight are those brought to light by

Schram, combined with newer archival findings by other researchers.

As quoted above, Knight complains of a lack of theory in the research on Mao. It is easy to state that his own contributions also seem to lack (explicit) theoretical background. It is even difficult to understand if he is talking about epistemological theory or social theory in the few paragraphs that he devotes to this theme. He is more explicit in discarding psychoanalytic interpretations.<sup>20</sup> However, it seems reasonable to combine what he says about theory with his emphasis on the “provisional” nature and not “truth” of the possible results, which appears to lead to a relativism. Knight cites with assent some of the leftist constructivists and relativists – Louis Althusser, Étienne Balibar, Umberto Eco, Michel Foucault, Antonio Gramsci, Barry Hindess, Paul Q. Hirst, Karl Löwith (i.e., several Frenchmen and Italians, one German emigrant to the USA, but no Germans of the Frankfurt school).<sup>21</sup> However, Knight never (in the examined book) indicates what he has found as applicable theories regarding Mao’s world of ideas.

## V. RESULTS

By a short comparison of two research texts (these are books, but they are comprehensive analyses of one specific set of research problems) I have tried to show how historical researchers may argue for new results and about problems. The latter is important. The two books comprise investigations of several problems, and these are treated separately by both authors. However, they treat them a bit differently. Schram wants to give readers a full account of all that might matter to solve the problem: What was Mao’s ideology? Knight is concerned more about giving a full argument of all steps in a reasoning of what is important in the conjecture of Mao’s ideology. For, as he says, there is no final truth about another person’s thoughts. I would add, that Schram’s approach is an earlier reverse of

<sup>20</sup> Knight 2007, 28-29, and especially, note 41.

<sup>21</sup> References to the mentioned authors occur in different places, and Knight never writes about them collectively. Knight 2007, for instance, see 37-38, quoting Michel Foucault, and 23, quoting Umberto Eco.

<sup>19</sup> Knight 2007, 30-31.

Knight's, but leads to the same result. Schram leaves it to the reader to decide if the material presented is convincing, when the introduction (containing Schram's conjecture) and the main text with full quotes are compared. Knight wants to show to what degree a convincing result may be attained through a "conventional" historical research text.

As I have done in an earlier book, I want to plead for what Peter Lipton calls Inference to the Best Explanation (IBE). Lipton discusses this as the heuristic instrument for scientists. I will argue that it is also the best instrument for historians to bridge the gap between observable facts and conjectures.<sup>22</sup> Texts by Mao are observable facts, but they do not tell what Mao thought or aimed. With several texts and with analyses of political and military situations, it may be possible to create a bridge over the gap between words and action strategy.

The same holds for all sorts of historical research problems. However, in many cases the historian (and even more the archaeologist) knows from the very beginning of research that vital material is missing because much has been destroyed after the events took place or when the state of things existed that the historian wants to investigate. In certain cases, some of this material may turn up through research or by chance. This adds a specific caution to all claims to historical truth, but this caution is of a practical nature and not an epistemological drawback for history.

To sum up: I want to plead that there is no vast distance between Schram's and Knight's standpoints. Both are experienced researchers, and they know the difficulties of the profession, and they know that an inference to the best explanation is what they look for, though they don't use this terminology. They use different ways, and Knight has the advantage to write later and with new material, unknown to Schram, but both use refined reasoning to make their point. Narration is not essential for their research though they have to give some narrative scaffolding for their findings.

<sup>22</sup> Torstendahl 2015, 27-33, 222. The term and the idea I have borrowed from the philosopher Peter Lipton (Lipton 2004).

## VI. CONCLUSION

The present article discusses two different main points. One is the often-stated difference between history writing and science, another is the claim by several theorists of history that they have found a fundamental difference between historical research and research made in the natural sciences. Formulated in this way, the thesis brought out here is that both points are stated without good reason and based in prejudices rather than in empirical evidence.

My first case against current philosophy (or theory) of history is that it neglects the important difference between summaries or overviews and research work. This is equally important in the discipline of history as it is in science. Research work does not consist of telling stories about what has happened, neither in astronomy nor in history. Nor do research results appear by telling details of oscillator findings or how to build complex instruments, nor in lexicographic readings of old manuscripts or findings of unexpected tax registers from the fifteenth century. Research amounts to 1) setting a problem to solve and 2) discussing the material that may be used for this end 3) in order to show that the problem has been solved. Failures to solve problems are seldom explicitly accounted for.

My second case against current philosophy (or theory) of history is that even those philosophers who state that it is important to scrutinise what historians actually do, fail to make the distinction between overview and research and fail to organise their argument according to empirical historical research about specific problems. This significant distinction should be made, even if historical professionals sometimes intertwine new research results in an overview. A statement of the problem is seldom lacking, and then the result may be scrutinised as to its validity. The philosophers I looked closer at are relatively young, and they seem to link their texts rather to an earlier generation than to those immediately preceding them. Thus, they connect rather to a philosophy of empathy as the main instrument for historians than to postmodern aestheticism, but the result is in both cases that there is a gulf

between so-called “history” (not called “historical research”) and science.

Finally, I analyse – through one example of two authors – a discussion between two historians (one of which had started his academic career as a physicist) about Mao’s thinking and his strategy. What I have wanted to show is that the differences between the two researchers are not entrenched in the chronology or any story-telling, but based on methods to vindicate that Mao’s partly inconsistent statements are correctly understood and, if so, rightly put into connection with his actions to make a logically consistent whole, sometimes presupposing some changes in the actor’s mind. The point is that no specific empathy is needed, though I should add, that I have grave doubts that a psychological theory is sharp enough instrument, to help the historian to arrive to the best explanation of the material in such situations.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> I have argued for this doubt in Torstendahl 2015a, 203-204.

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# The Culturalization of the Linguistic Sign: Foundation of the Transmission of Culture through Language

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## ABSTRACT

This research explores the character of the linguistic sign that predisposes the language to spread culture. Every language conveys a culture of which it is both producer and product (Porcher, 1995). Language is therefore a carrier of culture. Starting from this evidence, a logical problem arises: for language, as a system of signs, to effectively be the vehicle of culture, the signs that compose it must have a character that predisposes them to this function. However, according to one of the foundations of modern linguistics, the linguistic sign is arbitrary (Saussure, 1916). In addition, none of its other known characters is linked to its capacity to convey culture. It is therefore possible to define a new character to express this general principle. This character, relating to the tendency of the linguistic sign to make the language cultural, will be called "culturalization of the linguistic sign". This character could be dichotomous and also applicable to non-linguistic signs. To conduct this research, we used non-probability sampling by purposive choice and collected data using two interview guides from 35 resource persons.

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# The Culturalization of the Linguistic Sign: Foundation of the Transmission of Culture through Language

La Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique : Fondement de la Transmission de la Culture par la Langue

Dr. Adjibodou Ismaël Adédiran

## ABSTRACT

*This research explores the character of the linguistic sign that predisposes the language to spread culture. Every language conveys a culture of which it is both producer and product (Porcher, 1995). Language is therefore a carrier of culture. Starting from this evidence, a logical problem arises: for language, as a system of signs, to effectively be the vehicle of culture, the signs that compose it must have a character that predisposes them to this function. However, according to one of the foundations of modern linguistics, the linguistic sign is arbitrary (Saussure, 1916). In addition, none of its other known characters is linked to its capacity to convey culture. It is therefore possible to define a new character to express this general principle. This character, relating to the tendency of the linguistic sign to make the language cultural, will be called "culturalization of the linguistic sign". This character could be dichotomous and also applicable to non-linguistic signs. To conduct this research, we used non-probability sampling by purposive choice and collected data using two interview guides from 35 resource persons. The data, collected mainly in three languages or dialects (french, gùngbè, fɔngbè), enriched by online information and analyzed by the content analysis method according to the "box" procedure (Bardin, 1991), show that the culturalization of the linguistic sign is a general principle applicable to all languages. The study made it possible to conceptualize the "culturalization of the linguistic sign", to describe its dimensions and bases, and to demonstrate*

*that this characteristic predisposes the language to the transmission of culture.*

**Keywords:** language, culture, linguistic sign, culturalization.

**Author:** Université d'Abomey-Calavi (Bénin).

## RÉSUMÉ

*Cette recherche explore le caractère du signe linguistique qui prédispose la langue à diffuser la culture. Toute langue véhicule une culture dont elle est à la fois productrice et produit (Porcher, 1995). La langue est donc porteuse de culture. Partant de cette évidence, un problème logique se pose : pour que la langue, en tant que système de signes, soit effectivement le véhicule de la culture, il faut que les signes qui la composent possèdent un caractère qui les prédispose à cette fonction. Or, selon un des fondements de la linguistique moderne, le signe linguistique est arbitraire (Saussure, 1916). De plus, aucun de ses autres caractères connus n'est lié à sa capacité à véhiculer la culture. Il est donc possible de définir un nouveau caractère pour exprimer ce principe général. Ce caractère, relatif à la tendance du signe linguistique à rendre la langue culturelle, sera nommé «culturalisation du signe linguistique». Ce caractère pourrait être dichotomique et applicable également aux signes non linguistiques. Pour mener cette recherche, nous avons utilisé un échantillonnage non probabiliste par choix raisonné et collecté des données à l'aide de deux guides d'entretien auprès de 35 personnes-ressources. Les données, recueillies principalement dans trois langues ou parlers (français, gùngbè, fɔngbè), enrichies par*

des informations en ligne et analysées par la méthode de l'analyse de contenu selon la procédure par « boîte » (Bardin, 1991), montrent que la culturalisation du signe linguistique est un principe général applicable à toutes les langues. L'étude a permis de conceptualiser la « culturalisation du signe linguistique », de décrire ses dimensions et ses bases, et de démontrer que ce caractère prédispose la langue à la transmission de la culture.

*Mots clés:* langue, culture, signe linguistique, culturalisation.

## I. INTRODUCTION

La motivation et l'arbitraire constituent l'essentiel de l'enjeu d'un débat plus que millénaire. Commencé depuis le débat du *Cratyle*<sup>1</sup> (thèsei vs. phusei), ce débat a longtemps animé la réflexion sur la nature du signe linguistique. La motivation est, selon le Dictionnaire de linguistique de Dubois et al (1973), « l'ensemble des facteurs conscients ou semi conscients qui conduisent un individu ou un groupe à avoir un comportement déterminé dans le domaine linguistique ». En d'autres termes, c'est la relation de nécessité qu'un locuteur met entre un mot et son signifié (contenu) ou entre un mot et un autre signe (Dictionnaire de linguistique, Larousse). L'arbitraire se démarque de la motivation parce qu'il implique, en termes simples, que la forme du mot n'a aucun rapport naturel avec son sens (Martinet, 1960) c'est-à-dire qu'il n'y a aucun lien de nécessité entre le signifiant et le signifié du mot. Pour justifier que les signes ne sont pas arbitraires, les partisans de la motivation ont recours aux formations constructionnelles (cas de mots complexes), iconiques ou mimétiques (correspondance partielle, ressemblance ou similarité entre la forme et ce qu'elle représente). Cependant: i) il existe un nombre limité de phonèmes ou de graphèmes qui servent à la

construction d'une infinité de sens possibles ; ii) on peut employer le même signifiant pour désigner des signifiés différents (cas des homonymes); iii) un même signifiant est nommé par des signifiés différents dans chaque langue ; iv) les onomatopées authentiques (celles du type glou-glou, tic-tac, etc.) sont peu nombreuses et leur choix est déjà en quelque mesure arbitraire, puisqu'elles ne sont que l'imitation approximative et déjà à demi conventionnelle de certains bruits (Saussure, 1916). Voilà autant d'arguments sur lesquels repose l'arbitraire du signe linguistique. Ces arguments ne sont pas unanimement partagés. Ainsi, pour Saffi (2005), l'abstraction caractéristique du langage est plutôt « analogique » et non pas « arbitraire ». Pour Bayachou et al. (2009-2010), il n'y a pas de langue où tout serait arbitraire (immotivé) comme il n'y a pas de langue tout à fait motivée, le lexique est entre la motivation et l'arbitraire. Launay (2003) considère qu'il y a arbitrarité hors système du signe et motivation du signe dans le système et parlent avec force de « dogme de l'arbitraire du signe et ses possibles motivations idéologiques ». Par conséquent, le débat sur la nature du signe, qui paraît clos avec la linguistique moderne, est loin d'être terminé.

En effet, bien que le caractère arbitraire du signe linguistique, l'un des piliers de la linguistique moderne, ait perduré, il est également évident, comme le souligne la littérature scientifique, que la langue, en tant que système de signes codifiés permettant à une communauté de s'exprimer et de communiquer, transmet le patrimoine culturel. Toute langue véhicule avec elle une culture dont elle est à la fois la productrice et le produit (Porcher, 1995). La langue est porteuse de culture et en constitue l'expression verbale. Partant de cette évidence, un problème logique se pose : pour que la langue qui est un système de signes linguistiques véhicule effectivement la culture, il faudrait au préalable que les signes qui constituent ce système possèdent un caractère qui prédispose l'ensemble dont ils ne sont que des éléments constitutifs à cela. Or, le signe linguistique est, selon l'un des fondements de la linguistique moderne, arbitraire. Par ailleurs, aucun des caractères du signe linguistique connus

<sup>1</sup> Au IVe siècle avant J.-C., dans le *Cratyle*, Platon (v. 428-347 av. J.-C.) expose les deux thèses opposées en présence sur la nature des mots. C'est au niveau de ces thèses que se situe l'essentiel de l'enjeu d'un débat qui a longtemps animé la réflexion sur le signe linguistique. Et depuis, les analyses sur la nature du signe linguistique n'ont pas cessé et ont abouti à différentes conceptions.



jusqu'à présent n'est lié à sa capacité à transmettre la culture. Il est donc possible d'établir un caractère du signe linguistique qui pourra servir à exprimer et expliquer ce principe général. Le caractère à définir pourrait émerger lors de la construction du signe linguistique et être également pertinent et applicable au signe non linguistique. En effet, les recherches sur le signe linguistique sont la principale source d'inspiration et d'alimentation des réflexions sur le signe non linguistique. En d'autres termes, le caractère à établir pourrait être, de façon générale, convenable et applicable à tout ce qui est signe au sens sémiologique du terme. Et comme ce caractère est relatif à la capacité du signe linguistique à rendre culturelle la langue, nous le nommerons « culturalisation du signe linguistique ». Ce caractère pourrait être, comme l'habitude semble l'instaurer en linguistique, dichotomique.

En résumé, la transmission de la culture par la langue, malgré ses éléments constitutifs arbitraires (signes linguistiques selon Saussure, 1916), pose un problème logique. Cela conduit à se demander, comme Launay (2003), comment les linguistes peuvent encore trouver matière à discussion sur le signe linguistique et quelle cohérence ils peuvent y chercher, une fois admis son caractère arbitraire. La présente recherche se propose donc d'explorer le caractère du signe linguistique prédisposant la langue à la transmission de la culture (la culturalisation du signe linguistique). Eu égard à ces prémisses, il devient opportun de se poser la question suivante : par quel caractère du signe linguistique la langue parvient-elle à la transmission de la culture ? La réponse à cette préoccupation constitue l'orientation de la présente étude.

### 1.1 Cadre Théorique

L'exploration du caractère du signe linguistique qui prédispose la langue à la transmission de la culture nécessite la définition du concept de signe, la présentation de ses formes, simple et complexe, et un éclairage sur la signification et le sens qui lui sont étroitement liés. Ensuite, des théories sur la culture sont passées en revue et une approche théorique de cette notion est

proposée. Dans une autre section, les limites du cadre théorique sont explicitées. Enfin, la synthèse de la démarche vient clore ce chapitre.

#### 1.1.1 Le Signe Linguistique, Ses Différentes Formes et sa Signification

##### 1.1.1.1 Le Signe Linguistique

Selon Saussure (1916), le signe est une unité complexe constituée de deux éléments : le signifiant et le signifié. Ces deux éléments sont étroitement liés : un signifiant existe parce qu'il correspond à un signifié et vice versa. Pour Hjelmslev (1943), un signe n'est pas simplement une chose qui en remplace une autre. Il s'agit d'une fonction définie par la relation réciproque entre l'expression et le contenu. La fonction, appelée sémiotique, n'apparaît que lorsqu'une règle établit cette relation. L'expression et le contenu sont souvent assimilés respectivement au signifiant et au signifié de Saussure. La relation  $\otimes$  qui s'établit entre eux correspond à ce que Saussure appelle signification et peut être représentée ainsi : ERC.

À première vue donc, la notion de fonction sémiotique ne paraît pas trop différente de celle du signe tel que la formule Saussure (1916). Cependant, la définition que Hjelmslev donne du signe met en lumière le fait que le signe est une entité à deux faces comme le disait Saussure (1916) et accentue la dépendance réciproque de l'expression et du contenu. Mais si Saussure (1916) parlait d'une substance sonore et d'une pensée que le langage organise en formes (signifiant/signifié), il restait relativement évasif sur le statut du signifié. Selon Hjelmslev (1943), le langage structure deux types de continuums distincts : celui de l'expression et celui du contenu. En attribuant une forme à chacun, il les transforme en systèmes structurés. Ainsi, les substances (c'est-à-dire une séquence de sons significatifs et leur référence contextuelle) ne peuvent être produites et reconnues qu'en relation avec une forme. Cela aboutit à une combinaison de quatre classes distinctes:

- La substance de l'expression: c'est la substance communicante, la matière à l'état brut, la matière non fonctionnelle et non

articulée, telle qu'elle apparaît en dehors de toute organisation signifiante; on évoque par exemple les sons concrets ou phonèmes utilisés dans la communication dans le cas du langage verbal;

- La forme de l'expression: c'est la structure ou l'organisation des éléments sonores ou signifiants selon les règles et les conventions (paradigmatiques et syntaxiques) du système; la valeur que prend ou qu'acquiert la matière utilisée quand elle rentre dans le système<sup>2</sup>;
- La substance du contenu: c'est les concepts ou significations spécifiques véhiculés par les sons, le référent en tant que matière universelle dont l'existence est absolue ;
- La forme du contenu: c'est la structure ou l'organisation des concepts ou significations, l'ensemble des valeurs que prend le référent dans un système donné (individu, groupe d'individus, société, milieu, environnement).

Ces classes permettent de comprendre comment le langage transforme des éléments bruts en systèmes structurés et significatifs. La notion de fonction sémiotique a redéfini la présentation du signe, élargissant ainsi la conception saussurienne et permettant une meilleure compréhension du signe, notamment non linguistique. En effet, si selon Morris (1938) tout peut devenir signe à condition d'être interprété comme tel par un interprète, alors tout objet peut être considéré comme une expression dès lors qu'il participe à une fonction sémiotique. La conception hjelmslevienne du signe est donc plus adaptée à cette recherche, qui considère que le signe linguistique peut, dans un processus sémiotique, résulter: i) de la traduction ou du transfert dans une langue des caractéristiques, propriétés fondamentales et traits distinctifs notés par un groupe socio-ethnique chez l'objet nommé; ii) d'une image issue de l'imaginaire collectif, des pratiques sociales, des rituels, des connaissances sur la nature et l'univers, du système de valeurs, des savoir-faire artisanaux, et de l'environnement des locuteurs. En d'autres

<sup>2</sup> Un système (il s'agit ici de système de signes) est un ensemble d'éléments reliés les uns aux autres de telle sorte que la modification de l'existence et de la valeur d'un élément donné affecte l'existence et la valeur de tous les autres éléments.

termes, les caractéristiques, propriétés fondamentales et traits distinctifs d'un objet, ainsi que les représentations du monde extérieur ou d'un système de valeurs, peuvent intervenir dans la production d'un signe linguistique. L'utilisation de ces propriétés et représentations a pour fonction sémiotique de les manipuler et combiner pour faire émerger des significations, et d'évoquer le perceptible, le concret et le connu<sup>3</sup> pour suggérer ou restituer la réalité. Cela permet de créer une image mentale porteuse d'une valeur systémique propre à une culture, transmise à travers le signe linguistique. Les exemples suivants illustrent cette conception du signe, qui s'appuie sur celle de Hjelmslev.

*Exemple 1: àkpán.*

*Signification:* sorte de yaourt végétal et local du Bénin fait à base de maïs ou de sorgho.

*Origine:* àkpán dérive, par phénomène de nominalisation spécifique au gùngbè, de « é kpàn » qui signifie littéralement « cela s'est mélangé / coagulé ». Cette phrase a été prononcée par la Porto-Novienne qui a été à l'origine de la création de ce yaourt végétal et local du Bénin quand elle a raté la cuisson de l'akassa<sup>4</sup> qu'elle préparait en réalité. Ainsi, au lieu d'avoir l'akassa sous sa forme complètement cuite, elle a eu un mélange mi-cuit. Ne voulant pas faire du gaspillage, elle a transformé le produit obtenu en une boisson en y ajoutant du sucre et du lait. Akpán, le yaourt local, si tant apprécié est ainsi créé.

*Exemple 2: chimère.*

*Signification:* rêve, utopie, idée irréaliste, vaine imagination.

*Origine:* la chimère, qui vivait en Lycie, était un animal fabuleux avec un corps de chèvre, une tête de lion et une queue de dragon. Elle crachait des flammes et dévorait sans pitié hommes et troupeaux.

A partir des exemples précédents, l'on constate que la signification de l'objet ou de la chose nommé (matière) émane de ses propriétés, de ses

<sup>3</sup> Il s'agit de quelque chose qui est connu dans une société, un groupe social, une culture et non de quelque chose qui est nécessairement connu par un individu, une personne.

<sup>4</sup> Pâte locale préparée à base de l'amidon de maïs.

caractéristiques auxquelles un groupe socio-ethnique a été sensible, des représentations qu'un groupe socio-ethnique en fait ou d'un fait connu, subtilement évoqué par un groupe socio-ethnique, pour faire naître par différents procédés (métaphore, analogie, addition, associations, etc.) une image mentale porteuse d'une valeur propre à une culture donnée et transmise à travers le signe linguistique correspondant.

L'approche du signe dans la présente étude étant clarifiée et illustrée par des exemples, il est aussi important de faire part des différentes formes de signe qui s'en dégagent et qui, certainement, participent de la complexité de l'unité du signe reconnue par Saussure (1916).

*1.1.1.2 Les Différentes Formes du Signe Linguistique*

Bien que l'utilisation du signe linguistique ne pose généralement pas de difficulté, il est souvent

difficile de trouver une unité ou un élément de la langue qui en constitue le point de départ. En effet, depuis Platon (v. 428-347 av. J.-C), le signe linguistique est couramment confondu avec le mot. Cependant, il est facile de constater que certaines langues possèdent des mots pour des notions ou des objets qui, dans d'autres langues, sont exprimés par plusieurs mots, et vice-versa. Cette situation est courante car il n'existe pas de transcendance idéale permettant de transférer intégralement les idées et la richesse d'une langue à une autre, en raison du non-isomorphisme grammatical, sémantique et stylistique. Cela est particulièrement vrai lorsque les langues en question sont structurellement et sociologiquement éloignées. De plus, lors de la création d'un signe linguistique à partir de la traduction ou du transfert d'une image linguistique issue d'une vision du monde ou de l'imaginaire collectif, il arrive que le concept ou l'idée à traduire soit matérialisé par plusieurs mots fixes, formant ainsi un signe. Les exemples suivants illustrent ces réalités linguistiques.

Français	Gùngbè	Wèmègbè	Signification
Sensitive	Asù tòwè jà bọ àsá dó <sup>5</sup>	Axó' sì bọ àsá dó <sup>6</sup>	Espèce de mimosa dont les feuilles ont la particularité de se rétracter et de se replier les unes contre les autres sous l'effet d'un contact ou d'une stimulation extérieure
Canne à sucre	Lèké	Lèké	Graminée à tige haute dont est extrait un sucre

<sup>5</sup> *Asù tòwè jà bọ àsá dó* Mari / celui de toi / venir / rabattre / entrejambe / Ton mari vient, rabats l'entrejambe

<sup>6</sup> *Axó' sì bọ àsá dó* Reine / rabattre / entrejambe / Reine, rabats l'entrejambe

À partir des nombreux exemples similaires que l'on peut observer d'une langue à une autre, il n'est pas judicieux de réduire le signe linguistique à un seul mot. Le signe linguistique n'a pas de dimension concrète et bien délimitée. Il peut coïncider avec un mot unique, dépasser les limites d'un ou deux mots, voire s'étendre à plusieurs. Cette conception du signe linguistique est mieux comprise à travers le mot composé, la locution ou l'expression, notamment idiomatique. En effet, ces derniers, qui s'étendent sur plusieurs unités lexicales ou morphologiques, portent chacun une signification globale, et non par chacune des unités qui les composent. Ils fonctionnent alors comme des formes globales indivisibles, tout comme un mot unique. C'est pourquoi ils sont parfois utilisés comme entrées ou sous-entrées dans les dictionnaires. Quelle que soit leur dimension, le mot composé, la locution et l'expression idiomatique fonctionnent comme des signes linguistiques, associant un concept, une représentation mentale (signifié) et une image acoustique (signifiant) [Saussure (1916)], ainsi qu'une relation réciproque entre l'expression et le contenu [Hjelmslev (1943)].

