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PRACTICE OF STEREOTYPES IN THE TEXT: EXAMPLE OF TRAVEL NARRATIVE

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“But what is precisely the stereotypes otherwise quotes?”

*Antoine Compagnon, *The Second Hand or the Work of Citation**

“The stereotype was acquired by secondhand, rather by a direct experience with the reality that it is supposed to represent.”

*Ruth Amossy, *Received Ideas. Semiotics of Stereotype**

Abstract

Intertextuality refers to a "pre-text", which a text is already given. It often happens to a traveler that several second-hand texts, which arise from his cultural universe, furnish the materials of his travel narrative. Indeed, travel writing consists not only of seen things, but also of read things, of already learned texts, already written texts. Travel writing is the place of storage of second-hand knowledge, a pre-acquired knowledge about seen reality. The travel narrative often goes hand in hand with a heterogeneous text. Indeed, the narrator is in possession of a certain knowledge of the country visited which originates in a pre-trip: visiting museums, galleries, reading of other travel stories, tourist guides, History of the country visited before the traveler arrives there; Let us add to this list the

humanist education that a Western traveler will use in front of the mythological sites, in front of Troy for example, and the fashion of the journey to the Orient in the nineteenth century which gave birth to several voyages and clichés, Or commonplaces, the smallest forms of second-hand knowledge often introduced into the text without quotation marks. The travel narrative largely draws its materials from other works or repeats images already known to the public. Here we do not intend to study all intertextual phenomena in the travel narrative, but rather to dwell on one of the processes of intertextuality: the stereotype. Stereotyped discourse does not take into account the reality of the object on which it bears, or of the original and personal subjectivity which expresses it. Only the conformity to an earlier model which is faithfully reproduced a model that is not in reality, fluctuating and unstable, but in a fixed rhetorical tradition. This double characteristic of the topos - belonging to rhetoric, a tendency to repetition - also shows its fundamental incompatibility with the realistic writing of the travel narrative, which calls for a completely different style: the effacement of rhetoric in favor of the observation of the real. Allegiance of the writing to all the modifications