En partant du constat que le signe linguistique peut coïncider avec une unité lexicale ou morphologique, mais qu'il peut parfois dépasser ces limites pour s'étendre à plusieurs unités, convenons qu'une unité mono-lexicale ou mono-morphologique porteuse d'une signification est un signe linguistique simple. En revanche, une unité polylexicale ou poly-morphologique porteuse d'une signification est un signe linguistique complexe, exemple des mots composés, des locutions et des expressions, notamment idiomatiques.

Exemples de signe linguistique simple: machiavélique, *lègbà*, narcissisme, *gbàgbá*, gecko, *sùn*, cocorico, *àgasá*, draconien, *vodun*,  
Exemples de signe linguistique complexe: langue maternelle, complexe d'Œdipe, fil d'Ariane, franchir le Rubicon, tuer la poule aux œufs d'or, *axó sí bọ àsá dọ*.

En résumé, la conception du signe dans cette étude s'inscrit dans celle de Hjelmslev, qui associe le référent ou la matière à la valeur acquise dans

un système donné. Les formes simples et complexes du signe linguistique sont définies à partir de cette conception. La relation entre l'expression (signifiant) et le contenu (signifié) chez Hjelmslev correspond à ce que Saussure appelle signification. Saussure définit la signification comme une valeur résultant du fonctionnement des langues en tant que système (Rastier, 1999). Une clarification conceptuelle de la signification, terme plus courant dans le contexte des langues, est donc nécessaire pour rendre l'étude plus accessible. Cette clarification s'étendra également au concept de sens auquel la signification est étroitement liée.

### 1.1.1.3 La Signification du Signe

Il est difficile de trouver un terrain d'entente sur la question de la signification et une recherche sur la définition de sens donnerait probablement des résultats similaires (Vaxelaire, 2008). La relation entre ces deux termes est également problématique (Vaxelaire, 2008); il existe une barrière insurmontable entre eux (Shvejcer, 1988). Malgré la difficulté à trouver une définition qui fait l'unanimité, la signification est généralement désignée comme une forme stable, indépendante des contextes, alors que le sens varie selon les contextes (Vaxelaire, 2008). Fort de cela, Rastier (1999) remontant à Dumarsais (1988) affirme:

Convenons que la signification est une propriété assignée aux signes et le sens une propriété des textes (...). Un signe, du moins quand il est isolé, n'a pas de sens, et un texte n'a pas de signification. La signification résulte en effet d'un processus de décontextualisation. En revanche, le sens suppose une contextualisation maximale aussi bien par la langue (le contexte, c'est tout le texte) que par la situation (qui se définit par une histoire et une culture, au-delà du hic et nunc seul considéré par la pragmatique) (p. 19).

En d'autres termes, le signe a une signification première qui change en fonction du contexte. On peut appeler « signification » le contenu supposé invariant du signe, son contenu mental universel,

et «sens» ses acceptions ou ses usages en contexte. La plupart des théories de la signification, sur lesquelles un certain consensus semble se dégager, se concentrent sur le signe isolé. Cependant, le signe isolé est un artefact (Rastier, 1999), ce qui est particulièrement vrai pour les signes non linguistiques. Étant un artefact, la signification du signe est analysée à travers le sens des messages (textes), car selon Rastier (1999), l'étude des signes et celle des textes se complètent. De plus, le signe n'ayant pas toujours la même acception chez les émetteurs et les récepteurs dans des contextes différents, pour minimiser la perte de message et permettre un échange véritable, il est nécessaire que l'émetteur et le récepteur partagent à peu près le même « vocabulaire » et utilisent un langage commun. En bref, ils doivent avoir un code commun, c'est-à-dire un ensemble de règles permettant d'attribuer une signification aux signes utilisés. D'où la nécessité d'analyser la signification du signe à travers le sens des messages (textes). Cette nécessité découle également du fait que, même si la signification du signe est indépendante du contexte, il est souvent plus facile de l'établir en partant de plusieurs sens.

Connaissant davantage le signe linguistique, ses différentes formes et le rapport entre sa signification et sa valeur, pour mieux comprendre comment le signe linguistique se construit au contact de la culture, il est essentiel de bien cerner d'abord cette notion.

### 1.1.2 La Notion de Culture

La culture est un concept parfois insaisissable, défini de multiples façons. Pour s'en convaincre, Kroeber et Kluckhohn (1952) recensent plus d'une centaine de définitions différentes de ce concept. En 1973, le politologue français Philippe Bénéton a également consacré une thèse de doctorat<sup>7</sup> aux diverses acceptions du mot « culture » selon les disciplines des sciences humaines. Pour éviter les malentendus ou la surcharge sémantique, il est essentiel de préciser

dès le départ le sens particulier que l'on choisit de lui attribuer.

Le concept de « culture » trouve ses racines dans l'anthropologie anglaise, notamment grâce à l'anthropologue Edward Burnet Tylor<sup>8</sup> qui, dès le début de son ouvrage *Primitive culture* paru en 1871, affirme:

La culture ou la civilisation, entendue dans son sens ethnographique étendu, est cet ensemble complexe qui comprend les connaissances, les croyances, l'art, le droit, la morale, les coutumes, et toutes les autres aptitudes et habitudes qu'acquiert l'homme en tant que membre d'une société.

Ainsi définie, la culture ne se limite pas seulement aux éléments immatériels tels que la morale, la religion, le droit et les croyances, mais inclut également des aspects matériels comme les monuments et les collections d'objets, qui véhiculent des significations culturelles. Elle ne se réfère pas uniquement à un ensemble distinct de pratiques sociales, mais englobe tout ce qui est créé et transmis par l'homme en tant que membre de la société.

La définition de la culture proposée par Tylor est souvent citée. Cependant, elle est critiquée pour assimiler les notions de civilisation et de culture, pour être trop descriptive et pour ne pas mettre en évidence tous les aspects que l'on attribue aujourd'hui à la culture. De nombreuses autres définitions de la culture ont été proposées depuis. Kroeber et Kluckhohn (1952) ont compilé, classé et commenté ces définitions. Bien que certaines soient moins satisfaisantes que celle de Tylor, plusieurs ont contribué à mieux cerner la réalité culturelle. Par exemple, les sociologues américains définissent la culture de manière plus restreinte comme ce qui est commun à un groupe d'individus et tout ce qui unit ce groupe. De son côté, la philosophie considère comme culturel

<sup>7</sup> Cette thèse a été remaniée et publiée sous le titre *Histoire de mots : culture et civilisation* par les Presses de la Fondation nationale des sciences politiques en 1975.

<sup>8</sup> Anthropologue britannique, considéré comme un des fondateurs de l'anthropologie sociale et culturelle. Né en 1832 et titulaire d'une chaire d'anthropologie sociale à Oxford.

tout ce qui est différent de la nature,<sup>9</sup> c'est-à-dire ce qui est acquis et non inné. En d'autres termes, les pratiques et représentations concernées ne sont pas innées, mais résultent d'une construction sociale.<sup>10</sup> Ainsi, le culturel est toute construction sociale qui peut être ajoutée à la nature.

S'inspirant de la définition de Tylor (1871) et de plusieurs autres ayant contribué à mieux comprendre la culture, l'UNESCO la définit comme suit:

La culture, dans son sens le plus large, est considérée comme l'ensemble des traits distinctifs, spirituels et matériels, intellectuels et affectifs, qui caractérisent une société ou un groupe social. Elle englobe, outre les arts et les lettres, les modes de vie, les droits fondamentaux de l'être humain, les systèmes de valeurs, les traditions et les croyances.<sup>11</sup>

De manière succincte, une culture englobe un savoir, un savoir-faire et un savoir-être. Elle représente une prise de conscience de la pensée, des relations avec l'environnement et autrui. Plus concrètement, notre culture se manifeste dans nos comportements quotidiens, nos rituels et événements festifs, nos pratiques sociales, nos langues, nos traditions, nos systèmes de valeurs, notre mode de vie, notre interaction avec la nature et l'univers, notre conception des choses, ainsi que les connaissances et le savoir-faire nécessaires à l'artisanat traditionnel. Elle inclut également notre manière de discourir et d'exprimer nos pensées héritée de nos ancêtres et transmise à nos descendants.

La culture constitue donc un système de production et de création de normes, de modèles, de sentiments et de valeurs, de symboles, de connaissances, de traditions, de croyances, de

<sup>9</sup> La nature est tout ce qui existe, c'est-à-dire, tout ce qui entoure l'homme et qui n'est pas de son œuvre. C'est aussi ce qu'une chose ou un être est fondamentalement.

<sup>10</sup> Il s'agit de la nature, la réalité, la vérité, mais avec une signification, une conception, un caractère qu'une société dégage, fait ressortir, démêle, affranchit, enlumine et auxquels elle donne de l'expression.

<sup>11</sup> UNESCO (1982). *Déclaration de Mexico sur les politiques culturelles*. Conférence mondiale sur les politiques culturelles, Mexico City, 26 juillet - 6 août 1982. Paris: UNESCO.

représentations et d'institutions. Ce système permet à un corps social de se construire en se distinguant des autres, et aux individus de se reconnaître, accédant ainsi à une identité collective. Elle est un ensemble, un système de valeurs, de normes et de représentations collectives.

Malgré la recension des écrits et l'indication de l'approche théorique des notions importantes de l'étude (signe linguistique, signification et sens, culture), le cadre théorique semble présenter des limites qu'il est nécessaire de repousser.

### 1.1.3 Limites du Cadre Théorique

Pour répondre à la question de recherche, le concept de signe a été défini, ses formes simples et complexes ont été présentées et un éclairage a été apporté sur sa signification et son sens. Ensuite, des théories sur la culture ont été passées en revue et une approche théorique sur cette notion a été proposée pour servir de base aux discussions dans la recherche. Malgré cette démarche, l'absence apparente de lien entre le signe linguistique et la culture semble constituer une insuffisance majeure du cadre théorique. En effet, cette absence de lien pourrait, si elle était avérée, empêcher de comprendre la transmission de la culture par la langue à travers le signe linguistique. Elle pourrait également empêcher de déterminer précisément à quel courant, école ou théorie se rattache le processus de transfert culturel à travers la langue qu'est la culturalisation du signe linguistique. D'où la nécessité d'établir ce lien.

Pour y parvenir, il est important de rappeler que la langue est le principal véhicule de la culture. La linguistique et la culture sont donc intimement liées: la linguistique étudie le langage et, par extension, la langue – un système de signes linguistiques – qui véhicule la culture humaine. Par ailleurs, les anthropologues et les sociologues définissent généralement la « culture » comme l'ensemble des attitudes et des comportements transmis et acquis dans une société, y compris la langue ; les cultures englobent toute la vie sociale (Dubuisson, 1982). De plus, les liens entre la linguistique et l'anthropologie, qui étudie

l'homme sous les angles physique, social et culturel, sont assez étroits : l'anthropologie étudie l'homme à travers le prisme de la culture, et toute langue véhicule avec elle, selon Porcher (1995), une culture dont elle est à la fois productrice et produit.

La linguistique anthropologique de Foley (1997), qui prend « très au sérieux l'idée des quatre champs de l'anthropologie: anthropologie physique, archéologie, anthropologie culturelle et linguistique » et fournit aux étudiants en linguistique des « ouvertures concrètes », permet à notre cadre théorique de se réclamer sans ambages de la linguistique anthropologique. Il est cependant important de souligner que l'approche de la linguistique anthropologique de cette étude s'inspire essentiellement du culturalisme<sup>12</sup>, courant de l'anthropologie nord-américaine qui considère comme essentiels les phénomènes de contact et d'interpénétration des cultures dans la formation d'une société et de la personnalité des individus qui la composent. Autrement dit, l'approche de cette étude met l'accent sur l'influence des phénomènes culturels sur la société et l'individu. Elle s'inspire précisément du courant du culturalisme porté par des anthropologues comme Mead (1970) qui considèrent que la culture est un moule façonnant les comportements et les représentations des individus et que, pour être compris, les comportements humains doivent être resitués dans le contexte des cultures qui les produisent.

Ainsi, l'étude doit s'insérer dans l'analyse de la situation sociale (Balandier, 1971) où interviennent les phénomènes de contact et d'interpénétration entre la langue et les cultures. Cette analyse passe d'abord par la recherche des données essentielles de l'histoire locale. Il apparaît ainsi clairement que, dans le cadre de cette étude, la compréhension des signes linguistiques culturalisés se fera à partir du contexte social et des normes culturelles dans lesquels les locuteurs de la langue, créateurs et utilisateurs par excellence des signes

<sup>12</sup> L'expression provient des travaux de l'école « Culture et personnalité », représentée par Ruth Benedict, qui l'emploie pour montrer comment l'individu est entièrement façonné par la culture du groupe dont il est issu.

linguistiques, sont insérés au cours du processus par lequel s'accomplissent l'intégration, la sauvegarde et la transmission des modèles culturels à travers ces signes. Cette prise en compte du contexte social et des normes culturelles nécessite de remonter à l'origine de la signification / valeur du signe linguistique.

#### 1.1.4 Synthèse Sur le Cadre Théorique

Les signes sont analysés dans cette recherche en s'appuyant sur l'approche de Hjelmslev, tout en l'élargissant. Cette approche, qui intègre la notion de fonction sémiotique, est particulièrement adaptée car elle considère que les propriétés ou caractéristiques observées chez un objet ou une chose, ainsi que les représentations du monde, peuvent intervenir dans la production d'un signe linguistique par un groupe. Le recours à ces caractéristiques ou représentations a pour fonction sémiotique d'évoquer subtilement le connu ou de créer, par divers procédés (métaphore, analogie, addition, etc.), une image mentale porteuse d'une valeur systémique propre à une culture donnée, transmise à travers le signe linguistique utilisé.

En s'appuyant sur cette approche du signe et sur l'évidence que le signe linguistique peut coïncider avec une unité lexicale ou morphologique, mais qu'il peut parfois s'étendre à plusieurs unités lexicales ou morphologiques, il a été convenu qu'un signe linguistique simple correspond à une unité mono-lexicale ou morphologique porteuse d'une unité significative. En revanche, un signe linguistique complexe est une unité poly-lexicale ou morphologique porteuse d'une unité significative.

Partant de cette approche du signe, du fait que la relation entre l'expression (signifiant) et le contenu (signifié), selon Hjelmslev, coïncide avec ce que Saussure appelle signification et que la définition de Saussure de la signification comme valeur résulte du fonctionnement des langues en tant que système (Rastier, 1999), le cadre théorique a permis d'apporter une clarification conceptuelle sur la signification - terme plus usuel que celui de valeur dans le cas des langues - pour rendre l'étude accessible à un large public. Le

signe isolé étant un artefact (Rastier, 1999), il est plus facile d'analyser sa signification à travers le(s) sens du ou des message(s) (textes), car l'étude des signes et celle des textes se complètent (Rastier, 1999). D'où l'extension de la clarification conceptuelle de la signification à celle du sens.

Une approche théorique sur la culture a été proposée après une recension des travaux de différents auteurs. Combinée à celle du signe linguistique, cette approche théorique de la culture contribuera à montrer qu'il existe un caractère du signe linguistique prédisposant la langue à véhiculer la culture. Elle prépare à une meilleure compréhension de la notion de culturalisation du signe linguistique, tout comme le lien entre la linguistique et l'anthropologie, à l'origine de la linguistique anthropologique, justifie le fondement théorique de cette étude selon lequel la culture est un moule qui façonne les comportements et les représentations des individus. Les signes linguistiques culturalisés doivent être replacés au sein des cultures qui leur ont donné vie pour que leurs significations/valeurs soient mieux appréhendées. D'où la nécessité de remonter à l'origine du signe linguistique culturalisé chaque fois que nécessaire.

En somme, le cadre théorique de la culture aidera à conceptualiser le caractère du signe linguistique prédisposant la langue à véhiculer la culture et à l'analyser. L'approche théorique qui soutient l'étude étant clarifiée, ainsi que la démarche utilisée pour contourner ses limites, il importe maintenant d'aborder la méthodologie.

## II. MÉTHODOLOGIE

La présente section explique tout d'abord le type de recherche. Seront ensuite présentés les participants, puis les instruments et les méthodes de collecte des données seront décrits. Enfin suivra la sous-section sur le traitement des données.

### 2.1 Type de Recherche

Pour atteindre notre objectif de recherche, nous avons adopté une approche qualitative. La collecte des données a été réalisée à l'aide

d'entretiens semi-directifs. Lors de ces entretiens approfondis, nous avons utilisé un enregistreur, le *Genx digital voice recorder (GDVR-901)* de 2 Gb. Le choix de cette méthode d'enquête repose sur le fait qu'en recherche qualitative, on utilise souvent de petits échantillons sélectionnés de manière intentionnelle (Van Der Maren, 1995). L'enregistreur vocal numérique *Genx* permet de capturer les propos des participants tout en conservant la spontanéité de leurs réponses, ce qui est essentiel pour l'analyse. Il réduit également la prise de notes qui complète les enregistrements qui ont servi de base à la transcription du corpus de cette étude.

### 2.2 Participants

Les participants ont été sélectionnés par échantillonnage non probabiliste basé sur un choix raisonné. Cette méthode vise à identifier des personnes-ressources capables de répondre et d'argumenter sur le sujet d'étude, afin de garantir un contenu fiable, riche, profond et de qualité. Les grandes lignes de la recherche, y compris l'objectif de l'entretien, le contenu du guide d'entretien, l'importance de la franchise des réponses pour la fiabilité des résultats, la confidentialité des réponses, ont été présentées à ces personnes-ressources. Celles qui ne souhaitent pas participer ou qui n'avaient aucune connaissance du sujet ont été informées qu'elles pouvaient se désister. Ainsi, sur les 50 personnes contactées, 15 ont choisi de ne pas participer. Les 35 participants restants répondent aux critères de pertinence de la structure de la population étudiée dans cette recherche. Leur âge varie entre 32 et 87 ans et ils exercent diverses professions.

### 2.3 Méthode de Collecte de Données

Dans le cadre de cette étude, deux collectes de données ont été réalisées sur une période de six mois. La première collecte a permis de poser les bases du sujet et de recueillir les connaissances individuelles des interviewés sur les items du guide d'entretien. La seconde collecte a servi à chaque participant rencontré lors de la première collecte à confirmer ou rectifier ses propos précédents, mais surtout à établir, autant que



possible, une convergence entre ses propos et ceux des autres interviewés sur une même unité. Concrètement, lors des entretiens de la deuxième collecte, les propos tenus par chaque interviewé lors de la première collecte et transcrits par nos soins leur sont présentés. Après lecture de ces propos, nous leur demandons de les confirmer ou de les rectifier, de se prononcer par rapport aux dires des autres sur le même élément en argumentant leurs réponses. Cette méthode de collecte permet de s'assurer de la fidélité de la transcription des propos des interviewés, d'approfondir les thèmes évoqués, de rassembler les éléments de convergence et de noter les divergences ou les complémentarités propres à un

même aspect. Elle vise également à faciliter l'interaction entre les participants, qui peuvent rebondir sur les discours des uns et des autres, et à obtenir une vue comparative des interviewés sur chaque thème. De nombreuses ressources en ligne (dictionnaires, documents, magazines, articles, etc.) sont exploitées pour s'assurer de l'exactitude de la synthèse des propos des interviewés et, au besoin, les compléter et les approfondir pour disposer d'une information complète et de qualité. Les deux guides d'entretien, élaborés en fonction des besoins en information et des exigences de l'étude par rapport à son objectif, ont été construits comme suit.

*Tableau i.* Guide du 1<sup>er</sup> entretien

Besoins en informations	Éléments d'entretien
Informations générales	Profession de la personne-ressource : Âge : Autres informations utiles (titre/fonction, responsabilité) : Numéro d'identification de la personne-ressource : Langue d'information : Avez-vous connaissance de ce que la langue véhicule la culture ? L'avez-vous découvert par vous-même ? Sinon, qui vous l'a fait découvrir ou vous en a parlé ? À quelle(s) occasion(s) ? Avez-vous réussi à vous rendre effectivement compte que la culture est véhiculée à travers la langue ? Si oui, de quelle manière ?
Informations spécifiques relatives aux objectifs de l'étude	Donnez-nous des exemples d'éléments de langue à travers lesquels la culture est véhiculée. Donnez la signification de chacun de ces éléments. Donnez l'origine de l'attribution de chaque signification à l'élément de langue y relatif. Précisez la manière par laquelle chaque signification a été associée à l'élément de langue y relatif <sup>13</sup> .

<sup>13</sup> A partir de : la littérature, la religion/des croyances, la mythologie, le monde végétal, le monde animal, les phénomènes naturels, les faits passés/des vécus historiques, les traditions/habitudes, les connaissances/savoirs, les conceptions/visions, les pratiques/usages ou toute autre manière à préciser.

Tableau ii. Guide du 2<sup>e</sup> entretien

Besoins en informations	Éléments d'entretien
Informations générales	<p>Profession de la personne-ressource:                      Âge:                      Autres informations utiles (titre/fonction, responsabilité):                      Numéro d'identification de la personne-ressource:                      Langue d'information :</p> <p>Après la lecture de vos propos transcrits par nous sur la transmission de la culture par la langue, pouvez-vous les confirmer ?                      Sinon, quels sont les propos auxquels vous souhaitez apporter une rectification ?                      Justifiez votre choix de leur apporter une rectification                      Après la lecture des propos d'autres personnes interviewées, transcrits par nous, sur des aspects sur lesquels ont porté également vos interventions de la 1<sup>ère</sup> collecte, avez-vous des observations /commentaires à faire? Si oui, faites-les tout en justifiant vos propos.</p>
Informations spécifiques relatives aux objectifs de l'étude	<p>(Confirmation ou rectification des propos de la personne interviewée sur les informations spécifiques relatives aux objectifs de l'étude au cours du premier entretien.                      Justification de son choix de leur apporter une rectification.                      Observations / commentaires de la personne interviewée après la lecture des propos d'autres personnes interviewées sur des aspects sur lesquels ont porté également ses interventions de la 1<sup>ère</sup> collecte et justification de ses propos)</p>

Les deux guides d'entretien ont d'abord été prétestés auprès de cinq personnes-ressources sélectionnées au hasard. Leurs réactions et observations ont permis d'affiner certains items, améliorant ainsi ces outils de collecte et les rendant plus accessibles. Les guides d'entretien définitifs en français, tels que présentés ci-dessus, sont le résultat de cette procédure. Ils ont également été traduits en *gùngbè* et en *fɔngbè* par des traducteurs expérimentés, afin de garantir la fidélité de la traduction au texte original en français et d'éviter toute ambiguïté pouvant déformer le sens des items pour les personnes-ressources. En effet, toutes les personnes-ressources contactées ne comprennent pas le français ou n'ont pas toujours le niveau de maîtrise requis pour mener l'entretien dans cette

langue. Ainsi, les entretiens se sont déroulés exclusivement en *gùngbè*, en *fɔngbè* ou en français, selon la préférence de chaque participant. Malgré cette précaution, les personnes-ressources pouvaient utiliser une seconde langue si elles le jugeaient nécessaire pour mieux éclairer les informations attendues. Le choix du français, du *gùngbè* et du *fɔngbè* pour cette recherche s'explique principalement par la perspective de la linguistique anthropologique défendue par Foley (1997), selon laquelle la langue doit être étudiée comme un élément culturel et anthropologique. Pour qu'un observateur extérieur comprenne un fait linguistique propre à un groupe culturel, il doit s'immerger dans la culture de cette langue pour en appréhender les représentations cognitives

sous-jacentes. Les cultures de ces trois langues sont celles avec lesquelles nous sommes le plus souvent en immersion, de différentes manières.

Contrairement à d'autres langues, nous pouvons, à travers la genèse de leurs signes linguistiques, comprendre les représentations, attitudes et faits de langue, dont la compréhension nécessite la connaissance des « habitudes », de la culture et de l'histoire des Français, des *Gùnnù* et des *Fònnù*. En resituant chaque signe linguistique au cœur de la culture qui l'a fait naître, nous suivons le modèle du culturalisme de Margaret Mead. Le choix de ces trois langues ou parlers montre également que la culturalisation du signe linguistique est un principe général applicable à toutes les langues. Cela est corroboré par les détours occasionnels vers d'autres langues lorsque les données disponibles permettent une immersion sporadique dans leur culture.

#### 2.4 Méthode D'analyse des Données

Les données recueillies à l'aide des guides d'entretien ont été traitées par une analyse de contenu (Bardin, 1991). Cette analyse a suivi la procédure de la « boîte » (Bardin, 1991), soit une analyse catégorielle. Le système de catégorisation résulte ici d'une classification progressive par convergence des éléments. En d'autres termes, pour construire le corpus analysé, les 35 entretiens enregistrés ont été intégralement retranscrits, incluant tout ce qui a été dit ou fait durant les entretiens (sourires, réflexions, a priori, idées reçues). Chaque entretien a d'abord été analysé séparément. Dans un premier temps, l'analyse thématique de contenu a été horizontale: chaque entretien a été analysé thème par thème pour mieux comprendre l'idée générale de l'interviewé sur chaque thème et situer ses réponses dans le contexte de son vécu personnel. Ensuite, une analyse thématique verticale a été réalisée sur l'ensemble des entretiens pour obtenir une vision comparative des interviewés sur chaque thème. Pour garantir une analyse objective du corpus, les énoncés ou discours ne correspondant pas aux objectifs de l'étude ainsi que les a priori de l'interviewer ont été éliminés. Le corpus a ensuite été découpé en thèmes ou séquences correspondant aux besoins en information de l'étude qualitative. Les items les

plus récurrents ont été déterminés par un comptage des occurrences des notions et des mots cités. Après avoir identifié les unités d'enregistrement, celles qui sont convergentes ont été regroupées et classées en unités de sens. Ce regroupement a permis de dégager les différentes unités thématiques analysées. L'analyse des unités thématiques a permis de déduire, entre autres, les dimensions et les bases de la culturalisation du signe linguistique définies par des caractères communs. La catégorisation a consisté à regrouper les thèmes en catégories selon les axes de la recherche. En somme, la technique d'analyse a consisté en une analyse des données (items) collectées principalement dans trois langues ou parlers (français, *gùngbè*, *fòngbè*) auprès des personnes interviewées et des informations recueillies en ligne pour les consolider. Bien qu'elle présente des limites en matière de généralisation, l'analyse de contenu a permis de décrire le mécanisme et le processus des transferts culturels via le signe linguistique.

### III. RÉSULTATS

L'objectif de cette étude est d'explorer le caractère du signe linguistique qui prédispose la langue à la transmission de la culture. L'examen se concentrera sur la problématique de la culture au cœur du processus de construction de la langue, la conceptualisation de la culturalisation du signe linguistique, ses dimensions, ainsi que le mécanisme par lequel s'opèrent les transferts culturels qui y sont associés.

#### 3.1 La Culture au Cœur du Processus de Construction de la Langue

La langue est le véhicule principal de la culture d'une société (Porcher, 1995). Cette réalité découle du fait que les langues sont façonnées à partir des relations qu'elles entretiennent avec les cultures : elles se construisent essentiellement au contact de la culture d'un groupe social déterminé. Autrement dit, durant le processus dynamique et continu de construction de la langue d'un groupe socio-ethnique, divers procédés (association, rapprochement, similitude, analogie, transposition, allusion, référence, utilisation d'images, d'allégories, etc.) sont

employés pour que l'élaboration des éléments communicatifs (signes) repose sur l'imaginaire collectif, les représentations de la nature et de la vie quotidienne locale, l'histoire, les connaissances, les traditions, les croyances et les systèmes de valeurs de ce groupe social. Ainsi, chaque langue se présente comme un système de signes linguistiques construits essentiellement à partir des éléments constitutifs de la culture d'une société ou d'un groupe social déterminé. Par exemple, la langue haoussa et le grec comportent chacun des signes linguistiques construits à partir des éléments de leurs cultures respectives.

Cette description de la relation intime et même fusionnelle entre la langue et la culture constitue un cadre permettant de mieux comprendre le phénomène par lequel s'opèrent des transferts culturels au cours du processus de construction du signe linguistique, la culturalisation du signe linguistique.

### 3.2 Définition de la Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique

Selon le dictionnaire *Encyclopædia Universalis*<sup>14</sup>, culturaliser signifie rendre culturel ou considérer comme culturel<sup>15</sup>. Autrement dit, culturaliser consiste à apporter ou fournir de la culture à quelqu'un ou à quelque chose. La culturalisation, selon le même dictionnaire, est l'action de culturaliser.

En s'inspirant de ces définitions et en se basant sur la réalité de la construction des langues, qui repose sur des transferts culturels à travers des signes linguistiques conçus à partir de l'imaginaire collectif, des représentations de la nature et de la vie quotidienne locale, de l'histoire, des connaissances, des traditions, des croyances et des systèmes de valeurs d'un groupe social déterminé, la culturalisation du signe linguistique désignera l'action de le rendre culturel. Plus précisément, il s'agit de l'intégration des normes, modèles, systèmes de valeurs, symboles, connaissances, traditions, croyances, conceptions ou représentations qui composent

une culture à un signe linguistique, ainsi que leur sauvegarde et transmission par ce signe.

À travers la culturalisation, une réalité culturelle est donc incorporée, absorbée, figée ou portée par un signe linguistique ; un trait culturel spécifique est fixé ou sauvegardé à travers ce signe ; ou encore, un pan d'une culture est transféré, transmis ou reçu à travers ce signe linguistique.

En tant que partie intégrante de la culture, l'élément ou le trait culturel « incorporé », « absorbé », « figé », « porté », « sauvegardé », « transféré », « transmis » ou « reçu » par ou à travers le signe linguistique peut être une représentation de la vie quotidienne locale, une pratique sociale, religieuse, spirituelle, politique, un comportement, une valeur, une idéologie, une connaissance, un fait divers ou historique, une croyance, un art, la morale, une loi, une coutume, des mœurs, une représentation de la nature comprise, analysée et interprétée à travers un prisme culturel, ainsi que d'autres capacités et habitudes acquises par l'homme en tant que membre d'une société ou d'un groupe social.

De manière succincte, on parlera de culturalisation d'un signe linguistique lorsqu'il est imprégné par les normes, modèles, systèmes de valeurs, symboles, connaissances, traditions, croyances, conceptions ou représentations qui composent une culture, ou lorsqu'il y a survivance et/ou transfert des aspects culturels caractérisant une société ou un groupe social à travers ce signe.

Un signe linguistique est alors culturalisé lorsqu'il fixe, sauvegarde et transmet la culture dont les normes, modèles, systèmes de valeurs, symboles, connaissances, traditions, croyances, conceptions ou représentations ont servi à sa construction. Autrement dit, un signe linguistique culturalisé adopte une culture, en en portant, absorbant, intériorisant, figeant, fixant ou sauvegardant une réalité culturelle, ou en transmettant ou contribuant à recevoir un aspect de cette culture. Par conséquent, remonter à l'arrière-plan culturel ayant servi à l'élaboration d'un signe devient précieux pour mieux en comprendre la signification. D'où l'importance de resituer, à travers l'évocation de leur origine, les signes

<sup>14</sup> Consulté à partir de : <http://www.encyclopaedia-universalis.fr/>.

<sup>15</sup> Consulté à partir de : <https://motsavec.fr/>.

linguistiques au cœur des cultures qui les ont fait naître, afin de mieux les appréhender.

Les trois dimensions précédemment évoquées de la culturalisation du signe linguistique sont approfondies et illustrées par des exemples dans le développement qui suit.

### 3.3 Différentes Dimensions de la Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique

#### 3.3.1 La Culturalisation Comme L'intégration D'une Culture à un Signe Linguistique

##### 3.3.1.1 Description de la Dimension

Par cette dimension de la culturalisation, le signe linguistique intériorise les modèles, normes, systèmes de valeurs, symboles, connaissances, traditions, croyances, conceptions et représentations d'une culture.

##### 3.3.1.2 Illustrations

*Exemple 1:* en rang d'oignons.

*Signification:* rangé sur une seule ligne.

*Origine:* deux explications sont proposées. La première, la plus simple, fait référence à la manière dont les paysans assemblaient les oignons avec des liens de paille, du plus gros au plus petit. La seconde explication provient du baron d'Oignon, grand maître de cérémonie, qui avait l'art de placer les personnalités sur une même ligne et par ordre de taille.

*Exemple 2:* avoir maille à partir.

*Signification:* avoir un différend avec quelqu'un.

*Origine:* la « maille » était, sous les Capétiens, la plus petite monnaie qui valait un demi-denier. Le verbe « partir » signifiait à cette époque « partager ». On comprend aisément ce que pouvait avoir de critique la situation qui consistait à partager un demi-denier avec quelqu'un.

#### 3.3.2 La Culturalisation Comme la Sauvegarde D'une Culture à Travers un Signe Linguistique

##### 3.3.2.1 Description de la Dimension

À travers cette dimension de la culturalisation, le signe linguistique fixe, préserve ou sauvegarde les

normes, modèles, systèmes de valeurs, symboles, connaissances, traditions, croyances, conceptions ou représentations.

##### 3.3.2.2 Illustrations

*Exemple 1:* *lidosùn*.

*Signification:* le mois où l'on plante le petit mil, soit avril.

*Origine:* en raison de la division de l'année basée sur certaines constantes climatiques et végétales, le quatrième mois (*sùn*) de l'année correspond, en milieu *fɔn*, à la période où l'on plantait le petit mil (*li*). D'où son appellation « *lidosùn* », le mois où l'on plante le petit mil.

*Exemple 2:* être sur la sellette / mettre sur la sellette.

*Signification:-* être accusé, être celui dont on parle, dont on examine les torts et les mérites (être sur la sellette);- interroger quelqu'un, le questionner comme un accusé (mettre sur la sellette).

*Origine:* le sens de ces expressions devient clair lorsqu'on sait que la sellette était autrefois un petit tabouret sur lequel on faisait asseoir les accusés pour les interroger.

#### 3.3.3 La Culturalisation Comme la Transmission D'une Culture à Travers un Signe Linguistique

##### 3.3.3.1 Description de la Dimension

À travers cette dimension de la culturalisation, une réalité culturelle ou un trait culturel spécifique, qu'il soit encore d'actualité ou éteint, est communiqué, propagé ou diffusé à travers un signe linguistique. Sinon, cette réalité ou ce trait culturel est accueilli, acquis, admis ou perçu par les sens grâce à un signe linguistique.

##### 3.3.3.2 Illustrations

*Exemple 1:* croque-mort.

*Signification:* employé des pompes funèbres.

*Origine:* autrefois, pour s'assurer que l'on n'enterrait pas quelqu'un vivant, la personne chargée de fermer le cercueil mordait l'orteil du présumé mort. Si ce dernier ne réagissait pas, cela confirmait qu'il était bien décédé et on pouvait

l'enterrer sans crainte qu'il ne se réveille. L'homme qui s'occupait du cercueil a ainsi été surnommé « croque-mort », bien que cette pratique ne soit plus en usage.

*Exemple 2: cākì òkópó.*<sup>16</sup>

*Signification:* mille francs CFA.

*Origine:* à l'époque où il n'y avait pas de billets, les pièces étaient regroupées par lots de 1000 francs CFA et placées dans de petits sacs en kénaf appelés *cākì* en *fṅgbè*. C'est pourquoi, pour dire 1000 francs CFA, on dit *cākì òkópó* en *fṅgbè*. En *gùngbè* on dit *àkpò*<sup>17</sup> *òkópó* qui signifie la même chose. Il en est de même en yoruba où l'on dit *àkpò kàn*<sup>18</sup>. Bien que cette pratique ne soit plus d'actualité, tant que ces langues continueront d'être parlées, les signes linguistiques qui la fixent solidement seront toujours là pour la transmettre d'une génération à l'autre grâce à l'étymologie.

Comme on peut le noter à travers des exemples précédemment utilisés, les trois dimensions de la culturalisation du signe linguistique peuvent être mêlées<sup>19</sup> car elles ne forment que différents aspects de ce phénomène à la fois linguistique et anthropologique dont les sens sont liés, interdépendants et les mécanismes multiples.

### 3.4 Mécanisme de Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique

Après avoir décrit globalement le mécanisme de culturalisation du signe linguistique, l'étude présente diverses bases de réalisation du processus en les analysant à partir des illustrations.

#### 3.4.1 Description du Mécanisme de Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique

En observant l'environnement, en étant en contact avec la nature, en pratiquant, en analysant et en étudiant la religion et les croyances, en s'inspirant de la littérature, du

monde végétal, du monde animal, des phénomènes naturels, des faits historiques, des traditions et de la mythologie, des individus ou des groupes sociaux peuvent identifier et noter des caractéristiques distinctives à partir des réalités, des images, des tableaux et des scènes que ces éléments présentent. Ces caractéristiques, une fois remarquées et notées, permettent de créer des signes linguistiques grâce à divers procédés<sup>20</sup> (analogie, rapprochement, similitude, transposition, utilisation d'images, d'allégories, de métaphores, transfert, extension, allusion, etc.). En d'autres termes, les locuteurs d'une langue donnée puisent les éléments communicatifs (signes) nécessaires pour exprimer leurs pensées et échanger avec les autres à partir des significations élaborées dans leur interaction avec l'environnement/la nature (le monde végétal, le monde animal, les phénomènes naturels), des réalités locales, des conceptions, des connaissances et savoirs endogènes, des images, des tableaux et des scènes inspirés par la littérature, la mythologie, la religion/les croyances, les vécus historiques, les traditions et les usages. Ils codifient ces éléments communicatifs pour faire de la langue un véritable instrument de communication. En fonction de divers facteurs, les individus et les groupes sociaux créent alors des formules culturelles diverses et participent au dynamisme de la construction des langues. Ainsi, les langues se codifient essentiellement au contact de la culture d'un groupe social déterminé. Ce mécanisme est utilisé pour la culturalisation du signe linguistique à partir de différentes bases culturelles.

#### 3.4.2 Les principales Bases de Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique

Les fondements de la culturalisation du signe linguistique sont nombreux et diversifiés. On peut en identifier les plus significatifs.

<sup>16</sup> *Cākì òkópó / cākì / òkópó / / sac / un /.*

<sup>17</sup> Signifie à la fois « sac » et « poche » en *gùngbè*.

<sup>18</sup> *àkpò kàn / àkpò / kàn / sac / un /.*

<sup>19</sup> Dans ce contexte, le même signe linguistique peut clairement servir à intérioriser, préserver et diffuser un aspect d'une culture.

<sup>20</sup> Le plus souvent, ce sont des individus qui créent des signes. Une fois créés, ces signes sont progressivement adoptés par d'autres individus et, ce faisant, finissent par être intégrés par le groupe social et même au-delà.

### 3.4.2.1 La Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique à Partir de la Littérature

Le transfert culturel à travers un signe linguistique peut s'opérer à partir de la littérature (orale ou écrite) qui, selon Kesteloot (2012), est avant tout une manifestation culturelle. En d'autres termes, un aspect du sujet, de l'histoire racontée ou de l'expérience narrée dans une œuvre littéraire peut servir de base à des groupes pour élaborer, par divers procédés, un signe linguistique.

*Exemple 1:* harpagon.

*Signification:* homme avare et cupide.

*Origine:* ce personnage de Molière dans *L'Avare* est devenu l'archétype de l'homme avide et extrêmement avare.

*Exemple 2:* *tò dé to nukɔn na Alàcɛ*.<sup>21</sup>

*Signification:* il y a mieux ailleurs que ce dont on vante « exagérément » les mérites, les exploits, les talents, la valeur ou l'immensité.

*Origine:* en référence à la réplique cinglante, par chanson, du chanteur traditionnel *gùn Dosu Letriki* à son aîné et maître *Yedenu Ajahwi*<sup>22</sup> qui, à travers ses compositions musicales, tend à considérer *Alàcɛ Hwezùnme*<sup>23</sup>, son village natal, comme le centre du monde et les artistes chanteurs qui en sont originaires, lui-même en premier, comme la crème de la crème.

### 3.4.2.2 La Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique à Partir de la Religion / Des Croyances

Les faits, les enseignements et les idées reçues issus des croyances ou des religions peuvent jouer un rôle dans le processus de transfert culturel par signes linguistiques. En d'autres termes, ces

éléments peuvent servir de base à des groupes sociaux pour créer des signes linguistiques.

*Exemple 1:* être né sous une bonne étoile (ou mauvaise étoile).

*Signification:* avoir (ou ne pas avoir) de la chance, du succès.

*Origine:* cette expression fait référence à l'astrologie, une science ancestrale qui postule que les astres influencent nos vies. Ainsi, être né sous une bonne (ou mauvaise) étoile signifie avoir (ou non) de la chance.

*Exemple 2:* vendre son âme au diable.

*Signification:* compromettre son salut par une action impardonnable.

*Origine:* cette expression provient d'une croyance populaire du Moyen Âge selon laquelle certains pouvaient échanger leur âme avec le diable contre des biens matériels.

### 3.4.2.3 La Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique à Partir de la Mythologie

Les récits fabuleux des dieux, des demi-dieux et des héros de divers peuples, civilisations ou régions, ainsi que les idées et valeurs imaginaires qu'un groupe humain projette sur un phénomène de société, peuvent fournir des métaphores et des symboles pour exprimer des traits de caractère, des comportements spécifiques ou évoquer différentes images.

*Exemple 1:* traquer la Bête du Gévaudan.

*Signification:* poursuivre quelque chose ou quelqu'un avec une détermination intense, souvent dans un contexte de chasse ou de recherche obstinée.

*Origine:* la « Bête du Gévaudan » fait référence à une créature mystérieuse qui a terrorisé la région du Gévaudan (aujourd'hui la Lozère et la Haute-Loire) en France entre 1764 et 1767. Le roi Louis XV a envoyé des chasseurs professionnels pour traquer la Bête. En septembre 1765, François Antoine, porte-arquebuse du roi, a tué un grand loup identifié comme la Bête. Cependant, les attaques ont repris peu de temps après. Finalement, en juin 1767, un paysan

<sup>21</sup> / tò / dé / to / nukɔn / na / Alàcɛ / / pays, localité / certain / être / devant / par rapport à / Alàcɛ / Il existe une localité par-devant ou en avance sur Alàcɛ.

<sup>22</sup> *Yedenu Ajahwi* est un artiste traditionnel béninois. Le talent extraordinaire dont il fait preuve dans ses compositions musicales en fait le maître incontesté de son genre musical et l'un des grands et des plus célèbres maîtres de la musique béninoise.

<sup>23</sup> Il s'agit d'une localité de la Commune d'Avrankou au Bénin. Tout comme Léopold Sédar Senghor l'a fait pour Joal, au Sénégal, à travers ses écrits, *Yedenu Ajahwi* a rendu célèbre cette localité qui l'a vu naître à travers ses chansons.

nommé Jean Chastel a abattu un autre loup, mettant fin aux attaques. Les récits sur la « Bête du Gévaudan » varient, mais elle est souvent décrite comme un loup gigantesque ou un hybride entre un loup et un chien.

*Exemple 2:* affronter la Tarasque.

*Signification:* faire face à un grand danger ou à une situation très difficile, souvent avec courage et détermination.

*Origine:* Le nom « Tarasque » provient du provençal “tarasco”, auquel, selon la légende, la ville de Tarascon en Provence doit son nom. La Tarasque est un monstre légendaire du folklore provençal, souvent représenté comme un hybride avec des caractéristiques de plusieurs animaux. Elle vivait dans les marécages près de Tarascon, terrorisant les habitants et détruisant tout sur son passage. Elle est célèbre pour avoir été apprivoisée par Sainte Marthe, selon la légende locale.

#### 3.4.2.4 La Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique à Partir du Monde Végétal

La culturalisation du signe linguistique peut émerger des représentations développées par les communautés dans leur interaction avec le monde végétal.

*Exemple 1:* pomme de lait.

*Signification:* la caïmite.

*Origine:* la désignation « pomme de lait » provient du fait qu’une pulpe laiteuse (latex) s’écoule de ce fruit ressemblant à une pomme lorsqu’on le coupe.

*Exemple 2:* àkú-masà<sup>24</sup> (oignon du printemps).

*Signification:* oignon de sécheresse.

*Origine:* cette désignation provient du fait que, pour les Gùnnù et autres parentés aja-tado, ce type d’oignon n’apparaît qu’en saison sèche.

#### 3.4.2.5 La Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique à Partir du Monde Animal

La culturalisation du signe linguistique peut émerger des représentations développées par les

<sup>24</sup> / Àkú / masà // Sècheresse / dimunitif de àlùmasà (oignon) / Oignon de sécheresse.

communautés dans leur interaction avec le monde animal.

*Exemple 1:* avoir du plomb dans l’aile.

*Signification:* être atteint dans sa santé, sa fortune ou sa considération.

*Origine:* cette expression fait référence à la situation critique (perte de force, mauvais fonctionnement) causée par l’impact d’une cartouche d’arme sur l’aile d’un oiseau.

*Exemple 2:* xɔmesi<sup>25</sup> (gecko).

*Signification :* maitresse de chambre<sup>26</sup>.

*Origine:* les geckos se nourrissent d’insectes nuisibles que l’on rencontre dans les maisons. On les aperçoit souvent la nuit, aux aguets, grimpant, rampant ou marchant le long des luminaires et des plafonds en quête de ces insectes nuisibles pour les humains (moustiques, fourmis ailées, mouches, cafards). En faisant cela, les geckos protègent notre santé et celle de nos proches, tout en nous évitant l’utilisation de produits chimiques et de pesticides nocifs pour l’environnement. Ils agissent comme une maîtresse de maison, généralement aux aguets, qui protégerait son espace conjugal de tout ce qui pourrait être préjudiciable à sa famille. C’est pourquoi les Gùnnù ont donné à ces alliés, excellents régulateurs naturels de nuisibles, généralement collés aux murs des chambres, le nom de xɔmesi, maîtresse de chambre.

#### 3.4.2.6 La Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique à Partir des Phénomènes Naturels

Les groupes sociaux peuvent interpréter des phénomènes naturels, qu’ils soient universels ou spécifiques à leur environnement, à travers un prisme culturel afin de créer des signes linguistiques.

*Exemple 1:* hwezé<sup>27</sup>.

*Signification:* l’Orient, l’est.

<sup>25</sup> / Xɔ / mɛ / si // Chambre / dans / femme / Femme / maitresse de chambre.

<sup>26</sup> Il s’agit de la traduction littérale de xɔmesi.

<sup>27</sup> Hwe zé / soleil / pointer, se lever / Là où le soleil pointe, se lève.



*Origine:* l'identification de cet endroit comme étant le point de l'horizon où le soleil se lève lui a valu le nom de *hwezé* par les *Gùnnù*.

*Exemple 2:* se coucher avec les poules.

*Signification:* aller dormir très tôt.

*Origine:* les poules ont la réputation de se coucher tôt. En réalité, elles se couchent avec le soleil: tôt en hiver et plus tard en été.

### 3.4.2.7 La Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique à Partir des Faits Passés / des Vécus Historiques

Les signes linguistiques peuvent également être élaborés à partir des expériences de vie, des faits et des événements réels survenus à différentes périodes de l'évolution d'un groupe social.

*Exemple 1:* *zinsutakwε*.

*Signification:* 1- impôt de Zinsou.

2- répression excessive et épouvantable évoquant les actes redoutables liés au recouvrement de l'impôt établi par Émile Derlin Zinsou.

*Origine:* Émile Derlin Zinsou, ancien président du Dahomey (actuel Bénin), avait pour vision, à son avènement au pouvoir, de développer son pays en comptant sur les ressources internes plutôt que sur l'aide étrangère. Le Bénin ne disposant pas de ressources minières significatives, il fallait compter sur un budget essentiellement fiscal, « nos propres forces », comme le dirait par la suite le régime révolutionnaire de Kérékou. Ainsi, les impôts ont augmenté et, malgré la noblesse de la vision, sont devenus insupportables pour une population au pouvoir d'achat déjà très limité. Dans ces conditions, leur recouvrement faisait souvent l'objet d'une répression excessive et épouvantable<sup>28</sup>. Cette répression était si terrible que l'expression « *é ná myán wè xú zinsutakwε* » a pris le sens d'intimidation<sup>29</sup>, de menace d'actes

redoutables rappelant la répression excessive liée au non-paiement de l'impôt établi par Émile Derlin Zinsou.

*Exemple 2:* boire comme un templier.

*Signification:* être un grand buveur.

*Origine:* cette expression provient de la mauvaise réputation faite aux templiers sous Philippe le Bel. Cherchant à les évincer et à affaiblir leur pouvoir, il les accusa de corruption et de nombreux vices, dont celui d'être des ivrognes. L'expression est restée.

### 3.4.2.8 La Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique à Partir des Traditions / Habitudes

Les groupes sociaux créent également des signes linguistiques en se référant à leurs manières habituelles d'agir ou de penser, leurs coutumes, leurs mœurs, ainsi qu'aux capacités ou habitudes qu'ils ont acquises en tant que membres d'une société ou d'un groupe social.

*Exemple 1:* mettre en quarantaine.

*Signification:* isoler quelqu'un ou quelque chose de force, le tenir à l'écart pendant une période donnée.

*Origine:* à l'origine, la quarantaine désignait une période d'isolement de quarante jours imposés aux personnes ou marchandises provenant de pays touchés par des épidémies. Aujourd'hui, ce terme s'est élargi pour désigner tout isolement forcé, sans notion de durée précise.

*Exemple 2:* se regarder en chiens de faïence.

*Signification:* se regarder avec hostilité, méfiance ou animosité.

*Origine:* cette expression fait référence aux statuettes de chiens en faïence, souvent placées face à face sur les cheminées. Ces chiens semblaient se fixer avec un regard sévère, comme s'ils étaient en conflit.

### 3.4.2.9 La Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique à Partir des Connaissances / Savoirs

Les signes linguistiques se forment également à partir des connaissances acquises par l'étude,

*mε è nɔ yi wè à ?* », ce qui signifie: « L'impôt de Zinsou en question va-t-il dans les poches de Zinsou ? ».

<sup>28</sup> Les gens allaient jusqu'à abandonner leur maison ou fuir et se cacher, même sur les toits.

<sup>29</sup> Lors d'une interview réalisée par le célèbre journaliste en langue *fɔn* Albert Kinhouandé, juste après la Conférence nationale des forces vives du Bénin de 1990, le président Émile Derlin Zinsou s'est exprimé sur la question de l'impôt controversé de Zinsou, *zinsutakwε*, en posant la question rhétorique suivante en *maxigbè*: « *zinsutakwε ɔ, Zinsú kpo*

l'observation, l'apprentissage et/ou l'expérience. Ces connaissances, développées par un groupe social, peuvent concerner la nature et l'univers, un art, une discipline, une science, une profession ou tout autre domaine.

*Exemple 1:* perdre la tête.

*Signification:* devenir fou.

*Origine:* La tête est considérée comme le centre de l'intelligence chez l'homme. Avoir la tête bien en place sur les épaules symbolise l'équilibre de l'esprit. À l'inverse, « perdre la tête » signifie perdre toute notion de réalité.

*Exemple 2:* àgbɔnɔ<sup>30</sup> (résistant, endurant, courageux).

*Signification:* personne ferme et énergique face aux situations, de danger, de souffrance ou de difficultés notamment.

*Origine:* le terme « àgbɔnɔ » dérive de « àgbɔ » (souffle) qui symbolise des vertus telles que la résistance, l'endurance et le courage dans le milieu traditionnel fɔn et autres parentés àjàtádó. Le résistant, l'endurant, le courageux est ainsi assimilé à un « détenteur de souffle ».

### 3.4.2.10 La Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique à Partir des Conceptions / Visions

Le signe linguistique peut également être créé à partir de la manière dont un groupe social perçoit, par l'œil ou par l'esprit, une réalité concrète ou abstraite. En d'autres termes, sa représentation globale ou particulière des objets ou des choses peut servir de base à la création d'un signe linguistique.

*Exemple 1:* faire des yeux de merlan frit.

*Signification:* avoir un regard ridicule, criant de niaiserie.

*Origine:* lorsque vous faites frire un poisson, ses yeux deviennent globuleux et luisants. Dès le XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, on comparait ce regard de « carpe frite » à celui des amoureux transis devant leur belle. Avec l'évolution de la langue et peut-être des goûts culinaires, c'est le merlan qui a été mis

à l'honneur, tel qu'attesté par Larousse à la fin du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle.

*Exemple 2:* nyisé<sup>31</sup>.

*Signification:* oiseau qui peuple la savane africaine et se perche sur les grands herbivores tels que les bœufs, les buffles, les antilopes, les girafes, les hippopotames, les phacochères et les rhinocéros.

*Origine:* les oiseaux appelés « nyisé » prélèvent des lambeaux de peau, des insectes et autres parasites sur la peau des bœufs pour se nourrir. Ils soulagent les animaux en les nettoyant. Les bœufs bénéficient non seulement de l'élimination de leurs parasites, mais aussi d'un avertissement en cas de danger: en effet, le pique-bœuf pousse des cris stridents à l'approche d'un prédateur. Ainsi, pour les Gùnnu et autres parentés àjàtádó, il apparaît comme « l'ange protecteur du bœuf », d'où le nom « nyisé » qui lui est donné.

### 3.4.2.11 La Culturalisation du Signe Linguistique à Partir des Pratiques / Usages

Les signes linguistiques peuvent aussi être construits à partir de l'expérience acquise lors de la mise en œuvre ou par l'exercice répété d'une activité, d'une profession, d'un rituel, d'une dévotion, d'un art, d'une technique, etc.

*Exemple 1:* chercher une aiguille dans une botte de foin.

*Signification:* chercher quelque chose de quasi introuvable, tenter une chose extrêmement difficile.

*Origine:* cette expression est facilement compréhensible: quiconque tente de retrouver une aiguille de couture tombée dans une botte de foin a très peu de chances de la retrouver.

*Exemple 2:* gbɛɛn kàn yɔyɔ́ d́ó kàn xóxó nu<sup>32</sup>.

*Signification:* tisser la nouvelle corde au bout de l'ancienne.

*Origine:* l'expression métaphorique « tisser la nouvelle corde au bout de l'ancienne » trouve son

<sup>30</sup> / Àgbɔ / nɔ // souffle / morphème de possession / Détenteur de souffle.

<sup>31</sup> / nyi / sé // Bœuf / ange protecteur, Dieu / Ange protecteur du bœuf.

<sup>32</sup> / Gbɛɛn / kàn / yɔyɔ́ / d́ó / kàn / yɔyɔ́ / nu // tisser / corde / nouveau / sur / corde / ancien / bout / Tisser la nouvelle corde au bout de l'ancienne.

origine dans une pratique courante autour des puits en milieu *gùn* et autres parentés *àjàtádó*. Lorsqu'une corde servant à tirer l'eau du puits se casse, la nouvelle corde est généralement nouée ou tissée au bout de la partie restante de l'ancienne, souvent suspendue au support transversal de la margelle. D'où l'expression « *gbèen kàn yoyó dọ kàn xóxó nu* ». Elle s'est élargie au sens figuré pour signifier « se servir des choses anciennes comme fondation ou sous-bassement pour mettre en place les nouvelles ».

Comme on peut le noter à travers les exemples utilisés, les différentes bases du processus de culturalisation du signe linguistique peuvent se mêler, car, comme le reconnaît si bien Bastide<sup>33</sup>, tout est interconnecté dans une culture. Les différents éléments intervenant dans ce processus, qui relèvent avant tout de la culture, n'échappent pas à ce principe général.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

Les résultats de cette recherche montrent une relation significative entre la langue et la culture. Les mythes, les traditions et les valeurs, encapsulés dans les signes linguistiques, sont transmis de génération en génération à travers la langue, faisant de la culturalisation des signes linguistiques le fondement du transfert culturel par la langue. Cela signifie que cette culturalisation est le caractère du signe linguistique qui prédispose la langue à transmettre la culture. Ainsi, les résultats confirment que l'objectif de la recherche est atteint et soutiennent l'idée que la langue est le véhicule de la culture. Cependant, ces résultats semblent contredire certains postulats. Selon Porcher (1995), toute langue véhicule une culture et est le principal vecteur culturel d'une société. Or, en décrivant le processus de construction des langues au contact des cultures, les résultats de l'étude montrent que chaque langue est un système de signes linguistiques principalement, mais pas exclusivement, construit à partir des éléments culturels d'une société ou d'un groupe social spécifique. Cette réalité révèle que la

culturalisation des signes linguistiques présente des particularités. Ces particularités, qui seront abordées dans des publications futures, permettront de mieux comprendre l'importance de l'analyse de la relation entre langue et culture sous un prisme multiculturel.

#### V. CONCLUSION

À partir d'une approche qualitative, cette étude menée auprès de 35 personnes-ressources a permis de mieux comprendre que les langues dépendent des relations qu'elles entretiennent avec les cultures. Chaque langue se présente comme un système de signes linguistiques, simples et complexes, construits principalement à partir des éléments constitutifs de la culture d'un groupe socio-ethnique donné. La culturalisation apparaît donc comme le caractère du signe linguistique qui prédispose la langue à diffuser la culture. Une description globale du mécanisme a présenté les trois dimensions interdépendantes de ce trait et les onze bases, représentatives du déroulement du processus, en les analysant.

Ces apports de l'étude débouchent sur deux recommandations clés.

#### RECOMMANDATION

La linguistique, en particulier la linguistique anthropologique, pourrait, grâce à la notion de culturalisation du signe linguistique, aider l'anthropologie, la sociologie et d'autres sciences connexes à approfondir leurs recherches et réflexions sur les processus de transferts culturels.

Attirer l'attention des chercheurs et des spécialistes sur cette passerelle pourrait être extrêmement bénéfique pour la complémentarité entre les disciplines, ainsi que pour l'interdisciplinarité et l'intersectorialité qui sont de plus en plus recommandées pour enrichir et améliorer la qualité des apprentissages.

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# Interwoven Threads: Ecology, Feminism and Cultural Critique in Arundhati Roy's *the God of Small Things*

*Antara Saha*

## ABSTRACT

Converging upon the degradation of several sides of our environment and culture Arundhati Roy as an activist shows her concern in her novel *The God of Small Things* over all kinds of oppression resulted from the devastating consequence of the global market, development happened without sustainable thought and the locus of women in the postcolonial society. Roy highlights the necessity of social, economic and environmental justice for oppressed women, marginalised human beings and nature. Patriarchal categories always ignore productive and sustainable activities and adore unproductive activities and so development which creates uneven structures and environmental poverty is assessed as mal- development. Roy focuses on how hierarchical development and commercial development together damage the entire ecology of Ayemenem where Ammu and her twins' Rahel and Estha are victimised most. The emergence of westernisation not only affects Indian culture and nature leading towards profit-oriented viewpoint but seizes the purity and wilderness embedded in it also. Therefore, this novel aims at showing Roy's presentation of women, culture and nature from the viewpoint of ecology and feminism.

*Keywords:* environmental devastation, patriarchal categories, ecological problem, vandana shiva.

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**Author:** Assistant Professor of English Dikhulal Nibaran Chandra College, WB, India.

## I. INTRODUCTION

As a concerned activist against environmental devastation, Arundhati Roy discloses the inhuman

practice of postcolonial patriarchal society over women, nature and the subaltern who are noticeable as victims. Roy has shown her concern found in her dealing of the subject concerning domination over the marginalized women and the subordinate people belonging to the lower caste in the postcolonial India. Underneath the patriarchal society, they are always maltreated and browbeaten in different ways. Roy's consciousness with all kinds of domination touches at the national and global levels. She depicts the devastating consequence of the global market in postcolonial India, where development conveys disaster to the natural environment and explores the need of social, economic and environmental justice for oppressed woman, marginalized human beings and nature. Therefore the crack between the empowered and the marginalized remains the same even after the colonial period. Roy illustrates how the woman characters in this novel are subjugated by the patriarchal organization so that they are obliged to obliterate their longings. Vandana Shiva states: "Patriarchal categories which understand destruction as production and regeneration of life as passivity has generated a crisis of survival" (*Staying Alive* 22). Development creates uneven social structures and environmental poverty. These calamities occur when progress in all circles of life is not sustainable.

## II. DEVELOPMENT AND ECOLOGICAL DEGRADATION

As dominance of human beings by other human beings because of the hierarchical development shatters the social ecology of a society, domination over nature on behalf of commercial development carries the same damage in the physical ecology as well as the local ecology of

Ayemenem. And, in the same way, Ammu and her twins' ecology are disturbed by the intrigue of their own people. It is Rahel who feels the changing scenario in the physical ecology of Ayemenem has been changed after 25 years: "Years later, when Rahel returned to the river, it greeted her with a ghastly smile, with holes where teeth had been, and a limp hand raised from a hospital bed" (*God* 124). Roy illuminates how the river becomes victimized by the influential paddy-farmer lobby who allow the construction of a saltwater barrage which pedals the inflow of saltwater from the backwaters which release into the Arabian Sea. Thus the production of more rice becomes possible through the two harvests rather than one: "More rice for the price of a river" (*God* 124). Rahel detects the narrowness of the river in the month of June, the time of the rainy season and each and everything underwater come to be wafted on the water surface whether it is dead fish or weeds and lily-trotters. Rahel ruminates that in the former years, this river had the enough strength to arouse fear. But now it has been transformed into something immobilised. The speaker narrates:

Once it had had the power to evoke fear. To change lives. But now its teeth were drawn, its spirit spent. It was just a slow, sludging green ribbon lawn that ferried fetid garbage to the sea. Bright plastic bags blew across its viscous, weedy surface like subtropical flying-flowers. (*God* 124)

Roy has defined concisely the despoiled state of the river. Once while the bathers and the fishers were exactly steered by the suitable stone steps to their destination, now these guide them from "nowhere to nowhere" (*God* 125). The unhygienic and the distraught condition of the other side of the river she depicts, is worse than the previous one. The mud banks of the river not only gather the shanty hutments, the faecal wastes and the factory wastes but the dirt from bathing and washing clothes also contaminates river and ruins it. Garrard thinks: "pollution' is an ecological problem because it does not name a substance or class of substances, but rather represents an implicit normative claim that too much of something is present in the environment, usually

in the wrong place" (6). Cynthia Deitering says, "a shift from a culture defined by its production to a culture defined by its wastes... examines the way in which the toxic landscapes functions...as a metaphor for the pollution of the natural world" (196). Roy establishes the relationship between literature and nature by portraying how ecological change is greeted by the outcome of growth and expansion. The capitalist patriarchal power exploits Ayemenem's river by raising both barrage as well as the Heritage, the five-star hotel, an insightful amalgamation of colonial and postcolonial, the western and the Indian, progression and reduction. While on one hand the river is shrunk by the salt-water barrage, on the other hand, the hotel 'Heritage' brings reduction to the history of History House. Roy emphasizes how people were bestowing much importance to the history house rather than to the Earth Woman. Chacko tries to make them recognize that the creation of human life and civilization is just a twinkle for the Earth woman (*God* 54). But children were not interested in the Earth Woman rather they were interested in the History House. The author says:

Though the Earth Woman made a lasting impression on the twins, it was the History House – so much closer at hand - that really fascinated them. They thought about it often. The house on the other side of the river. Looming in the heart of Darkness. (*God* 54)

Actually the word 'Heart of Darkness' epitomizes the development that leads the whole civilization into the darkness. The novel illustrates how the natural splendour of God's Own Country is condensed to the country of the God of Loss where no God exists in the artificially established region. Actually, the phrase God's Own Country is used to enhance the attraction of the tourism department which hiding the foul flaws of the region is only demanding to demonstrate the elegance of nature draped by luxury. Thoreau Manes thinks that wilderness is not treated as a luxury but it is very essential for the human spirit, and as vibrant to human lives as water and bread (16). Indeed the earlier definition of wilderness is lost now. Greg Garrard's *Ecocriticism* referencing Bill McKibben's *The End of Nature*



(1990) demonstrates Cronon's representation of the purity of wilderness. He thinks that pollution and devastation are local occurrences and these common flaws come from the effect of DDT or the outcome from distinctive nuclear weapons' tests. But the emergence of anthropogenic climate change, or 'global warming', has skewed the condition primarily polluting the entire planet:

We have changed the atmosphere, and thus we are changing the weather. By changing the weather, we make every spot on earth manmade and artificial. We have deprived nature of its independence, and that is fatal to its meaning. Nature's independence is its meaning; without it, there is nothing but us (McKibben 54).

Garrard says that wilderness has its own worthiness as it renovates connection between human beings and earth. But that restoration is lost with the detachment of human beings from nature. Thus ecofeminism is presented here as a protest, as a movement, highlighted by the postcolonial writers' concerns about a society which is being victimized by different kinds of disparities and degradation. Roy says in her essay "The Greater Common Good" (1999) about the politics included in a dam project which bears a huge amount of cost of living of human lives and displacement in the postcolonial period. Carolyn Merchant shows in her book *The Death of Nature* how male dominant societal rules and male dominant knowledge trap both women as well as nature. In *Ecofeminism* Vandana Shiva also says that both patriarchal evolution and scientific revolution together reduce the identity of women and the identity of nature. Roy shows how the development of the History house to a five-star hotel alters the physical environment of Ayemenem and how the local ecology is disturbed by the modern arrangement of the entertainment. The author depicts the arrogance of modernity which knows no bound their material comfort and for which they can easily shut down the poverty by giving partition to the slum. The smelly paradise is named as 'God's Own Country' in spite of the smelliness of the region and the poverty of the people. It becomes an issue of order. What they plan to remove is the smell of shit that comes out

from the river bank and pollutes the local ecology by furnishing the rooms with Air-conditioning "because they knew, those clever Hotel people, that smelliness, like other people's poverty, was merely a matter of getting used to. A question of discipline. Of Rigour and Air-conditioning. Nothing more" (*God* 126). In God's Own Country the river not only changes its direction towards Ayemenem but the History House also becomes isolated from the river. Even around the Ayemenem house, Rahel observes: "houses had mushroomed, and it was only the fact that they nestled under trees, and that the narrow paths that branched off the main road and led to them were not motorable, that gave Ayemenem the semblance of rural quietness" (*God* 128). The Heritage, the new name and the new structure of the History House does not disregard the aristocracy related to the house where there was the coexistence of "History and Literature enlisted by commerce. Kurtz and Karl Marx joining palms to greet rich guests as they stepped off the boat" (*God* 126). The pollution and filthiness in the ecology of Ayemenem are the consequences of using pesticides which are bought with the world-bank loans and create an obstruction in the Meenachal River. Rachel Carson says in her book *Silent Spring*:

This pollution is for the most part irrecoverable; the chain of evil it initiates not only in the world that must support life but in living tissues is for the most part irreversible. In this now universal contamination of the environment, chemicals are the sinister and little recognized partners of radiation in changing the very nature of the world-the very nature of its life. (*Silent Spring* 23)

The author says: "Most of the fish had died. The ones that survived suffered from fin-rot and had broken out in boils" (*God* 13). She tells about it in an interview with David Barsamian that the entire world is being controlled by the WTO, the IMF, and the World Bank. She thinks that these monetary funds do agreements with those governments who collaborate with the multinational companies. For Roy, the agreements are made secretly depriving the people of the information. She states, "Contracts

that governments sign with multinationals, which affect people's lives so intimately are secret documents" (*The Checkbook and the Cruise Missile* 12). Referring to the contract between Enron, the huge Houston-based organization and the government of Maharashtra, Roy asks for the document to be made public (*The Checkbook and the Cruise Missile* 12). Carolyn Merchant shows how grassroots globalization aims at corporate globalization through the global corporate power exhibited by WTO, World Bank and IMF. Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies state in their book *Ecofeminism* that the World Bank does not actually care for the welfare of the entire world's communities, rather it is regulated by the contributors who are economically and politically powerful and the real contributors who pay the real price become voiceless. Thus these institutions in the name of development create neo-colonialism through financing and debt-trapping to remove underdevelopment and poverty. Maria Mies states:

With increasing ecological destruction in recent decades, however, it becomes obvious that this subsistence — or life production— was and is not only a kind of hidden underground of the capitalist market economy, it can also show the way out of the many impasses of this destructive system called industrial society, market economy or capitalist patriarchy. (*Ecofeminism* 298)

### 2.1 Loss of Identity and Culture

Roy shows that the effect of capitalist patriarchy not only degrades natural environment but it degrades human culture also. Roy in her novel highlights Baby Kochamma's treatment of garden culture through the knowledge of Ornamental Gardening. After coming back from Rochester with a diploma in Ornamental Gardening, she is given the charge of the front garden of the Ayemenem house. But her ornamental knowledge about gardening converted it into "a bitter garden that people came all the way from Kottayam to see" (*God* 26). Her supremacist claim and her western learning could not bring her close to nature rather her domination over culture leads the garden towards cultural degradation. "Like a

lion-tamer she tamed twisting vines and nurtured bristling cacti. She limited bonsai plants and pampered rare orchids. She waged war on the weather. She tried to grow edelweiss and Chinese guava" (*God* 27). The entire garden carries the western taste, the mechanical sense and artificial decoration where there is very little touch of Indian culture: "it was circular, sloping patch of ground, with a steep gravel driveway looping around it. Baby Kochamma turned it into a lush maze of dwarf hedges, rocks and gargoyles....a marble cherub peed an endless silver arc are into a shallow pool in which a single blue lotus bloomed" (*God* 26). Chaia Heller says in her article "For the Love of Nature: Ecology and the Cult of the Romantic:

Societies increasing alienation from nature has left the idea of nature as fair game for romantic love. Increasing urbanization, suburbanization, and the demise of the family farm leave many of us with little direct participation in the organic cycles of planting and harvesting. Our relationship with the natural world is largely mediated by industries of production and consumption that shape our appetites, tastes, and desires (229)

In spite of Ammu's contribution to the pickle factory she never gets the importance rather she has to tolerate Chacko's monopoly claim "my factory, my pineapples, my pickles" (*God* 57). The author says: "Legally, this was the case because Ammu as a daughter, had no claim to the property" (*God* 57). Even Chacko tells the twins that "Ammu had no Locusts Stand I" (*God* 57). Bina Agarwal states that land identifies the social position and political influence in the village, and it builds relations both inside and outside the home. She thinks that the most influential economic factor which affects the status of a woman is the gender gap in control over the property. She also produces various instances in this regard where the brother does not provide the sister with her right to the inherited land and its production. Acharya and Bennett note:

Women's involvement in market activities gives them much greater power within the household in terms of their input in all aspects

of household decision-making. At the same time, confining women's work to the domestic and subsistence sectors reduces their power *vis-a-vis* men in the household. Two explanations are offered for this phenomenon. First, women who participate in the market activities make a measurable contribution to the household income and second, they are more likely to control their own production assets, while women working in subsistence agriculture are generally labouring on land controlled by the male household head. (*A Field of One's Own* 68).

Lori Gruen states that the Marxist feminists analysing the system advocate that the way of liberation must be lost for economic inequalities. They consider that the liberation of women is connected to the participation of women into production (Gruen "Dismantling" 76).

### 2.2 Commercialisation of Kathakali

Roy exposes how the significance and classic texture of Kathakali are commercialised by the hotel Heritage and it wants to present this dance form before the tourists to create attraction. Thus this classic dance form is commodified in the postcolonial environment. Indeed, Roy highlights how her native culture, going to be diminished due to the entrance of the western version into it. She highlights the lack of reasonable attendance of the lonely temple where two Kathakali men perform their dances secretly. The novel presents a consciousness of the survival of the Indian dance form (Kathakali) in the postcolonial India. If the Kathakali Man is considered the god of their art, the god suffers from an uncertain future.

In that evenings (for that Regional Flavour) the tourists were treated to truncated Kathakali performances ('Small attention spans, the Hotel People, explained to the dancers). So ancient stories were collapsed and amputated. Six-hour classics were slashed to twenty- minute cameos (*God* 127)

Thus the entire process divulges not only the nature/culture dualism but it also deals with the implanted crisis in this dualistic notion which is seen as common in the global south. Roy, in an

outstanding way, depicts the degradation of Ayemenem temple as well as the degradation of Kathakali dance which gifts the Great Stories from the Puranas. The author says, "The Great Stories are the ones you have heard and want to hear again. The ones you can enter anywhere and inhabit comfortably....To the Kathakali Man, these stories are his children and his childhood" (*God* 229). But these stories are being corrupted by the Kathakali Man who is obliged to perform their art for the tourists. They are forced to curtail their performances. The archaic form of Kathakali blends with the material comfort of the postcolonial ecology. In the Heart of Darkness, they perform their dance to be released of their degradation. They are ashamed of such dishonesty that they do "for encashing their identities. Misappropriating their lives" (*God* 229). So, during their coming back from the Heart of Darkness they stop at the temple to make an apology to God. Roy shows how reduction of culture separates them from their local culture and how Indian culture is being dominated by the western culture. During the performances, hotel guests play raucously with their children in the water and the couples are busy to rub suntan oil on each other. The grand scenes of the Great stories become diminished under the weight of modernization that the western culture introduces. She says:

While Kunti revealed her secret to Karna on the river bank, courting couples rubbed suntan oil on each other. While fathers played sublimated sexual games with their nubile teenaged daughters, Poothana suckled young Krishna at her poisoned breast. Bhima disembowelled Dushasana and bathed Draupadi's hair in his blood (*God* 127)

### 2.3 Identity Crisis of the Characters

In one way, she relates the Kathakali Man with Karna. Roy shows that both the Kathakali Man as well as Karna are separated from their own culture and own identity. Both are 'others' who are victimized by their own society. As an unmarried mother, Kunti is obliged to be separated from her son for her survival in the ancient society and the Kathakali Man is forced to

be separated from his mother art to survive in the postcolonial society. This separation brings a reduction in a relationship and in culture “the hidden fish of shame in a sea of glory” (*God* 230). Roy explains:

The Kathakali Man is the most beautiful of men. Because his body is his soul. His only instrument. From the age of three it has been planned and polished, pared down, harnessed wholly to the task of storytelling. He has magic in him, this man within the painted mask and swirling skirts. But these days he has become unviable. Unfeasible. Condemned goods. (*God* 230)

He is obliged to take a turn to tourism where he presents stories by which his body responds to become a ‘Regional Flavour’ (*God* 231). To survive in the Heart of Darkness, he tolerates the nudity of the tourists’ scornful attitudes and dances for them. He becomes professional giving up the artistry of art: “he collects his fees. He gets drunk. Or smokes a joint. Good Kerala grass. It makes him laugh. Then he stops by the Ayemenem Temple....to ask pardon of the gods” (*God* 231). Notwithstanding his abundant talent, the Kathakali Man’s identity is reduced like Karna who is obliged to take the side of Duryodhana. The Kathakali Man becomes the abandoned child of art like Karna:

But if he had had a fleet of make-up men waiting in the wings, an agent, a contract, a percentage of the \$DnK4h)6QVpt profits - what then would he be? An imposter. A rich pretender. An actor playing a part. Could he be Karna? Or would he be too safe inside his pod of wealth? Would his money grow like a rind between himself and his story? Would he be able to touch its heart, its hidden secrets, in the way that he can now? (*God* 231)

In this respect, Roy shows another kind of contrast where the twins, like Karna, have no identity, no ‘Locusts stand I’ as they are also abandoned by their father and Ammu keeps their identity as such: Rahel only because Ammu thinks that “choosing between her husband’s name and her father’s name didn’t give a woman much of a

choice (*God* 37). Velutha is victimized as paravan, as a subaltern like Karna who is brought up as a charioteer’s son. In spite of Velutha’s connectedness with Ayemenem family he is killed by the conspiracy of Baby Kochamma to whom the twins’ take oath to tell ‘Yes’ to save their Ammu as Karna promises Kunti to save her five sons. The twins’ oath murders Velutha and Karna’s oath murders himself. The twins and Karna both have taken oath for the sake of their mother. Roy says, “...the performance like this, separated by the breadth of the kuthambalam, but joined by a story. And the memory of another mother” (*God* 234). The Kathakali Man’s tattered skirt, hollow crown and bald blouse expose the exhaustion of both figures of myth and reality in spite of his knowledge that he will never become real Karna “a prince raised in poverty. Born to die unfairly, unarmed and alone at the hands of his brother. Majestic in his complete despair” (*God* 232). Roy shows how the logic of domination resides in the heart of the Kathakali Man who is himself dominated by the aristocratic class with their makeup and after removing their make up they show domination over their wives. An irony that the narrator wants to imply here is that the hand the Kathakali Man uses during performing their dance, their art and bring justice for Draupodi by killing Dushshasana, the same hand they use to beat their wives. Thus women of all ranks are dominated in patriarchal society. Roy delineates that no woman figure is introduced in performing the role of Kunti. Karna and Kunti both roles are played by men, women are excluded from performing this role. Philli Zarrilli says:

I don’t think women will make good performers because they have some limitations age-wise and so on. If they reach a certain age they will not be able to concentrate on this, especially when they get married. They may do it all right before their marriage. The physical capabilities also differ from that of a man. In *Kathakali* men can do all the difficult things, but not women. (*Kathakali* 70)

Karen Warren thinks that ageism is one of the social oppressions to be included in ecofeminist

issues. She says: “Racism, classism, ableism, ageism, heterosexism, anti-Semitism, and colonialism are feminist issues because understanding them helps one understand the subordination of woman” (*Ecofeminist Philosophy* 1).

#### 2.4 Truth Revealed through Story-Telling

Roy shows how the Kathakali Man plays a significant role as a storyteller who tells the Great stories through dances. These stories are taken from *The Mahabharata* and *The Ramayana*. The storyteller uses his Kathakali dance which he presents as a representative art, takes the audiences at the core of their emotional level from where they try to connect themselves to their own ecology and reconnect themselves to the stories of their survival: “an emotional investment in the locality where the storytelling takes place, so that people will care what happens to it” (*Storytelling and Ecology* 25-26). Anthony Nanson documents that storytelling works as a means to make knowledge more reachable, pleasurable and impressive. The storyteller resurrects the hidden truth from the mind of the audience who watch the performance. The storyteller presents his story to the live spectators in an unplanned way so that his tale can easily reconnect them with the ancient ecology and they are able to understand the difference between the degradation of present ecology and the strength of past ecology. Roy shows Kunti’s deep relation with the Sun God whose power makes her fertile. But for the fear of the opposing forces, Kunti is compelled to be alienated from her son. Rahel and Estha also think their alienation from their father at first and later from their mother because of the external forces and also perceive how modern forces alienate human beings from nature and keep her infertile. Deepika Bahri in her book *Native Intelligence: Aesthetics, Politics and Postcolonial Literature* say:

Arundhati Roy’s incorporation of the Kathakali Man (*Katha, story; kali, performance*) in *The God of Small Things* introduces the framework of the novel the figure of a Benjaminian storyteller to revivify the relation of the novel form to fecund

tradition of Great Stories and that of mimesis to experience” (*Native Intelligence* 202)

Roy’s depiction of the Kathakali dance and the Kathakali Man not only highlights the effect of capitalist patriarchy through the degradation of culture and its conversion into commodity but also creates a sense of harmony by which the twins connect themselves with the story that tells the story of a helpless mother, a helpless child, a helpless woman. The tattered dress of the Kathakali Man indicates the uneven status of the great stories which are cut short during a presentation before the tourist people. Thus Kathakali is dominated by western culture. Though the Kathakali Man performs the Great stories, they are not attached to it wholeheartedly. In spite of being an artist his artistic sense cannot expand the philosophy of the Puranas to their domestic world, rather he beats his wife after removing the makeup. One thing is very clear that Arundhati Roy has created two kinds of the world: the world before makeup and world after makeup.

### III. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Arundhati Roy’s *The God of Small Things* serves as a powerful commentary on the intersections of ecology, feminism, and cultural identity. Through her vivid portrayal of Ayemenem, Roy illuminates the devastating impacts of hierarchical and commercial development, revealing how these forces contribute to the degradation of both the environment and marginalized communities. The struggles of Ammu and her twins epitomize the broader plight of women and the oppressed, emphasizing the urgent need for social, economic, and environmental justice.

Roy’s narrative not only critiques the oppressive structures that perpetuate inequality but also celebrates the resilience of those who resist them. By intertwining personal and political stories, she highlights how individual lives are inextricably linked to larger ecological and societal frameworks. The loss of purity in nature mirrors the loss of agency for women in a patriarchal society, suggesting that the fight for gender equality is also a fight for ecological preservation.

In her vision, the reclamation of cultural identity becomes essential for nurturing both the environment and the marginalized. Ultimately, her work invites readers to reflect on the importance of sustainability and equity, urging us to envision a world where the threads of ecology, feminism, and cultural integrity are harmoniously interwoven. In this interconnected struggle, every small action contributes to a larger movement toward justice, challenging us to reconsider our roles in both our communities and the planet.

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# Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and «Late Modernity»: What Correlations?

*Dr. Gonzague Mottet*

## ABSTRACT

Is the increase in the number of subjects diagnosed with ASD related to the permanent revolution of late modernity as described by Harmut Rosa?

The description of a particular phenotype of ASD in the study of Weill Cornell Medicine (2023) is an opportunity to test this hypothesis. By considering this phenotype of ASD as a complex sociological phenomenon and by applying a holographic approach, we found in a phenomenological analysis of two clinical cases possible correlations: the difficulty of coping with the intensity of the “presence-of-the-world” perhaps due to sensoriality disorders, the need to carry out the program of the time despite everything through islands of competences.

*Keywords:* asd, late modernity, complex phenomenon, phenomenology.

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# Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and «Late Modernity»: What Correlations?

Trouble du Spectre de L'autisme et « Modernité Tardive »: Quelles Corrélations ?

Dr. Gonzague Mottet

## ABSTRACT

*Is the increase in the number of subjects diagnosed with ASD related to the permanent revolution of late modernity as described by Harmut Rosa?*

*The description of a particular phenotype of ASD in the study of Weill Cornell Medicine (2023) is an opportunity to test this hypothesis. By considering this phenotype of ASD as a complex sociological phenomenon and by applying a hologramic approach, we found in a phenomenological analysis of two clinical cases possible correlations: the difficulty of coping with the intensity of the “presence-of-the-world” perhaps due to sensoriality disorders, the need to carry out the program of the time despite everything through islands of competences<sup>1</sup>.*

**Keywords:** asd, late modernity, complex phenomenon, phenomenology.

## RÉSUMÉ

*L'augmentation du nombre de sujets diagnostiqués TSA a-t-elle un lien avec la révolution permanente de la modernité tardive telle que la décrit Harmut Rosa ?*

*La description d'un phénotype particulier de TSA dans l'étude de la Weill Cornell Medecine (2023) est l'occasion de mettre à l'épreuve cette hypothèse. En envisageant ce phénotype de TSA comme un phénomène sociologique complexe et en appliquant une approche hologrammique, nous avons trouvé dans une analyse phénoménologique de deux cas cliniques des corrélations possibles: la difficulté de faire face à*

*l'intensité de la « présence-du-monde » peut- être en raison de troubles de la sensorialité, le besoin de réaliser malgré tout le programme de l'époque à travers des îlots de compétences.*

**Motsclés:** tsa, modernité tardive, phénomène complexe, phénoménologie.

## I. CONTEXTE

La « modernité tardive » commence là où les changements (émergence d'outils permettant un rapport nouveau entre les individus et le monde) ne sont plus inter générationnels, mais deviennent intra générationnels.

Ces quinze dernières années, l'œuvre du philosophe Harmut Rosa a été entièrement consacrée aux changements de cette modernité tardive et leurs conséquences sur nos sociétés. Il n'est pas question de faire ici un exposé exhaustif de ses thèses. Attardons-nous sur quelques notions que nous aurons à développer pour notre propos.

L'accélération du temps, sujet de son premier ouvrage à succès<sup>2</sup>, est telle qu'elle n'a plus pour conséquence l'idée d'un progrès dont chacun pourrait profiter, mais devient une nécessité pour stabiliser de manière dynamique nos sociétés. Si l'individu ne fait pas l'effort, ou ne peut pas s'adapter aux changements permanents qui s'imposent à lui (Rosa parle du monde comme « point d'agression ») il se trouve relégué, incapable, hors-jeu, ne pouvant pas conserver ce qu'il avait bâti jusqu'alors pour lui et ses proches. Pour Rosa, individus et sociétés sont condamnés pour survivre, à une adaptation dynamique permanente et sans repos. Le processus ne fait

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<sup>2</sup> Rosa H. Aliénation et accélération :vers une théorie critique de la modernité tardive, Paris, La Découverte, 2012, 157 p

que croître ces dernières années avec la multiplication et la miniaturisation des outils numériques, la prolifération des métadonnées et l'émergence de l'intelligence artificielle.

Rosa décrit une promesse de « disponibilité » toujours plus grande du monde (visible, atteignable, maîtrisable et utilisable) qui se transforme en son contraire et construit un revers paradoxal, le recul énigmatique du monde comme rencontre.

Dans deux ouvrages essentiels<sup>34</sup>, à la tonalité très pessimiste, Rosa poursuit son diagnostic implacable, cherche des solutions sans en trouver concrètement, comme si nous avions tous basculé dans un cycle mortifère.

Sur la même période, le regard porté sur les troubles du spectre de l'autisme s'est modifié. Force est de constater que l'ensemble des discours concernant les troubles du spectre de l'autisme convergent. Ils forment maintenant un corpus cohérent. Les politiques, l'éducation nationale et le monde médical utilisent le même champ lexical d'où domine, face à cette « épidémie moderne »<sup>5</sup> ou ce « phénomène de société », le terme de trouble du neurodéveloppement, qui sans rien dire de l'étiologie, uniformise le concept et le range du côté du « biologique ».

Cette uniformisation du concept de TSA est probablement en lien avec la généralisation des diagnostics standardisés type ADI-R et ADOS, qui ont à la fois tendance à diagnostiquer le trouble de manière quasi systématique chez les sujets suspects de TSA, tout en étant peu discriminant<sup>6</sup>. De plus, leurs algorithmes ne reprennent pas la totalité de leur riche analyse clinique, et ne permettent pas de circonscrire d'éventuels phénotypes. En particulier, ils n'explorent pas

<sup>3</sup> Rosa H. Résonance : une sociologie de la relation au monde, Paris, La Découverte, septembre 2018, 544 p.

<sup>4</sup> Rosa H. Rendre le monde indisponible, Paris, La Découverte, 2020, 144 p

<sup>5</sup> L'INSERM remet en cause cette notion dans une petite vidéo intitulée : « une épidémie d'autisme, vraiment ? »

<sup>6</sup> La plupart des centres de références ne font pas de diagnostic différentiel, concept qui semble être sorti du champ de la pensée médicale. Ils se contentent d'ajouter parfois des co morbidités.

suffisamment à nos yeux un des deux piliers<sup>7</sup> de l'autisme depuis Kanner, le « besoin d'immuabilité », à part dans sa forme majeure. Les diagnostics de TSA ainsi portés nous paraissent regrouper des réalités cliniques très différentes. Certains centres de référence affinent leur approche clinique dans un deuxième temps, mais dans une optique neuropsychologique en quantifiant les capacités cognitives, instrumentales ou attentionnelles ainsi que le retentissement fonctionnel.

C'est dans ce contexte qu'est publiée en 2023 dans Nature Neuroscience<sup>8</sup> une étude novatrice menée par les chercheurs de la Weill Cornell Medicine (New York), avec les moyens de l'intelligence artificielle, sur des échantillons très fournis. Cette étude met à mal l'uniformisation du concept de TSA. Pour la première fois, à partir d'éléments cliniques, géniques, biologiques, et de neuro imagerie, ces chercheurs américains sous la direction d'Amanda M. Buch, proposent de définir 4 groupes cliniquement distincts de personnes autistes.

Un de ces quatre phénotypes, le deuxième sous-groupe, retient plus particulièrement notre attention, car il correspond à un profil clinique que nous rencontrons régulièrement ces dernières années et qui nous interroge sur les liens entre l'accélération actuelle du monde et TSA. Ce phénotype est ainsi défini: une intelligence verbale supérieure à la moyenne, peu de déficience sociale, des comportements répétitifs, des troubles de la sensorialité. Nous l'appellerons phénotype Weill Cornell 2 (WCP2).

## II. VERS UN NOUVEAU PARADIGME CLINIQUE

Comment étudier les liens éventuels entre ce phénotype WCP2 et les « points d'agression » (ou bombardements d'informations) de la modernité tardive ?

<sup>7</sup> *sameness* (immuabilité) et *aloneness* (isolement)

<sup>8</sup> Buch A.M. et coll. Molecular and network-level mechanisms explaining individual differences in autism Spectrum disorder, Nature Neuroscience, volume 26, avril 2023, pp 650-663

Dans le modèle médical actuel (EBM ou médecine fondée sur les preuves), nous devrions définir des paramètres significatifs orientant vers un lien, modifications sociétales / phénotype WCP2, afin de les soumettre à une étude validée statistiquement. Outre la difficulté de trouver des sujets témoins échappant au monde comme « point d'agression », un tel travail est inenvisageable pour un clinicien de CMP. Les équipes<sup>9</sup> qui en ont théoriquement les moyens logistiques, ne se sont pas lancées dans ce type de recherche. Elles restent sur l'approfondissement du typage clinique et des causes organiques supposées. Elles font référence à l'influence du milieu sous le terme générique et vague d'épigénèse, qui ne dit rien des particularités de l'environnement pouvant déclencher l'apparition du trouble.

Un autre paradigme clinique est donc nécessaire. Ne plus considérer le phénotype WCP2 comme un « fait médical <sup>10</sup> » mais comme un phénomène sociologique complexe au même titre que tous les phénomènes complexes, quelle qu'en soit leur nature. Envisager le WCP2 comme un phénomène complexe implique de ne plus envisager le sujet dans ses capacités et ses incapacités, mais d'envisager le sujet comme un être relationnel dans un environnement relationnel. Les caractéristiques de l'environnement ont autant d'importance que les capacités ou les incapacités du sujet. Le nouveau paradigme clinique ne doit plus être la description des failles du sujet, mais la description des adéquations nécessaires entre le sujet et l'environnement relationnel. La complexité tient dans la recherche d'un fonctionnement adéquat entre un environnement en perpétuelle métamorphose et des sujets engagés dans un travail adaptatif « à l'aveugle », avant même que la trame adaptative ne soit déterminée et conceptualisée (le propre de la modernité tardive). Être efficace au plan relationnel avant que les règles relationnelles ne soient posées.

<sup>9</sup> Le site de l'INSERM consacré à l'autisme ne fait référence à aucune étude de ce type.

<sup>10</sup> Handicap ou maladie.

Ce changement de paradigme nous autorise à utiliser d'autres outils d'analyse, en particulier la notion d'hologramme. L'approche hologrammique est une des trois approches de la complexité selon Edgar Morin<sup>11</sup> (avec les approches dialogiques et récursives). Dans le système complexe sujet relationnel/environnement relationnel, une approche hologrammique doit rechercher les éléments communs à l'œuvre, dans une même période, chez le sujet et dans l'environnement. Qu'est-ce qui est « mis au travail » dans le fort intérieur de chaque individu et sur la place publique? Qu'est-ce qui fait nouveauté dans l'espace public et dans l'espace privé, pouvant définir l'époque par rapport aux époques précédentes ? Quels sont les éléments privés et publics d'un dialogue nouveau qui dessine l'originalité du moment ?

Deux éléments nous paraissent primordiaux au plan individuel, ceux-là même qui définissent l'époque au plan sociétal selon Hartmut Rosa: la course contre la montre, le besoin impératif de rendre le monde disponible.

### III. MÉTHODE: DEUX CAS CLINIQUES EN « PREMIÈRE PERSONNE »

Prenons l'exemple de deux jeunes patients suivis au CMP Musselon de Romans qui présentent les caractéristiques cliniques du WCP2. Analysons leur discours en « première personne »<sup>12</sup> à la recherche de leur manière de décrire les deux éléments cités ci-dessus: leur rapport à l'accélération du temps, leur besoin de rendre le monde disponible.

Paul est un jeune garçon de 8 ans, suivi depuis un an au CMP. Il présente les quatre caractéristiques cliniques du WCP2, à savoir, une très bonne capacité d'apprentissage avec une intelligence verbale de qualité, une très bonne capacité relationnelle duelle mais des difficultés relationnelles avec ses pairs, des intérêts restreints autour des objets « techniques » et de nombreuses réactions émotionnelles au moment des changements de rythme, des troubles de

<sup>11</sup> Morin E. Le défi de la complexité, Chimères, Revue des schizoanalyses, 1988, 5-6, pp. 1-18.

<sup>12</sup> Analyse phénoménologique.

l'oralité en voie d'amélioration et une grande sensibilité aux bruits de l'environnement.

Jean est un jeune adolescent de 12 ans suivi au CMP depuis 6 mois. Il présente les quatre caractéristiques cliniques du WCP2, à savoir, un niveau intellectuel élevé et de bons résultats scolaires, de bonnes compétences relationnelles limitées par ses intérêts très restreints, des îlots de compétences très circonscrits (les Pokemons), de graves troubles de l'oralité évoluant depuis la petite enfance et ayant abouti ces derniers mois à une hospitalisation pour scorbut.

### 3.1 Que Disent Paul et Jean de L'accélération du Temps ?

Paul est un jeune garçon bavard, toujours en mouvement, sautillant d'une jambe sur l'autre, le plus souvent sur la pointe des pieds. Il cherche à retenir mon attention d'une petite voix à la prosodie particulière. Spontanément Paul dessine sur le grand tableau blanc qui occupe tout un mur de mon bureau, des formes « fermées » et très colorées, d'où émanent une impression de vie, comme des cellules vues au microscope avec leurs membranes les séparant de l'extérieur et leurs cytoplasmes occupés par toutes sortes de structures. Si l'impression qui s'en dégage est une impression de fermeture, elle est aussi impression de mouvement et de vitalité.

Il répond aussi très facilement à notre invitation d'un partage sur le tableau blanc. Les thèmes des « histoires à deux »<sup>13</sup> sont variées mais une constante ressort: le besoin pour Paul d'enfermer le personnage auquel il s'identifie, et de l'isoler des turbulences de l'environnement. Enfermer n'est pas exactement le mot, car cet «enfermement» est à géométrie variable, dépendant d'une position existentielle, le choix du personnage d'être plus ou moins dans le mouvement du monde. Un exemple parmi les nombreuses « histoires à deux » partagées. Je cite Paul: « *Les fraises ne veulent pas pousser comme des fraises et être mangées. Si elles restent au soleil, elles deviendront rouges et*

*seront cueillies. Elles décident de devenir des fraises pommes de terre, enterrées. Mais les vers de terre vont les manger. Il faut qu'elles voient un peu le soleil par un trou dans la terre pour être des fraises rouges à l'abri* ». Tout l'enjeu de l'histoire sera de déterminer la taille du dispositif permettant de voir la lumière du soleil et de grandir comme fraise, mais d'être néanmoins à l'abri du destin commun des fraises, celui d'être mangé. Une autre « histoire à deux » raconte les hésitations d'un poisson rouge à sortir de son bocal pour affronter l'océan etc... Paul envisage le temps dans sa dimension existentielle. Il décrit des personnages qui ont conscience de leur finitude et qui tentent de construire leur destin à l'abri de l'agitation du monde. Contrairement à une thématique anxieuse classique (dévoration, perte, abandon, échec...) Paul n'utilise pas les systèmes de défense de la fuite ou du combat. Il temporise. Il ne compte que sur lui-même face à l'environnement qu'il ne définit pas comme hostile, mais dont il tente de minimiser la pression constante. Nous pourrions résumer son attitude par la formule suivante: « *prendre son temps même si je n'ai pas le temps* ».

Jean a un contact bien différent. Fatigué par ses problèmes somatiques (ne mange aucun fruit et légume, n'arrive pas à prendre le traitement per os de vitamine C, est amaigri, a des douleurs liées à son scorbut, est alimenté par sonde au cours d'une hospitalisation de jour), Jean parle doucement, d'une voix monocorde. Il est néanmoins dans un contact de qualité, soutenant une attention conjointe, répondant à nos questions, mais avec la limite d'une grande difficulté d'introspection. Jean répond souvent « *je ne sais pas* ». Deux sujets nous paraissent représentatifs de son rapport à l'accélération du temps. Jean raconte des pensées intrusives sous la forme de séries de mots toujours identiques qui mis bout à bout n'auraient pas de sens. Ils peuvent occuper jusqu'à la moitié de son espace psychique disponible. Il souhaite me dire ces mots, mais après plusieurs essais infructueux, il fond en larmes, incapable de les partager (avec moi, mais aussi avec ses parents dont il est très proche), ce qui empêche tout « travail d'association d'idées ». Contrairement à un

<sup>13</sup> Sorte de bandes dessinées où chacun à tour de rôle nous faisons progresser l'histoire sans limitation ni cadre à la créativité.

mécanisme obsessionnel classique, Jean ne lutte pas contre une pensée magique qui lui imposerait ces séries de mots en échange de l'absence de dangers pour lui ou pour son entourage. Ici, aucune transaction. Ses pensées intrusives ressemblent à un décompte temporel subi, sans sens perceptible, sans intentionnalité masquée, mais comme le martèlement du temps à l'intérieur de Jean, temps qui semble suspendu pour Jean lui-même dans son rapport au monde. Le monde s'invite dans Jean alors que Jean tente de le congédier.

De même Jean est envahi par des images de films, de jeux vidéo, ou de bandes dessinées, qu'il vit comme traumatiques. Là aussi il a beaucoup de mal à les décrire, leur description ayant la même tonalité traumatique. Aidé de ses parents nous comprenons que ces images sont relativement banales, faisant partie de l'iconographie de l'espace public, de ce à quoi nous sommes tous confrontés au quotidien. Comme pour le martèlement du temps, Jean tente de se protéger des « points d'agression » du monde que sont ces images vécues comme violentes mais communes. Cette tentative de contrôle échoue, laissant Jean passif face à un bombardement intime. Il est démuni. Ici aussi la recherche de sens de la nature de l'image traumatique a peu d'intérêt. C'est le bombardement massif du monde tel qu'il est qui pose problème à Jean.

### *3.2 Que Disent Paul et Jean de la Disponibilité du Monde ?*

Paul a une grande curiosité sur le fonctionnement du monde. Il pose de très nombreuses questions à ses parents, son père en particulier qui a une profession scientifique. A chacune de nos rencontres il met en place un rituel: me faire deviner à travers un dessin au tableau blanc, le détail agrandi d'un instrument scientifique ou d'un outil. Paul se focalise ainsi sur ce qui lui semble être la meilleure manière d'appréhender le monde, de le rendre disponible à sa curiosité (visibilité, accessibilité) mais aussi à son action (utilisation, maîtrise). Paul se contente pour l'instant de s'entraîner, et de vérifier dans le regard de l'autre la justesse de ses progrès. Rien n'est fermé, Paul n'a pas encore défini son futur pôle de compétence. Il en prépare les outils. La

dynamique est néanmoins très visible : avoir les moyens le jour venu d'être en position de force dans son désir de rendre le monde disponible. Ici point d'angoisse. Juste de la méthode, et beaucoup d'énergie.

Jean est à un stade bien plus avancé. Il a su définir des îlots de compétence<sup>14</sup> extrêmement précis. Après s'être intéressé de manière exclusive, aux dinosaures pendant deux ans, à Sonic pendant six mois, il s'intéresse depuis trois ans aux Pokémon. Son intérêt est exclusif et empêche toute autre curiosité. Il a créé sa propre association, avec des statuts et des assemblées générales, a tenté de mobiliser des vocations dans son collège par des affiches qu'il a pris beaucoup de temps à confectionner, n'est disponible pour ses camarades qu'à travers le thème des Pokémon. Ses tentatives d'entrer en relation avec les autres en dehors de la cellule familiale à travers le thème Pokémon ne sont pas couronnées de succès (affiches déchirées au collège, un seul ami dans son association, isolement relationnel dans la cour de récréation) mais ne le découragent pas et ne modifient pas sa stratégie. Même dans la cellule familiale, les Pokémon constituent le seul sujet d'échange en dehors de ses problèmes de santé (angoisses, troubles du sommeil, troubles alimentaires). Jean ne peut concevoir que ses parents aient un autre centre d'intérêt que les Pokémon. Il a offert à sa mère pour son anniversaire un coffret Pokémon en espérant qu'elle le garde intact pour qu'il prenne de la valeur comme il le fait parfois lui-même. Jean connaît tout des Pokémon. Il n'imagine d'avenir qu'à travers eux. Il se voit travailler plus tard dans la Pokémon compagnie. Jean est arrivé à un tel niveau de compétence qu'il est en difficulté de partage, même avec ses parents pourtant en demande de relation. Par exemple, il ne peut jouer avec eux, étant le seul à avoir un « deck » de qualité. Jean n'imagine pas constituer un « deck » pour ses parents afin qu'ils soient en mesure de jouer avec (contre) lui. Sa maîtrise doit être totale. Nous pouvons dire que Jean est un enfant de son époque. Il en réalise le programme, rendre le monde totalement disponible, mais dans une parcelle du monde, son

<sup>14</sup> Le pôle est devenu îlot car à distance des autres.

îlot de compétence. Devant une telle ambition, la relation avec les autres devient problématique. Même si Jean a de bonnes compétences relationnelles, même si ses outils relationnels ne sont pas défaillants, sa polarisation sur son îlot de compétence réduit les sujets partageables. Pouvoir être en lien avec les autres nécessite des capacités, mais aussi un minimum commun partageable, ce dont Jean s'éloigne, et ceci en raison de son besoin de rendre le monde totalement disponible, ou tout au moins une partie de ce monde.

### 3.3 *Le Phénotype TSA / WCP2 Face à L'intensité de la «Présence-Du- Monde » Dans la Modernité Tardive*

Notre analyse en « première personne » envisage une corrélation entre l'accélération du temps dans la modernité tardive avec son bombardement informationnel permanent, et des tentatives de protection de la part de Paul et de Jean, plus ou moins inopérantes.

Elle envisage également une corrélation entre le programme de la modernité tardive de rendre le monde disponible, et sa réalisation par Paul et Jean dans des parcelles du monde (îlots de compétence).

La protection maladroite face aux agressions du monde semble première. Nous ne sommes pas en position de tisser des relations de causalité, mais l'accroissement à nos yeux du phénotype WCP2, qui comporte d'importants troubles de la sensorialité, interroge sur l'inadaptation grandissante de ces profils aux exigences de la modernité tardive Ce qui nous paraît essentiel dans l'analyse clinique phénoménologique de ces profils, c'est la particularité de leurs troubles anxieux qui diffèrent des troubles anxieux classiques (angoisse d'abandon, de perte, d'échec, de dévoration, d'impuissance...) et même psychotiques (angoisse d'envahissement, de morcellement, de persécution...). Ces profils TSA n'envisagent pas le monde dans une intentionnalité mais dans l'intensité de sa présence. C'est de cette intensité de présence dont ils tentent de se protéger dans une mise à l'abri plus ou moins efficace. Ce qui donne à leur

“présence-au-monde” cette impression particulière de ne pas être totalement dans le jeu commun<sup>15</sup>, de se tenir à distance.

La construction d'îlots de compétence paraît seconde. Elle permet à la fois d'organiser cette distance relative face aux « agressions tous azimuts du monde », tout en restant en partie dans le jeu commun, tout en réalisant partiellement le programme de l'époque. L'îlot de compétence est donc d'abord un îlot (être à l'abri) tout en restant compétent aux yeux de l'autre. Et pourtant si le sujet TSA excelle dans cet îlot de compétence, il s'isolera progressivement du jeu commun par manque de sujets partageables, ce qui nous fait dire que les troubles de la communication et de la relation sont seconds dans ce phénotype TSA / WCP2.

Nos deux jeunes patients sont des garçons, comme la grande majorité des enfants diagnostiqués TSA. Les filles porteuses de TSA semblent moins sujettes à la constitution d'îlots de compétence. Elles ont parfois une « amie poisson pilote » qui est à la fois un filtre protecteur contre l'intensité de la « présence-du-monde », et une interprète dans les exigences relationnelles sociétales. L'effet protecteur et normalisateur de « l'amie poisson pilote » explique peut-être que les filles porteuses de TSA passent souvent sous les radars diagnostiques, jusqu'au début de l'âge adulte où la donne relationnelle change.

## IV. CONCLUSION

La possibilité d'un lien entre les particularités de la « modernité tardive » selon Hartmut Rosa et certaines formes cliniques de TSA retient notre attention depuis plusieurs années. La mise à jour en 2023 d'un sous-type de TSA par l'équipe de la Weill Cornell Medecine de New York, sous type auquel nous avons donné l'acronyme WCP2, nous a permis d'envisager une exploration clinique de cette hypothèse. Nous avons fait le choix d'envisager ce phénotype comme un phénomène sociologique complexe ce qui nous a permis d'utiliser l'approche hologrammique. Afin

<sup>15</sup> Le Mitsein (être-avec) d'Heidegger.

d'affiner notre approche clinique phénoménologique dans le format de cet article, nous nous sommes limités à deux cas cliniques.

Le vécu de Paul (8 ans) et Jean (12 ans) nous a permis de faire des corrélations entre le monde comme « point d'agression » et leur besoin de s'en tenir à distance, ainsi qu'entre le programme de la modernité tardive (rendre le monde disponible) et leurs tentatives de rester dans le jeu commun à travers leurs îlots de compétence. Nous ne pouvons faire de lien de causalité entre leur manière spécifique de faire face à l'intensité de la « présence-du-monde » et leurs troubles de la sensorialité, mais nous retenons cette possibilité.

Notre analyse clinique semble distinguer au plan temporel, les tentatives de se tenir à distance du monde comme « point d'agression » qui paraissent premières, du besoin de réaliser malgré tout le programme de la « modernité tardive » en rendant le monde disponible à travers les îlots de compétence qui paraît second.

De même les angoisses de Paul et de Jean semblent spécifiques et nous ne pouvons les comparer aux angoisses communément rencontrées chez nos jeunes patients.

Quelque soit l'étiologie de ce trouble WCP2, ces particularités psycho dynamiques doivent nous interroger sur la prise en charge des patients qui en sont porteurs: comment les protéger physiquement et psychiquement de l'intensité de la «présence-du-monde», comment les aider à rester dans le jeu commun sans s'enfermer dans la fausse solution des îlots de compétence ?

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# Conceptual Metaphors in Psychotherapeutic Discourse: Insights from Irvin Yalom's Fiction

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## ABSTRACT

The goal of the research is illustrating how the conceptual metaphors “dispute is a war”, “dispute is a dance”, “time is money”, “life is a cruise” organize the process of psychotherapy, help to achieve deep constructive communication in psychotherapeutic practice. Irvin Yalom, American writer and psychoanalyst, had described some psychoterapeutical techniques in his fiction "The Schopenhauer Cure" and "Mommy and the Meaning of Life". Thanks to the analysis of the psychotherapist's inner speech through fiction, it is possible to understand the client's unconscious processes through elements of conceptual metaphors (CM) that organize the communication process in psychotherapy. The key discoveries are: 1) conclusion that psychotherapeutic discourse (PD) is not just a kind of medical discourse (MD), but a specific discourse that use metaphor and CM in speech as the essential sign and cure speech strategy; 2) CM organize the composition of sets and illustrate the process of thinking and cure in fiction. The theoretical frame of the paper is grounded in Lakoff and Johnson's CM theory. The study advances knowledge in the field of PD, metaphor analysis, literary discourse, explain the role of CM in PD. The findings can help to increase speech techniques of helping professions.

**Keywords:** psychotherapeutic discourse; medical discourse; conceptual metaphors in therapy; psychotherapy in fiction; metaphorical language in psychotherapy; discourse analysis in therapy; therapeutic communication; existential discourse; narrative therapy; psycholinguistics in psychotherapy.

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## ABSTRACT

The goal of the research is illustrating how the conceptual metaphors “dispute is a war”, “dispute is a dance”, “time is money”, “life is a cruise” organize the process of psychotherapy, help to achieve deep constructive communication in psychotherapeutic practice. Irvin Yalom, American writer and psychoanalyst, had described some psychotherapeutic techniques in his fiction “The Schopenhauer Cure” and “Mommy and the Meaning of Life”. Thanks to the analysis of the psychotherapist's inner speech through fiction, it is possible to understand the client's unconscious processes through elements of conceptual metaphors (CM) that organize the communication process in psychotherapy. The key discoveries are: 1) conclusion that psychotherapeutic discourse (PD) is not just a kind of medical discourse (MD), but a specific discourse that use metaphor and CM in speech as the essential sign and cure speech strategy; 2) CM organize the composition of sets and illustrate the process of thinking and cure in fiction. The theoretical frame of the paper is grounded in Lakoff and Johnson's CM theory. The study advances knowledge in the field of PD, metaphor analysis, literary discourse, explain the role of CM in PD. The findings can help to increase speech techniques of helping professions.

*Introduction.* The purpose of this article is analyzing the metaphorical language of PD integrated into I. Yalom's fiction. Metaphor is a safe way to verbalize forbidden topics with a client during the psychotherapeutic sets, to create a safe space, to achieve a good setting, to reduce the client's resistance, to shift the conversation from unconsciousness to consciousness, etc. Practice of using conceptual metaphors is a tool for understanding the deepest layers of the communication between the client and his

*analyst.* The purpose of therapy is to change the client, to help him find the lost meanings of life, while the purpose of medical care is to cure the client of a physical illness. So, the therapy works with the words and changes the structure of human's thinking, but medicine treats an organ and does not work with a person as a whole. Russian linguist Vladimir Karasik considers PD as a part of the medical discourse (MD); still, the presence of conceptual metaphors in PD and other features makes it possible to distinguish PD into the independent one. The relevance of linguistic analysis lies in the need to study other discourses of helping professions (DHP) and in the fact that the present level of the MD functioning requires wider using PD.

*Methodology and sources:* The article is based on J. Lakoff and M. Johnson's conceptual metaphor theory, which supposes that CM organize unconsciousness and deconstructs the frames of thinking.

The theoretical basis of the analysis carried out in the article are works discussed the PD and the metaphorical language of psychotherapy (I. V. Karasik, A. R. Markin, M. S. Grineva, E. V. Ermolaeva, etc.). The artistic texts by the American practitioner, psychotherapist, and the author of psychological tales Irvin Yalom are the date of the analysis of the PD included in fiction (PDIF). The research materials were selected according to two criteria: 1) a wide range of materials of the therapeutic process, descriptions of dialogues and polylogue during psychotherapeutic sessions. In fiction, which includes psychotherapeutic discourse with the inner speech of the author (psychotherapist), it is possible to trace deep therapeutic processes (transference and countertransference), the client's thoughts on the therapist). The second criterion of texts selection was connection with the meaning of life in order to trace the verbal

expression of the client's changing positions from the conceptual bottom to the conceptual top. In the selected texts, there were tracked "coded" manifestations of conceptual metaphors, which could show the processes of struggle, cooperation, understanding the role of money in psychotherapy, and attitude to life. In the process of text analysis, attention was paid to the speech changes that accompanied the client's cure processes.

Research methods include discourse analysis, comparative analysis, content analysis, semantic analysis, and conceptual analysis.

Results and discussion: The article describes the PD as an independent one that based on I. Yalom text's analysis. Among the central conceptual metaphors in the PD of this paper, there are some, such as "dispute is a war", "dispute is a dance", "time is money", and "life is a cruise". Orientation metaphors, where the UP-position is associated with the concept of mental health, well-being, altruism, strength, high status, rationality, and the DOWN-position – with images of illness, failure, low social status and emotionality show the process of healing in psychotherapy. The paper illustrates how conceptual metaphors construct a dialogue, helping to understand a problem deeper, to improve the contact between the therapist and the client(s), and to facilitate the client's transition from the conceptual "bottom" to the conceptual "top" in the therapeutic process.

The research identifies functions of metaphor in the discourse under analysis. The pivotal functions of metaphor in the discourse are 1) establishing contact between the agents of the therapy and addressing the client's resistance through imagery, 2) genre-forming: constructing a narrative in dialogue and polylogue, 3) representative and transformational: encouraging positive changes through intensive speech practice. Metaphor is a safe way to verbalize forbidden topics. The representing function of metaphor shines through the conceptualization of feelings and emotions. The transformational function involves the gradual development of the CM in the process

of dialogues between the client and the therapist, which has a therapeutic effect.

**Keywords:** psychotherapeutic discourse; medical discourse; conceptual metaphors in therapy; psychotherapy in fiction; metaphorical language in psychotherapy; discourse analysis in therapy; therapeutic communication; existential discourse; narrative therapy; psycholinguistics in psychotherapy.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

Researchers traditionally define classical metaphor as a poetic, expressive tool for making speech meaningful and deep. "The study of metaphor is traditional, but it would be wrong to think that it is supported only by the power of tradition. On the contrary, it is becoming more intense and rapidly expanding, capturing different fields of knowledge – philosophy, logic, psychology, psychoanalysis, hermeneutics, literary criticism, theory of fine arts, semiotics, rhetoric, linguistic philosophy, different schools of linguistics," supposes N.D. Arutyunova, highlights the metaphor as a kind of mediator between the text and the discourse, and between different discourses [1, p. 5].

Readers of American textbooks know that scientists and popularizers of science use metaphors to explain complicated physical and chemical phenomena, and a good teacher uses the reduction method in the classroom to explain the phenomenon in a few bullet points. Even though, abstractions are difficult to visualize, metaphors can be increasingly found in scientific texts. If people want to understand something new and complex, they invariably rely on what they already know. Today's scholars rely heavily on computer models to make predictions, and computer modelling is a highly sophisticated form of analogical reasoning. This makes the language of

modern scientific discourse closer to the daily discourse and speech, which some scientists note [2]. This fact reflects this tendency of scientific discourse to the daily speech [3].

## II. METHODOLOGY AND SOURCES

Classical metaphor considered to belong to natural language, but not to the realm of thought or action. Classical metaphor is a linguistic phenomenon based on comparing the properties of some objects with others. Representatives of the non-classical theory of metaphor, George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, argue that the conceptual metaphor permeates our entire daily life, manifesting itself in thinking and action [4, p. 387-416]. CM is an element of thinking that is determined by physical sensations and experience. Cognitivists believe that our conceptual system is predominantly unconscious (metaphorical) in nature, and experience and behaviour are primarily determined by metaphor. Since thinking is connected with language, studying of metaphors in language, structuring our perception, gives access to many unconscious aspects of human thinking. The intrinsically CM in psychotherapy lifts the veil over the destructive perception of the world. The saturation of metaphorical language, as well as specific communicative tactics and strategies using CM, allows us to distinguish the psychotherapeutic discourse (PD) as a separate one from the medical discourse (MD) [5; 6; 7].

According the typology of constitutional discourses proposed by Russian philologist V.I. Karasik, PD is a type of MD. The medical and the psychotherapeutic discourses coincide to the greatest extent in terms of goal parameters, tonality and values, but they differ in language. Both include the elements of the religious discourse, so they both use suggestive techniques. "Medical discourse is one of the oldest, and the doctor, as the bearer of special knowledge, acts as a modified priest who was given the right to turn to the heavenly powers to heal the sick. The proximity of medical and religious types of discourse leads to a significant degree of suggestiveness of medical communication between a doctor and a patient", writes V. Karasik

[5, p. 239]. Indeed, they have similar goals, but there is a significant difference: a psychotherapist cannot write medical prescriptions. Both professions have a sacred character, both of them belong to the helping professions, have an existential discourse in their genesis, in our opinion, and their agents have been perceived as sacred figures, "*bearers of truth*" [7]. Philosophers were the first self-therapists who integrated PD into fiction in their diaries and confessions, so the first examples of PD lie in the existential discourse, which includes religious one. The PD partly deals with the description of truth only indirectly through limiting and describing concepts and themes. Along with the general aspects of the practice of therapy as "*self-care*", which can be designated as strategies and tactics, a psychotherapist (as well as a philosopher) certainly possesses the art of irrational suggestive influence on clients. This creates a borderline phenomenon that is neither purely scientific nor an art that is born at the junction of discourses [8]. Both professions, medical and psychological, have their professional language and ethics, aimed at achieving a better understanding between communicating agents. The word therapy is essential in both [9].

Despite the similarities, there are a number of significant differences between these discourses. The element of seriousness and unambiguity is essential in MD [8; 10]. In MD, there is a particular system of signs, like white coats, medical instruments, ambulances with a cross, etc. The psychotherapists have their specific system of signs like a couch and a tube, often black clothes, a half-empty, uninformative environment (for psychoanalysts), it can be a ward or a room, as well as an ordinary apartment, office or gym for training or sets.

The task of doctors is to correctly diagnose and prescribe treatment, while the task of a psychotherapist is to avoid making diagnoses. The goal of a doctor is to cure the patient, while the goal of a therapist is to raise a client's self-esteem and help him to adapt socially [5, p. 239]. For example, in the novel "*The Curse of the Hungarian Cat*", client Mr Halston reproaches his therapist Dr Lash for unprofessionalism,

confusing the "rules of the game" of medical and psychotherapeutic treatment: "*No offence, Doctor, but I'm accustomed to more professionalism when seeing a physician who offers a discrete diagnosis and prescribes a treatment*" [I, p. 204]. The psychotherapeutic technique involves improvisation and a change of tactics to work out the problem with words, metaphors, dreams, reminiscences and fantasies, not medications.

Both professions are close in the secrecy of non-disclosure of a disease or problem, but with the written consent of clients, both doctors and psychotherapists sometimes describe their interesting cases in their books. There is a significant difference in the language of these discourses: for doctors of all countries, knowledge of Latin is mandatory, and psychotherapists use ordinary language, but its application requires knowledge of unique strategies and tactics (attachment, detachment, transference, countertransference, interpretation, etc.). "One of the features of the language of medicine is that, along with unique medical terms, there are commonly used words denoting synonymous concepts that are synonymous, for example, stomach and belly, variola and smallpox, morbilli and measles. The success of communication depends on the choice of a particular word (term or common)" [9, p. 17]. Psychotherapists do not use special terms in sessions at all, while doctors use them as a kind of sacred words that have a strong influence on the patient [8]. As we can see, there are strong reasons to separate these discourses. Many of their techniques are connected with only words. Kathleen Warden Ferrara explores the skilful and creative uses of language in the complicated speech event of psychotherapy. It shows personal experience and feelings narrative, jointly constructed metaphorical extensions, strategies of repetition, reconstruction, her paper emphasizes the interactive nature of PD and shows how language is mutually constructed the therapeutic process [10].

Moreover, in the modern practice, when reducing the time for medical examination in Russia, elements of psychoanalyst's language can play an

important auxiliary role both for clarifying the causes of the disease and for stabilizing and maintaining the patient's health and behaviour. Therefore, the study of linguistic tactics of psychotherapeutic discourse seems relevant for the training of physicians [1; 12].

An important difference between MD and PD could be mentioned in the asymmetry of the speech flow between the doctor and the patient and between the therapist and the client. The doctor's patient says little or nothing at all. The therapist expects a stream of consciousness, complaints, and requests from the analyzant. In a typical session, both in the individual set or in a group, the client's speech significantly exceeds that of the therapist. The client and the therapist should interpret the client's dreams, metaphors, and analyze nonverbal language as manifestations of the unconscious. Medicine, as a rule, does not work with the causes of the unconscious, but more often deals with the consequences of mental and physical injuries.

Based on a comparison of crucial elements of discourse, which V.I. Karasik defines as the basis for distinguishing an independent discourse, we can talk about the possibility of separating PD from MD. Analyzing the speech of a psychotherapist, researchers note the metaphorical nature of speech in PD [7], the predominance of emotionality over rationality [8], the high variability of the psychotherapist's speech practices [9], the presence of meditative elements in the speech and its proximity to magical and meditative practices [12; 13]. Using the methodology of analyzing conceptual metaphors, according to Lakoff and M. Johnson, we illustrate the use of a conceptual metaphor in PD integrated into fiction [14].

As mentioned above, the genesis of PD lies in existential discourse, so metaphors here can be both convoluted and expanded, allegorically replacing the client's existential problem (anxiety, fear of death, loss, fear of life, lack of existential meanings, etc.), receive a different emotional content as therapy progress. Since the primary speech genres of psychotherapy are a dialogue and a polylogue, the metaphor sounds, repeated,

modified, supplemented and truncated due to its constant variable reproducibility from the mouth of the agent and client of psychotherapy. If we draw an analogy with music, a metaphor is like a leitmotiv, which varies, modulates, sounds in various settings, is polyphonically intertwined with other themes; fragments are cut off from it and begin to live an independent life, it turns into another theme, etc.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

One of the metaphorical concepts that permeates the PD sphere due to dialogue, as the primary genre, is *"dispute is war"*. Starting from the dialogical practices of philosophizing in ancient Greek schools, the principle of dialogue permeates both philosophical and everyday speech. Agon (competition of representatives of different ideologies) is the primary principle of the composition of ancient Greek tragedies [15]. In ancient Greek tragedy, the maximum number of agonists was three: one expressed the views of the generic law themis, the other - the views of the personality nomos, the third was neutral or blind (like King Oedipus). In the agon, the participants exchanged their views. Daily dialogue involves tuning in to another person and talking about common topics that do not have serious ideological differences. Dialogue in PD presupposes the presence of two agonists: the "deluded" client and the therapist, the bearer of truth. During the dialogue, the client should find ways to achieve the truth by changing his perception of the situation. CM, which forms the composition of the dialogues, shows how this process is carried out.

In PD, in a dialogue, the main communicative tactic aim is ensuring the client(s) and the agent (psychotherapist) to exchange judgments, interpretations, description of feelings, thoughts "here and now". The author describes the events during the psychotherapy in "Seven Advanced Lessons in the Therapy of Grief", *"That session was less like therapy than a wrestling match. It was the most serious fight we had had"* [II, p.113]. *"I am already sick of this walking through minefields,"* the psychotherapist tells the client, who cannot get out of the situation of loss and

shows aggression towards him [I, p. 113]. In the psychotherapist's fantasies, a real fight arises when he describes their interaction, *"By making contact, emotional contact, by wrestling with her (I speak figuratively, though there were times I felt we were on the brink of a physical struggle), I was proving again and again that the black ooze was a fiction that neither tarred, nor repelled, nor endangered me. Irene clung so firmly to the metaphor that she was convinced each time I approached her rage that I would either abandon her or die"*[I, p.113].

In the epigraph to the first chapter of "The Schopenhauer Cure", the author presents the meaning of life by analogy with the struggle; *"Every breath we draw wards the death that constantly impinges on us.... Ultimately, death must triumph, for by birth it has already become our lot and it plays with its prey only for a short while before swallowing it up. However, we continue our life with great interest and much solicitude as long as possible, just as we blow out a soap bubble as long and as large as possible, although with the perfect certainty that it will burst"* [II, p. 9].

People in Western European culture are accustomed to competition and struggle; they strive to win in a dispute, where they aggressively defend their position, and they talk in disputes in terms of war. The person they are arguing with is perceived as an opponent, antagonist, and the rival. People expose someone's point of view and defend their own. Thus, such a dialogue can be considered as a battle rather than peaceful communication aimed at achieving the truth. A. R. Markin, speaking about Dr. Kurpatov's psychotherapeutic methods, gives an example of the personification of abstract anxiety with concrete images: the enemy, the offender, the Mongol-Tatar hordes [16, p. 104]. Something scary needs to tame, have a cup of tea with him, and talk. In Yalom's *"The Curse of the Hungarian Cat"*, the therapist conducts a conversation session with a giant Cat, which is a metaphor for fear and appears either in patient's dreams or in hallucinations. This psychological novel, with a large amount of incomprehensible, fantastic, includes aspects of magical discourse with a

description of elements of Erickson hypnosis, the technique of "reducing" the image of a colossal cat, which eventually becomes smaller and leaves. A Cat in the framework of psychotherapeutic discourse can act as a metaphor for fear, struggle with men [17].

The conceptual metaphor also presupposes the gradual seizure of enemy territory, in the terms of PD – a psychotherapist's territory. Describing the therapeutic process, practitioners use the phrases "to move forward", "to lose his/her rational defenses", "to show resistance". Thus, Irwin Yalom describes the client's behaviour at the end of the session in the novel *"Seven Advanced Lessons in the Therapy of Grief"*, "Sometimes she sat there at the end of the hour glaring and refusing to budge" [I, p. 108].

When planning actions, the therapist uses specific strategies and tactics. Convinced of the weakness of one approach, he chooses another. Emotional intensity, the power of resistance, and aggression of clients contribute to changing the client's condition developing productive dynamics in therapy, reducing the resistance. Resistance is a kind of defense, when the client tries to deny prominent unconscious topics, at the beginning of the therapy, the psychotherapist acts as the leading parental figure, onto whom conflicts with loved ones (the father, first of all) are projected. Then the text of the "therapist = father" becomes the client's inner speech, which gives the last greater confidence in his actions.

J. Lakoff and M. Johnson say that the "dispute" can be much milder, as between two partners in a dance. I. Yalom describes this process through the conceptual metaphor of "argument is dancing", where there is no winner, where the partners are performers, and the purpose of such interaction is a harmonious and beautiful dance performance. In such a culture, people will discuss their positions in a different, softer way, using different concepts and tactics of dialogue, that is, to think in terms about dance. The character of I. Yalom's novel *"Seven Advanced Lessons in the Therapy of Grief"* has a dream: "In another (dream – add by I. Sh.), she dances with a wiry young man, who suddenly leaves her on the dance floor. She turns

to a mirror and recoils to see her face covered with sagging red skin pockmarked with hideous boils and blood blisters" [I, p. 132]. This conceptual metaphor indicates a good relationship that ended (the heroin's husband died), but simple metaphors "hideous boils" and "blood blisters" say about hidden from the women problems.

The second crucial conceptual metaphor, according to J. Lakoff and M. Johnson is "time is money". It permeates the entire market system of relations that exists in modern society and in psychotherapy. Money is the equivalent of a spent resource (time, effort, knowledge, strength, warmth). In PD, time experiences as productive, wasted, something calculated, invested wisely, saved, etc. Being asked by the therapist about what is happening now, in the story "Double Exposure", the client answers, "Frustrating! Another hundred-fifty-dollar pop and I don't feel better". – "So I failed again today. Took your money and didn't help." [I, p. 157].

In his reminiscences about Philip in "The Schopenhauer Cure", talking with a difficult client, the therapist reproaches himself for not solving the problem, despite the time and money spent on sessions, but his inner voice objects, "Why would Philip continue for three years if he had gotten nothing? Why would he continue to spend all that money for nothing? And God knows Philip hated to spend money?" [II, p. 24]. Arranging for the therapist Dr. Julius to give him a recommendation as a psychotherapist, Philip agrees to the offer to attend Julius' group therapy instead of paying, Philip offers to help the doctor by introducing him to Schopenhauer's philosophy, which should cure the dying therapist. A time resource in the existential therapy is a valuable thing, a short time of life before the news of an imminent death is a very valuable thing. Living in the moment "here and now" is the most useful thing, the goal of therapy and life.

The sequence by which a conceptual metaphor is organized and functions suggests that the mechanisms of one concept work to reveal the unconscious realm, while some aspects are necessarily hidden. People focus on one aspect of



the concept (illuminate it), but do not notice, displace other aspects of this concept (obscure it). For example, Magnolia in I. Yalom's novel *"Southern Comfort"* considers her dream of becoming a teacher has not been fulfilled, although she practically became a teacher for many children of hers. Due to the dominant thought of early death, a person loses his taste for life, becomes depressed, feels that his life is dark, hopeless, that is, symbolically ceases to live. On the contrary, the minute-by-minute emphasis on a high quality of life, despite the verdict, increases the value of life. In the novel *"Travels with Paula"*, Paula speaks of a thought that a priest once told her, *"He who has a 'why' can put up with any 'how,'" the priest reframed her suffering. "Your cancer is your cross," he told her. "Your suffering is your ministry"* [I, p. 21]. By helping others, a person replaces some meanings with others. I. Yalom also uses the author's metaphor of *"life is a cruise."* Even though that life will end, it is valuable because of what a person does every moment, that is, the quality of life. In loss therapy, the therapist uses this metaphor, *"Don't take an ocean voyage," I advised, "Your reasoning would render the trip joyless. Why invest yourself in anything, why make friends, why take an interest in anyone, if the voyage is to end?"* [I, p. 140]. Yalom also associates good relations between therapist and patient in *"Double Exposure"* with the excitement, *"It requires a relationship that has to be well established, that will enable therapist and patient to weather the ensuing storm"* [I, p. 196]. So, this metaphor helps as identifying the therapeutic session to a part of life.

Lakoff and Johnson also talk about another systemic quality of the conceptual metaphor as an orientation associated with such oppositions as "TOP – BOTTOM", "inside – outside", "obverse – reverse side", "deep – shallow", "central – peripheral". Such orientation oppositions stem from the physicality of our thinking. The concepts of well-being, happiness, and success are associated with the top, *"I feel on top," "she perked up," "they were flying on the wings of joy."* Sadness and illness are associated with the bottom: *"he lost heart," "illness knocked him*

*down," "the severity of the problems landed him."* The indirect characterization of Philip, who came to group therapy for the first time, conveyed by such "low", "diminishing" epithets, elements of an expanded metaphor, *"With his smoothly combed reddish hair, skin stretched taut over his cheekbones, wary eyes, and heavy footsteps, Philip looked like a convict being led to the scaffold"* [II, p. 95]. Sadness and despondency depress a person, make him smaller, lower his head, and shrink him. Positive emotions straighten a person and make him raise his head, feel his importance, strength, and growth.

Consciousness is connected with the up and the outer world, the unconscious – with the down and the inner space. There is a physical basis under these symbolic meanings: all living things sleep lying down, the disease forces a person to lie down, sleep and healthy animal and a person are awake vertically: they are active, exploring a large territory. Death and illness are linguistically linked to the bottom and health and well-being are linked to the top. A person, who controls the situation, sets the tone, has great knowledge, has power, is on top, a subordinate, incompetent person is on the bottom. Julius recalls his arrogance: how many times he took on more than he could carry, how many times he demanded the impossible from clients, *"he had been healer, doctor, priest, and shaman..."* [II, p. 123]. The desire to do a lot speaks about the strength of a therapist: to be able to do a lot, you need to set challenging goals for yourself. The surge of energy after therapy is a consequence of improving the condition, raising self-esteem: *"One of the major side benefits of leading a group – a fact never stated in the professional literature – is that a potent therapy group often heals the therapist as well as the patients. Though Julius had often experienced personal relief after a meeting, he never was certain of the precise mechanism. Was it simply a result of forgetting himself for ninety minutes, or of the altruistic act of therapy, or of enjoying his own expertise, feeling proud of his abilities, and enjoying the high regard of others? All of the above?"* [II, p. 123].

The concept of more is oriented upwards, less – downwards. By the amount of things said during

group psychotherapy, one can judge the status and mental health of a person in a group. An increase in income, a decrease in suicide attempts, increases in the number of friends is the top, a decrease is the bottom in "Travelling with Paula": "The number of our "flock," as Paula called this skyrocketed," Yalom writes about the successful therapy process. "New, terror-stricken faces appeared every week or two. Paula took the new members in hand, inviting them to lunch, teaching, charming, and spiritualizing them. Soon we were so large we had to split into two" [I, p. 29]. As you can see Paula here is endowed with the attributes of a guardian angel, with wings, comforting, inspiring, feeding, and making miracles. After the enthusiasm of electronic fans, "Her self-esteem surged. She read and reread her fan mail. She collected: praise, profiles, phone numbers, information" [I, p. 199]. The disclosure of the inner world, stories about oneself and an increase in the amount of information bring the group members closer to the therapist, and the story of a life event increases its significance and awareness, "Stewart has grown noticeably in recent months, more than in the previous three years" [II, p. 336].

From the perspective of society's assessment in Western European culture, people perceive the rational as the best (TOP), the emotional perceive as bad (BOTTON): "the discussion was emotional", "emotional dispute" – in these phrases, emphasizes the uncontrollability, bias of judgments, therefore, their assessment is low, biased. In Western European culture, people believe that they should follow by reason, not emotions, when discussing difficult situations, and rationalization in psychotherapy is considered one of the "mature" defenses. The work on interpreting metaphors in PD is developing of a mechanism for rationalizing complicated feelings, which the client gradually realizes, thanks to the therapist.

Initially, the interpretation of the metaphor of "black ooze" sounds in the psychotherapist's inner speech from the "Seven Advanced Lessons in the Therapy of Grief", "The black ooze metaphor was potent because it was overdetermined: it was a single image that satisfied and expressed several

*different unconscious dynamics. Grief rage was one important meaning. But there were others: for example, the belief that she was poisonous, contaminated, fatally jinxed.*" [I, p. 113]. The symbol of ooze also refers to the bottom and, thus, characterizes a negative attitude towards oneself as an unworthy, dangerous person, communication with whom "invites" death.

In I. Yalom's fiction, everything inexplicable is described by elements of magical discourse, which also actively uses metaphors [18]. Thus, most of the fundamental tactics in PD are organized in terms of orientation metaphors. Each spatial metaphor has an internal consistency. Consistency within the overall system allows you to identify the top and the size with the straightness of the body, uplift of mood, breadth of smile, etc., excess. Low, restraint is associated with DOWN, a disadvantage, the epithet "mundane" is a characteristic of low flight and a small-minded mind. Consequently, the author compares DOWN with disadvantage, high – with an excess. Sometimes, the incomprehensible, the intangible is associated with riding: a crane in the sky, a titmouse in the hands.

Conceptual metaphors authors also use as a place of events, actions, occupations (activities) and states. They consider occupation (activity) as a container for actions and other activities that are part of it. The lack of filling forms a space with a negative sign of emptiness. Depression, the lack of meaning that a person wants to fill his life with, is reflected in the metaphor of an empty place, lack of movement: "he fell into depression," "he felt nothing," "she fell into a state of stupor". Metaphors related to limited spaces show that a person perceives the world as outside of it. Each person is separated by the surface of the body from others with an "inside-outside" orientation. Obvious receptacles include rooms and houses. We also interpret the field of our vision as a container, and the visible as the contents of this container: "keep in sight", "is in the centre of my field of vision". Psychologists often identify vision as cognition, and interpret "to see" as "to understand".

It is obvious, that through dialogue, metaphor in therapy serves as the most important source and driving force of personal change. It allows the client to "appropriate" previously unknown meanings or join the understanding of the process. By choosing a metaphor, the patient can interpret it together with the psychotherapist. By transforming a metaphor by the patient, the client and the agent of the psychotherapy use to change the attitude towards it, see other, firstly hidden sides of the event symbolized by it, thereby changing the state. By transforming the patient's mind, the metaphor gains healing power. What may initially be a "dark" and painful for the patient, can transform into something "bright" and constructive, becoming a metaphor for personal rebirth.

The most common approaches used in therapy are working with a metaphor suggested by the patient himself, or working with a metaphor suggested by the therapist. The metaphor expands the boundaries of experience, is able to lead the patient in several directions at once and acquire the properties of reality. At the same time, metaphor is just one of the possible ways of therapy. Patients often express their fears, feelings and attitudes towards themselves and others using metaphorical language [18]. The metaphor works as a bridge between the sense of a problem and reality; it can open access to those meanings that remain wholly closed when using traditional rational methods of helping professions.

Since psychoanalysts know about the connection between metaphorical language and emotional arousal, this activation can serve as an essential mechanism for overcoming a psychologically tricky situation, depression, and apathy. Therefore, in this regard, music and art therapy help clients to get out of a problematic condition more efficiently [19]. Since metaphors are based on synesthesia (separation of sensations), this helps to awaken sensuality and emotionality, which in turn leads to the activation of thinking and improved memory and the disappearance of depression. F. Mathieson, J. Jordan and M. Stubby consider it essential that the language of psychotherapy is built as a complex,

self-organizing system that "smoothly unfolds" [20, p. 201]. It is influenced by extralinguistic factors, therefore, it is also vital to determine where, by whom, in what environment, and in what setting psychotherapy takes place.

The method of constructing the metaphors together in the psychotherapy by K. Hill and A. Regan was described with the following algorithm: 1) the primary relationship between the number of metaphors used by the psychotherapist and the patient; 2) repetition, the use of the exact words of the interlocutor during one session; 3) unfolding the content of the metaphor, i.e. the consistent use of different, but conceptually related, metaphors [21]. This algorithm is very similar to the composition of a classical piece of music. Naturally, this algorithm of the artwork helps to influence the client's unconscious movement towards catharsis, clarification of his problems, and a change in the minor key in assessing the situation.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

Thus, thanks to the analysis of the functioning of the conceptual metaphors in fiction that include PD, it is evident that PD can act as an independent one, since it differs from medical one in several parameters, the primary of which is the conceptual metaphor. In I. Yalom's fiction, along with the author's specific artistic techniques, conceptual metaphor acts as the essential compositional device that reveals the depth of the characters' experiences, feelings and the dynamics of their recovery. Fiction including PD due to inner speech of the author (therapist) can help us to catch some essential information with the help of CM, the signs of which the reader can read and reread.

Not only conceptual metaphors perform structuring thinking functions, but also classical metaphors provide psychotherapy with a number of essential services: changes in attitude to reality as brighter, more benevolent and interesting, help to find greater mutual understanding between the therapist and the client, aesthetic properties of metaphor help a person to become more essential, engaging and interesting for others, convince

them of his position, to see all the colours of the world, illuminating the best in it. So, we can divide the functions of classical and CM in PD. The functions of a classical metaphor: 1) The classical metaphor acts as one of the most common ways to describe complex feelings in PD. 2) It performs a suggestive function, acting as an attractor for the therapist's PD techniques. 3) It performs a contact-fixing function, tabooing feelings, forcing the therapist to discuss them. 4) It performs a narrative-forming function, forcing us to look for analogues with other events and archetypes of culture. 5) Transformational: it stimulates positive changes in attitudes towards a taboo subject.

The functions of a conceptual metaphor: 1) CM is a way of conceptualizing and describing various technologies in PD – establishing a setting through an argument, building a constructive dialogue, reflecting the transfer in the relationship to the therapist. 2) It structures information about the patient's world, integrates disparate partial memories. It performs a suggestive function, acting as an attractor for the therapist's techniques. 3) CM performs an informative function: describes the patient's worldview, his values, and attitude towards people. 4) It performs a narrative-forming function, teaches the patient the flow of consciousness, freeing him from the clamps. 5) CM acts as a technique of a dialogue that promotes therapy.

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# Specificity of the Semantic Category of Graduality in Irish Folk Dance Terminology

*Tatiana S. Rosyanova*

## ABSTRACT

The article is devoted to the issues of terminological graduality. Graduality is considered a linguistic, cognitive and intellectual phenomenon necessary for the professional thinking of choreographers. The focus on cognitive aspects in the study of terminology in various domains makes it possible to address the mental capabilities of native speakers to explore their professional field and the world in general. Different cases of graded series of terms and their formation are discussed.

*Keywords:* term, terminology, graded series of terms, gradation, terminological graduality, cognitive linguistics.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

The approach developed in Russian terminology research over the past decades involves, in particular, the study of terms from the standpoint of cognitivism. The focus on cognitive aspects makes it possible to address the mental capabilities of native speakers to explore their professional field and the world in general associated with the ethnocultural traditions of society, the socio-historical characteristics of the time they are experiencing, and the national psychological traits of individuals.

According to Russian prominent scientist in cognitive linguistic studies, E.S. Kubryakova, "the purpose of language and its role in the human community are determined by the fact that, first of all, it serves *cognition*, that ... is understood as both scientific and everyday knowledge of the world, operating in the processes of its conceptualization and categorization" [Kubryakova, 2009: 12].

Terminology develops within scientific or professional domains. Expert knowledge of professionals is generated at a certain level of abstract thinking. It is verbalized in communication and accumulated in profile editions. In some cases there is a need to use infographics as an additional support for non-verbal mental structures.

The purpose of this paper is to study the semantics of terminological graduality and to analyze terminological gradation in multicomponent terminological units functioning in the English-language discourse of Irish folk dance.

The analysis was based on terms extracted by continuous sampling from explanatory terminological dictionaries, glossaries, original choreographic manuals and monographs on the history of dance over about more than a hundred years.

The relevance of the discussed issues is seen in the fact that choreographic terminology as a whole is an under-studied area due to its uniqueness - the presence of French terms in classical ballet, the absence of a single generally accepted system of notation (visual drawing records of dancers' movements), as well as the diversity of the world folklore heritage, which is conceptualized by borrowed terminological units at the level of national dances' names.

In addition, the phenomenon of *graduality in terminology* has not been studied enough. However it is a fruitful material for research and series of graded terms in the fields of specific knowledge can be found in dictionaries and while functioning in the texts.

## II. BRIEF LITERATURE REVIEW

Numerous studies show that language and cultural heritage of the countries can influence perceptual judgments. People construct the surrounding world with the associations, symbols and images based on the language. Mental categorization of objects in memory reveals some of their various characteristics and overlaps with the semantic frameworks of the language.

We plan to discuss essential ideas from the previous decades concerning graduality.

It's worth refreshing in the memory a few postulates of Edward Sapir on grading. The first one tells that grading is a *psychological process* (and, therefore, it lies in the scope of cognitive linguistics interests). Also, there is a need of measurement, counting and preliminary judgments of grading. Moreover, the judgements of "more than" and "less than" are based exceptionally on the human perceptions. Finally, even the idea of "many" is rather subjective and depends upon the point of departure [Sapir, 1973: 122, 123].

Russian scientists who studied the quantitative manifestations of grading processes in the semantics of general vocabulary units recognized the presence of unique means of expressing graduality in the language (S.M. Kolesnikova, A.E. Levitsky, A.A. Krishtalyuk, etc.)

Linguistic (language) grading, according to S.M. Kolesnikova, is an expression of the speaker's "measuring" attitude to the subject of speech by lexico- phraseological, word- formative, morphological and syntactic means [Kolesnikova, 2010: 31].

The essence of grading, according to S.M. Kolesnikova, is the continuous increase/decrease of graduated quantities, degrees of quality, located on a scale in the form of "degrees" (steps, grading steps) [Kolesnikova, 2011: 185].

A.E. Levitsky, in his study of the concept of "Graduality", notes that a person evaluates his understanding of the external world and its phenomena, events, and actions from the

standpoint of a particular scale of assessment existing in his consciousness [Levitsky, 2015: 115]. Everyday life requires evaluating the signs (features) and qualities of objects in the surrounding reality. Therefore, a person applies his mental ability to carry out grading (revealing the essential properties of objects, phenomena and processes) based on his goals and aspirations. According to A.E. Levitsky, "graduality is designed to capture a certain quality, degree, measure of a feature, or property of an object, phenomenon, state, or action" [Levitsky, 2015: 116].

The quality or property of the object must correspond to the internal psychological standard of the person. If it differs from what is expected, then the individual evaluates the object as a whole with a minus sign and rejects it as something unsuitable and unacceptable for himself. The internal rating scale is challenging to correct, even over time. On the contrary, "perfectionists" periodically convince others that "the water was wetter" because their internal standard has not been changed since their youth, and they are sensitive to changes.

The presence of identical features in objects allows them to be classified into a particular category. Their correlation with the standard simplify a value assessment, and a person characterizes them as desirable or undesirable. A personal category system may have "fine-tuning" and not coincide with the perception of others, with potential conflict possibility.

Psychologists are aware of the phenomenon called a "constancy of perception." This term describes the tendency of object constancy. "In general, a person perceives an object as relatively unchanged, despite changes in its illumination, position from which it is visible, or distance. It can be said that constancy makes it easier to locate and recognize objects" [Atkinson, Atkinson, 2000].

Proponents of the cognitive trend in psychology note: "The constancy of perception helps us to distract from insignificant, transient changes and perceive objects as something relatively unchangeable, and this, in turn, saves us from

having to be a kind of weather vane, allows us to develop a certain line of behaviour (strategy and tactics) concerning various phenomena" [Druzhinin, Ushakov, 2002: 54].

The relative constancy of perception makes it possible to grade objects, phenomena and actions according to a scale of values, properties or qualities. According to the cognitive linguistics, "grading acts as an abstract operation, that is structured in an scaling image-scheme. The relations between referents in the aspect of "more" or "less" are organized and their intensity is determined" [Krishtalyuk 2011: 260].

In connection with the ideas of *intensity* that linguists have been interested in, the results of such linguists as Charles Bally and Jan Baudouin de Courtenay should be mentioned. Thus, according to Ch. Bally, *intensity* should include "all differences that come down to categories of quantity and magnitude [Bally, 1961: 202].

By comparing the categories of *intensity* and *graduality*, modern Russian researchers conclude that they are close but not identical. So, S.S. Kadyseva (2010) emphasizes that they "operate with the same units of language-speech and are linked with the degree of a grading manifestation assessing". At the same time, "the category of graduality is associated with the sequence of speech units in the order of increasing or decreasing degree of quality or property manifestation" [Kadyseva, 2010: 196].

*Terminological gradation* in this work is the embedding of a dimensional (measuring) scale that performs the function of characterizing object essential features in the lexical and syntactic structure of multicomponent terms.

Thus, having mentioned general information about linguistic graduality, we will examine the multicomponent terminological units that characterize Irish folk dances.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The scale of graduality is based on the principles of changing one of the parameters perceived by a person (qualities, properties or quantities).

Verbalization of a parameter change can be achieved through various linguistic means in multicomponent terminological units.

*Graduality in terminology* is a sequential increase or decrease of a specific essential feature in the object of a terminological nomination that unfolds in several multicomponent terms. Graded series of terms possess, as a rule, a common main word of a terminological phrase. The terms able to participate in grading lead to the formation of derivation series.

During the analysis we will consider graded series of terms by using examples of two- and three-component terminological units. Preliminary discussion of relevant information about the primary one-component terms is provided.

### IV. INITIAL ONE - COMPONENT TERMS

The uniqueness of the Irish dance terminology and choreography terminology has been discussed earlier [Rosyanova, 2024]. A thematic group of terms, names of Irish folk dances, was chosen as the initial group of one-component terms.

The polysemy in these units is such that the name of the dance coincides with the folklore melodies or musical instruments. These are, for example, the terminological units *Jig* and *Reel*. Preliminary historical and cultural information about these two dances is provided before the further analysis on terminological graduality.

In the course of the research, not only modern sources were considered, but also diachronic explanatory dictionaries and monographs. The involvement of diachronic sources guarantees the embeddedness of the terminological unit and its rightful place in the terminological system of folk dances.

According to the definitions of the 19th century, *Jig* and *Reel* belong to European dances that have gained popularity in different countries. *For example:*

- *Jig. Gigue (Fr). Giga (It.)* - A lively dance performed by one or more dancers. It is popular among many nations and has a

certain amount of difference in the steps according to the habits and customs of the people. The *Jig*, *Gigue*, *Gighe*, or *Giga*, as it is variously spelt, was one of the instruments used by the musicians of the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries, and this is generally understood to have been a sort of fiddle [DMT, 1889: 244].

- *Reel (Old Eng.)* – A lively rustic dance, popularly supposed to be Scotch, but probably of Scandinavian origin [DMT, 1889: 376].

It follows from the given definitions that many European nations perform a *Jig* in their way and with a various number of dance steps. In the Middle Ages, a string musical instrument, a type of violin, was called a *Jig*.

*Jigs* are also mentioned either Irish or cosmopolitan dances in the descriptions of the early 20th century. *For example*:

- To the *Jig* must be awarded the honour of being our oldest national dance; and there cannot be any doubt that of all the dances known in Ireland at the present day the *Jig* has the best title to the description "traditional" [Sheehan, 1902: 3].
- *Jigs* are not specially Irish, but are cosmopolitan. Only within the last century or so have they been described as "*Irish Jigs*". The *Jig (Gigue, Giga, Geige)* can be traced back as far as 1300 [Urlin, 1912: 92].

*Reels* are defined as dances of several couples in the Harvard dictionary of music in the middle of the 20th century. *For example*:

- *Reel.* - A dance performed by two or more couples standing in a circle and describing a series of figures each in the time of eight measures. It is common in Ireland, Scotland and America, the American variety being known as the Virginia Reel [HDM, 1950: 632].

If we return to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the term *Jig* in the electronic version of the Encyclopedia Britannica is defined as a popular dance of the the 16th and 17th centuries in Scotland and northern England (and in Ireland since the 18th century). Information on the *Irish jig* available in the Encyclopedia Britannica, reports that it is

performed as a solo or pair dance, with varieties of musical sizes, also called *Jigs* [britannica.com].

Thus, having considered general cultural information about the one-component terms of Irish folk dances *Jig* and *Reel*, we will begin to explore multicomponent terminological units formed by the derivation on their basis.

## V. GRADUALITY OF TERMS BASED ON NUMERICAL OR ORDINAL CHARACTERISTICS OF OBJECTS

The simplest way to express graduality is by numerical or ordinal characterization of objects. When analyzing the material of Irish folk dance terms, several cases of creating gradation using numerical features (quantifiers) in the terminological nomination of objects have been found.

### VI. TWO-COMPONENT TERMS

Graded series or terms correlating with the names of traditional Irish dances based on musical rhythms and melodies are the following:

- *Single Jig, Double Jig, Treble Jig*
- *Single Reel, Double Reel, Treble Reel*

The three-term graduality of dependent components of terminological phrases (*Single, Double, Treble*) expresses categories of various musical rhythms and types of performers' shoes. So, in particular, *The Single Jig* is one of the uncomplicated dance melodies performed in soft shoes. *The Double Jig* is performed either in soft or rigid shoes, with a beat to the rhythm. *The Treble Jig* is performed also in rigid boots and the *Treble Reel, too*. The grading in this case is classificatory in nature and differentiates *Jigs* and *Reels* as dances from dance rhythms and melodies.

The functioning of the terms involved in the graded series in the context of special literature shows that they have been used for more than a century. The embeddedness of two-component terms in the terminological system of choreography can be seen from the fact that they

have been functioning over a hundred years. *For example:*

- The *Jig*, the *Reel* and the *Hornpipe* of Ireland are at once the most difficult and highly elaborated dances of the clog and shuffle type that can be found. In them are passages in which the feet tap the floor seventy-five times in a quarter of a minute [Kinney, 1914: 174].
- All of the tunes are in ordinary *jig time* (*single jigs* and *double jigs*) or *reel time*, with one exception. [Burchenal, 1924: 3].

It should be noted that numerical gradation is quite often used for nomination in both musical and theatrical terminology. Here are dictionary examples of one- and two-component terms that include a numerical component: *first violin/fiddle*, *prima donna*, *prima ballerina*, *septet*, *sextet* (type of ensemble or musical composition), *triple fuga* (three-voice fugue), *triplex* (three-part size), etc. [Barchenkova, Osipenkova, 2014]. The ordinal component *first* or *prima*, refers to an evaluation characteristic, meaning the "best" sample of something.

The terms *duo*, *trio*, *quartet*, etc., describe numerically the type of musical ensemble or composition. On their basis, as a result of derivation, two-component terms are formed, and they specify the musical instruments that are used: *piano duet*, *trio of accordion players*, *violin trio*, or related to singing: *vocal duet*. In this case, the initial single-component terms act as the top of the terminological nest, and further derivation stages diverge from this top.

## VII. THREE-COMPONENT TERMS

Graded series or terms correlating with the names of traditional Irish dances based on the number of dancers are the following:

- *Four Hand Reel*, *Six Hand Reel*, *Eight Hand Reel*, *Twelve Hand Reel*, *Sixteen Hand Reel*.

In this case, the principle of creating graded terms series is based on the number of participating performers. The number of hands (*Four*, *Six*, *Eight*, *Twelve*, *Sixteen Hand*) is taken as the counting measure. Since this grading applies to

pair dancing, the number of participants is always even.

Rare sources from the early twentieth century have examples of the functioning of such terminological units, confirming their embeddedness in the terminological system of dance. *For example:*

- The *Reel* is of Celtic origin, and a gliding, graceful movement is practised in the *foursome*, *sixsome* and *eightsome reels*, danced respectively by two, three and four couples [Urlin, 1912: 90].
- *The Twelve-hand Reel* is danced in precisely the same manner as the *Sixteen-hand Reel*. The leading couples dance hands round with couples on left, the other couples arranging themselves accordingly [O'Keeffe, 1902: 38].

The dependent components of the terms in question (*Four Hand*, *Six Hand*, *Eight Hand*, *Twelve Hand*, *Sixteen Hand*) contain a direct quantitative indication of the mutual dependence between terminological units having the identical main component, *Reel*. In addition, they verbalize a measure, a particular step that creates a "distance" between the terms. It is reasonable to call such dependent components as *quantifiers* since they objectify precisely the numerical feature of the terminological nomination.

It should also be noted that the french terminology of classical ballet to this day is characterized by the creation of graded series of terms with quantifiers based on the number of dancers. Such quantifiers do not contain evaluability or intensity. *For example:*

- *Pas de deux* is a dance between two performers, a classical *duet*, usually a dancer and a ballerina.
- *Pas de trois* is a dance of three performers, a classical *trio*, most often two ballerinas and one dancer.
- *Pas de quatre* – dance of four performers, classical *quartet* [Babich, 2019].

According to the interpretation of the Short Dictionary of Dance terms and concepts, these types of dances are ballet forms with a specific

structure, formed in the ballets of the XIX century. *For example:*

- *Pas de deux* - (*French lit.* step of two, dance together) is a ballet form. Originally, pas de deux was a dance that demonstrated the skill and grace of the performers. The final structure of the *pas de deux* – *entrée, adagio, variation* (solo) of the dancer, variation (solo) of the ballerina and the *coda* – was formed in the second half of the XIX century [Alexandrova, 2011: 593].

Choreographic compositions containing names that include *quantifiers* (for example, "Step of Two" or "Step of Four") are widely used in classical ballets performed on the modern stages.

### VIII. CONCLUSION

Thus, the conducted study of multicomponent English terms of Irish folk dance containing graded scales of various types allows us to identify the following specificity of the category of graduality:

- The creation of graduality in two- and three-component terms is carried out by numerical ordering of dependent components with the identity of the main components.
- The grading scale of objects revealed in choreographic terminological nomination is based on dependent components-quantifiers. Such quantifiers do not contain evaluative or intensity semantics.
- The main quantifiers in terminology of Irish folk dance are various musical rhythms (such as *Single Jig, Double Jig, Treble Jig*) or the number of dancing performers (for example, *Six Hand Reel, Eight Hand Reel*).
- Grading quantifying term components explicate the progressive increase (decrease) of object characteristic features, the quantified "distance" during the transition from one specific feature to another. The sequence of essential features of the terminological nomination fixes the hierarchy of graded terms.

The research on terminological gradation issues based on the terminology of Irish folk dance will

serve to the further development of cognitive approach in the study of terminology. The accumulating of facts on graded series of terms in various professional domains is necessary to create a typology of graduality in English terminology.

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# The Fluidity of Lewoh Traditional African Beliefs and Western Catholic Beliefs: A Study of John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *God was African*

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## ABSTRACT

The paper, "The Fluidity of Lewoh Traditional African Beliefs and Western Catholic Beliefs: A Study of John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *God was African*" seeks to juxtapose the similarities and differences in the traditional Lewoh African beliefs and the Western Catholic beliefs as portrayed in the selected text. The main character in the text seems to find himself at crossroads with making a choice between their traditional Lewoh beliefs and practices and their Western Catholic beliefs. Having been exposed to both belief systems from home and at school, the protagonist finds himself in a dilemma as to which of the belief systems to adhere to principally. Is any belief system actually superior to the other or better than the other? This study is based on the proposition that none of the belief systems is better than the other as much similarity abounds between the two systems in question. The study concludes that all the belief systems are geared towards the worship of an Omnipotent God based on the religious context of the believers. The author therefore advocates for hybridized characters who understand and embrace the Lewoh and Catholic beliefs based on the context in which they find themselves. This study will employ the theories of Trans-Deconstruction: Theory on Monism and Theory of Interpretation as propounded by Pramod Ambadasrao Pawar.

*Keywords:* fluidity, beliefs, deconstruction, alterity, power.

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**Keywords:** fluidity, beliefs, deconstruction, alterity, power.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

H. L. B. Moody defines culture as the peculiar characteristic of a particular community, including its organization, institutions, laws, customs, work, play, art, religion, music and so on (qtd in Ayuk, 193). The nexus of this paper is built on the religious worship of the entire Nweh clan and Catholicism from the West. Religion is treated in this article as an aspect of culture that shapes and determines the way of life of a particular community; the African and the Western in this case. This paper, "The Fluidity of Lewoh Traditional African Beliefs and Western Catholic Beliefs: A Study of John Nkemngong Nkengasong's *God was African*" aims at examining the two belief systems as portrayed by the author. At the surface level, there seems to be an imminent clash of cultures between the Lewoh traditional way of worship and the Western Catholic way of worship that almost tears the community apart. The protagonist, Kendem, is not exempted from the psychological turmoil that constantly traumatises him anytime he has to choose between his traditional religious practices and Catholicism as taught in school and in the church. In the same light, the religious conflict that seems to pull the community apart is resolved in no time.

Theories are like vehicles through which the contents of works are aptly analysed and conveyed. This study will employ the theories of Trans-Deconstruction: Theory on Monism and the Theory of Interpretations as propounded by Pramod Ambadasrao Pawar. Pawar's theory of Trans-Deconstruction: Theory on Monism (2021) holds that the dichotomy between the centre and the margin is rather a symbolic manifestation of uniformity, singularity and uniqueness as a

centered-universe needs to be decentered. This also, is likened to the way deconstruction begets trans-deconstruction when a reader is haunted by his endless search for one meaning in the crowd of the multiplicity of meanings. For him, “the binary oppositions like presence-absence, light-darkness, day-night, hen-eggs, and seed-tree are all merged into the Absolute, the Truth where no entity is privileged over another” (3). This paper will focus on this tenet in its analysis amongst others.

With regard to the Theory of Interpretation (2024), Pawar makes an enchanting comparison between the author/the text and soul/body:

The author is the soul of the text; he has never been dead in any interpretation of the text. In fact he is alive through his point of view in the text, having been rested forever beneath the super-consciousness of the text. An author stands as a soul in the body whereas the text forms the entire body. How can the ingrained presence of the author be left without any interpretation of the text? If you drop the author and simply focus on the text, it means that you disprove the presence of the creator and celebrate its creation only. This leads to mean overlooking the father as a creator and pampering the son as a creation. The celebration of any creation in absence of the creator is a literary injustice to the text. This is an unfair practice in the interpretation of the text. (1)

The author is therefore portrayed as the soul of the text, while the text is the body of the creation which cannot be separated from the creator. Pawar equally sees every piece of writing as a symbolic manifestation of the self to the world, signs to the signified, and words to the world (2). These theories by Pawar are more suiting to this article as they do not only acknowledge the role of the author in the fair interpretation of literary works, but celebrates their very existence and contributions as in this Gedenkschrift in honour of Professor John Nkemngong Nkengasong. The intrinsic and extrinsic qualities of the text will be used in the analysis and interpretation of this paper as propounded by the theorist. This researcher will examine the author’s biography,

and thereafter, adapt a problem-solving approach, where conflicts arising from the texts will be examined and their proposed solutions made.

### *Brief Biography of the Author*

The examination of the biography of the author is motivated by Henry James’ claim in *The Art of Fiction* that “the deepest quality of a work of art will always be the quality of the mind of the producer” and that “no good novel will ever proceed from a superficial mind” (1385). This assertion also gives credence to the functionality of African literature in shaping the society as well as projecting cultural values.

John Nkemngong Nkengasong was born in 1959 in Lewoh Fondom, Lebialem Division of the South West Region of Cameroon. He attended his primary education in the Catholic Mission School Fotabong, and later moved to the Government School Mamfe. After his First School Leaving Certificate, he continued with his secondary school education in Our Lady Seat of Wisdom College Fontem, a Catholic institution of great standards in Lebialem Division, where he received a holistic education and Catholic upbringing with the Focolare Missionaries. His critical mind, high moral standards and his love for truth and fairness could have been developed at his teenage age in this college. In an online conversation between this researcher and Nkengasong on March 17<sup>th</sup> 2019, Nkengasong admits, “I think the school [Our Lady Seat of Wisdom] greatly shaped my life and vision of the world today” (3). The school, his “alma mater provided and still provides a solid moral foundation for its students” (2).

After studies in the Government High School Mamfe, Nkengasong proceeded to the lone University of Yaounde at the time, in the United Republic of Cameroon, where he later obtained a Ph.D. He served as a Professor of British Literature in the same university. It is not surprising therefore, that his high moral values, his firm stance in what he believes in and his craving for the truth and what is noble made the authority place him in charge of ethics and deontology in the Faculty of Arts in the University of Yaounde 1. During his reign as President of

Anglophone Writers' Association, many literary works by Anglophone Cameroonians were published with the help of subvention from the Ministry of Culture.

His anti-assimilation thoughts began earlier on as a teacher in the secondary school where he and Azong Wara fought hard in 1991 for the establishment of the General Certificate of Education (G.C.E.) Board for the welfare of the Anglophone System of Education, which was gradually being assimilated into the Francophone System of Education. He also won the Fulbright Scholarship to New York in the United States of America. He was a writer of reputable celebrity both at home and abroad with many novels, plays, short stories, and a collection of poems to his credit: He was also winner of the 2013 Eko Prize for literature and accredited for the proponent use of local imagery in his works, which assert his African background and the Nweh culture in particular. He passed on into eternity on June 11<sup>th</sup> 2023, while actively serving as Dean of the Faculty of Arts in the University of Buea, Cameroon.

## II. LEWOH AFRICAN BELIEFS VERSUS WESTERN CATHOLIC BELIEFS

This section of the work examines the conflicts portrayed in the texts, which emanate from some cultural differences in the way of worship. Religion is treated in this paper as an aspect of culture and the societies involved are the African and Western Societies which are further delimited to the traditional Lewoh beliefs and the Catholic beliefs in particular. Even though other conflicts abound in the text from racism as witnessed by Kendem during his Fulbright Scholarship programme in the United States of America, a greater part of it stems from a clash of religious practices and beliefs between the indigenous and the imported Catholic beliefs.

In his key note address "Parachuting into Space" (2024), Mbuh Tenu Mbuh opined, "God is a destination" and argues that most of the conflicts witnessed are "conflicts of how to reach the destination" (unpublished key notes). The utopian communities seem to be facing the same difficulties where confusion, misunderstanding,

and hatred arise in the process of reaching this destination. The conflict could be identified as twofold; within hybridized individuals who seem to have fairly embraced the two religions and amongst the non-hybridized individuals who adhere strictly to one of the religions only.

Some hybridized characters include Kendem and his mother, Chief Beyano, his first wife and some of his many wives and children, while the non-hybridized characters include Father Tom, Kendem's father, Bombabili, and the rest of the Nweh villagers. Most of their character personas reveal their belief systems as either hybridized or not as would be discussed. Some of the conflicts to be discussed arise from performances of burial rites, habitual rituals, types of marriages, other doctrines about God and spirits.

### 2.1 Burial Rites

The novel opens up with the arrival of Kendem followed by a vivid description of the beautiful topography of Lewoh village where Kendem hails from with an exposition of some of the good and evil spirits of the land and their specific abodes. Through the technique of flashback, the reader learns that Kendem has been in the United States of America. The first conflict is revealed through the technique of dialogue when one of the men in the bar inquires, "Mbe Nwet, has the matter been settled" (8)? Mbe Nwet had hardly responded when another villager intruded with a response which did not only raise eye brows, but turned out to be proleptic: "Do you see it as a matter that can be settled in a day? This matter has teeth. It will split Lewoh country if not handled in both hands. The chiefs are already divided" (8). The suspense continues in the reader who wonders what the precise issue is. Again, another man in the bar intercepts the conversation with "But if a chief must be chief, he must follow the rules of our ancestors" (8). At this junction, it becomes clear that there is some bridge of tradition or rule. The men in the bar blame Chief Beyano for not initiating his children well into the traditional and religious practices of the Nweh clan. One of the men summarily reveals the conflict and some of the Lewoh traditional beliefs:

The children are now insisting on a Christian burial for their father. But some of the fathers of the land do not think that this is the right thing to do to a departed chief who was one of the custodians of our culture and who knew that he was to travel to the land of his ancestors and then return as tradition demands. (8)

In the first place, the villagers do not want their chief buried in church because he will not be able to meet his ancestors and return to rule his village if the traditional rites are not performed as demanded. They firmly believe that a chief disappears and returns to rule after a number of rituals is performed.

In the second place, the children have violated the traditional belief by taking their father to a mortuary when they are aware that as they were growing up a chief never died, but went on a journey to return in another form. This conflict split the village as “some people were clearly on the side of the church while others held firm that the laws and the customs of the land must be respected” (9). This conflict split Chief Beyano’s family as well as the entire village.

### *2.2 Rituals and Practices*

After Kendem’s returns from the U.S.A., his mum tells him of her dreams the night before his arrival, where he saw his father welcoming him from his journey though not happy and asking about Kendem’s brother whom he “put in place to continue to stretch his umbilical cord” (15). She therefore orders Kendem, “You must visit your father in the shrine and tell him that you have returned” (15). She pauses and cautions him not to hesitate in spite of the fact, that he has gone to many places in the world and learned many new things, because a woodpecker always returns to its hole however far it flies into the forest. This analogy is telling as it reminds Kendem of his cultural values. Does this doctrine make any sense to Kendem?

Kendem finds himself in a fix after his mother leaves him. He sits back wondering why she was so concerned about his visit to the ancestral shrine which he had long forgotten, especially the

site where his father used to perform rituals in honour of his ancestors when they were still young. He soliloquizes, “I had believed that the shrine no longer had a place in modern life. And as I went to college and continued the academic trip to the university I didn’t think that I should be steered into primitive cultures. I was a modern man, a civilized man and believed that some old traditions had to be discarded” (16). Kendem, a hybridized individual, finds himself in a dilemma: His mother urgently wants him to visit his father’s shrine while he is deeply convinced the shrine visit is primitive.

In addition, he had lost complete sight of the shrine after his father’s death, “except for the image of a hut with a tattered roof attached to the back of the main building that still hung hazily in [his] mind” (160). Kendem’s exposure to Catholicism and Western Education makes him perceive his traditional beliefs and practices as primitive.

### *2.3 Types of Marriages*

The Lewoh and Catholic beliefs do not seem to have any intersection on the question of marriage. The Lewoh tradition believes much in polygamy and marriage is primarily for procreation that brings much happiness and dignity to a man based on the number of wives and children he has. This view is contrary to Catholicism that believes in monogamy and love as the primary essence of any marriage with children coming as a blessing to the union. Kendem tells Don Tomson that his father has five wives, while his grandfather had twenty-one with a flood of children.

This clash in the two beliefs brings disharmony and destabilization in the Lewoh community, where a chief abandons his twelve wives and weds with the first wife. Even though Kendem’s mother does not wed his father in church, she was baptized as the first of five wives. Each system therefore perceives the other as not being valid. For Pawar (2021), differences should be celebrated as they rather form a part of the unified whole and the ultimate truth.

## 2.4 Conflicting Religious Doctrines

Some clash of beliefs in Lewoh tradition and Catholic beliefs seem to bother the young Kendem. As a young boy, Kendem went to the village ceremonies with his dad where it was contradicted, “that only wizards and evil spirits visit the sky” while “people talked about their gods and ancestors living in the earth, and who gave the living food, water, fire and air from the earth” (27). Kendem gets confused the more on the doctrine about heaven, for Father Tom had told him in Wysdom College that God lives “in Heaven above” (27). He questions, if this was not the place “where Father Tom told us good people went to when they died?” (27). Kendem gets trapped between the different perceptions of Heaven being above the sky and beneath the sky.

### III. AUTHORIAL PROPOSED IDEOLOGY

In the light of Pawar, there is Truth in the heart of every text which constitutes power, since basic truth can never be changed even if distorted. Every attempt of interpretation is therefore geared towards uncovering the basic truth in a text. How is this uncovered?

Pawar (2024) holds that the text is a complete body of super-consciousness, full of ambiguities in-built in the text, beyond definition, interpretation and analysis which needs to be trans-deconstructed first (4-5). For him, the author is never dead in the interpretation of the text. He is in fact, still alive through his point of view in the super-consciousness of the text and as the mouthpiece of the different characterisations sketched, scheduled, and designed by him. In his masterpiece, only the author can make the directions in the interpretations of the text. As a matter of fact, the authorial note needs to be taken into consideration in any research activity.

Guided by these tenets, the reader gets many of the authorial voices amongst the men drinking in the bar which could posit the stance of the author: “But the church should know that it did not travel from wherever it came and found a vacuum in Lewoh country. It came and met people with their own customs and traditions. Ugh! How does one kill a snake that has coiled round his calabash of

oil” (8)? The indigenes therefore had a culture, a way of worshipping God before the coming of Christianity from the West. Bombabili regrets this when he shares with Kendem, that “God was African” (29) even though Christianity saw their Gods as satanical, and their culture as barbarical causing them to burn up their jujus, while installing theirs. Jean Piaget (1937) holds that individuals actively construct their understanding of the world through interactions with their environment. This is very true of Bombabili, Kendem, and his mother based on their lived experiences and perceptions.

As regards the preservation of home and identity, Princess Kingful and Olatunde Adeyemi Ojerinde (2023) assert that “Home and identity have been at the center of most postcolonial investigations of literature and society” (63). This view to them is supported by early theories such as Edward Saïd who propagate for a fixed identity with every individual belonging to a particular culture, whereas Evans Mwangi in *Africa writes back to self: Metafiction, Gender, Sexuality*, holds that “new, engaging twenty-first century writing from the continent and the Diaspora is neither a ‘writing back’ to Europe nor an endorsement of Euro-American neo-colonialism. It is, first and foremost, about self-perception” (qtd. in Kingful & Ojerinde, 63-64). This assertion by Mwangi is valid to a greater extent in the context of this literary artefact, where most of the characters like Kendem, his mother, Father Tom, and Bombabili act according to the perception of the world around them and in a bid to uphold their identities.

For G. Ojong Ayuk (1986), “in building their cultures, African nations must remain outward looking, but the desire to remain open should not be taken to mean that indigenous cultures are to be smothered by alien models” (200). He states, that “Colonialism, in establishing by violence the cultural unreality of the subjugated peoples, in petrifying their cultures in an immense ghetto of history, deprives the colonized of all identity” (199). This is similar to the burning of the indigenous jujus in favour of the Western jujus.

#### IV. POINTS OF CONVERGENCE IN THE BELIEF SYSTEMS

Oscar C. Labang (2014) posits that Nkengasong in his works “undertakes the task of reminding his own people of their past as well as informing the outside world about their traditions and its value” (146). Some of these values are portrayed in this section of the work. Reading through the text, one tends to see more of convergences than divergences in the Lewoh traditional ways of worship and Catholicism: As concerns hierarchical structures in the two systems, His Majesty, Fuo Atemangwat is the highest authority in the Nweh Clan just like the Pope in the Catholic Church, who is the Successor of St Peter.

The Lewoh indigenes belief in the good spirits that reside in Nyi-Mbong and the bad spirits that reside in Nyi-Mbinda. This is not different with Catholicism that believes in the good and bad spirits that either guide or destroy the individual. Father Tom tells Kendem in school that good people go to heaven, while bad people go to hell. The notions bear much semblance.

Similarly, the belief in the resurrection of the dead and communion of saints is common to both belief systems. Kendem’s father “had built the shrine in the backyard of the main house of the compound in which he displayed relics of his ancestors and offered sacrifices to them at different times of the year” (29). These sacrifices are offered to either ask for specific favours or in thanksgiving for the abundance they enjoyed.

The Catholics too have shrines which they visit regularly and ask for intercessions like the special favours of Mary, the Mother of God. Besides the shrines, other places of worship exist like the chapels and churches in Wysdom College in Nweh land, in Lewoh Village for the parishioners as well as the Church of St Joseph in the U.S. where Kendem used to worship. Kendem equally talks of the Church of St Joseph and the mosaic structure at the altar which usually carries the relics of the named saints. Just as Kendem’s father used to put up a feast in honour of his ancestors, the priest at the Church of St Joseph encouraged the Christians not to come to church only when there

was a crisis like the September 2011 disaster at the Trade Centre and the Paragon, but to come to church just to praise and worship God. The author also makes use of historical and biblical allusions giving credence and verisimilitude to his narration.

In like manners, Bombabili tells Kendem that the rite carried out in the past to chase away bad people at Lewoh boundaries are rarely done since “you pipu [Catholics] came and built your juju house and put your own juju in the house” and he laments bitterly, “we didin knows what we was doing and we put our jujus in the fire and burnt it” (129). It was only later on that they discovered God was African in the peaceful and respectful way that they treated their Gods with sacrifices offered, rather than beating him to death on the cross. The juju house that Bombabili is referring to is the tabernacle where the Consecrated Host is kept. The two systems therefore operate juju houses based on their different contexts. Instead of the woeful destruction of cultural values, Nyanchi Marcel Ebliyi advocates for “leaders to create the necessary environment where home cultures can accommodate new ways of life and practices, especially with respect for the norms on the ground” (152).

The author also makes use of a symbolism to drive across his message: The protagonist in the text is called ‘Kendem’ a variation or wrong spelling of his original name ‘Nkue-ndem’ which means ‘God’s message’. Although his names have two variant spellings, the personality is neither changed nor affected by the variants. In the same way, the two belief systems are only varied ways of worshipping the same God and should not affect the believers adversely, since the practices are directed to the same God.

Most especially, the decision of His Majesty Fuo Atemangwat to perform the traditional rites on Chief Beyano according to the traditions of the Nweh clan before handing to the Catholic Church was befitting as both parties felt satisfied and expressed their own cultural beliefs based on their different contexts. The initial threat to seize the chieftancy from Chief Beyano’s family did not happen and the initial conflict from the intended



Christian burial that split the family before that of succession was equally resolved peacefully.

The authorial voice resounds again through one of the men in the bar when he states:

Things have long changed. The church and tradition today are one. Do we not sing the same ritual songs in church today which the church forbade our fathers from singing in their shrines a long time ago? Did they not say the songs were pagan songs and that it was the work of Satan singing those songs and dancing? The church refused eating the crab when it first arrived. Today it is eating its sauce and licking its fingers. (9)

The author employs a good number of local Nweh imageries in the text. The plot is wrought with a lot of flashbacks and intertext narrations which is a characteristic feature of this author.

When asked about his craving for truth and justice in society as expressed by some literary scholars, Nkengasong replied:

[The] world no more listens to the voice of Truth; it no more reveres Truth the foundation upon which a harmonious society should be built. One of the major causes of pain in the world is the illusory nature of our policies, practices, conceptions and ideologies. Therefore, a writer, if he/she has any real value for his/her works must seek to debunk the illusory world which we have created as a result of our bitter souls. (www.duniamagazin.com).

For Nkengasong, truth is the fundamental principle for living in a peaceful society, for attaining harmony which is badly needed in the world today, for achieving unattenuated progress in the world.

According to Pawar (2024), “An idea of the inner self is always codified in writing. It can be termed as a speech-mini manifesto” (3) and the author sometimes speaks through his characters to project his point of view as portrayed by Kendem’s mother on the clash between the two belief systems. Kendem’s mother is described as a

devoted convert of the Roman Catholic Church, a hybrid of Lewohism and Catholicism who respected both religions with equal attentions by adhering to all the rites and rituals in the two systems. She tells her son, “that in this matter of the church, let the trap be sensible and so the animal too” (20) in relation to the burial conflict raised because “the two faiths resided in her soul and each had occasions for expressions” (19). Pawar likens the author to the soul of the text and the text itself to the body. The lived experiences of the author could shape his writing to an extent.

## V. CONCLUSION

The reading of the text can be reached to its destination through the theory of trans-deconstruction, where the intention of the author is deduced through his voice, his characters, plot, as important tools of expression for interpretation (Pawar, 2021). Religion plays a vital role in shaping the individual and collective lives of the communities in the text. The religious differences are to be celebrated in their uniqueness and beauty and perceived more as beauty in diversity as they all aim towards the services of an Omnipotent God. This study concludes therefore, that the two belief systems in the text have more convergences than divergences, that no belief system is more superior to the other, that they do not complement each other, but are rather perceived as diverse ways of worshipping the same Almighty God based on the cultural context of the believers.

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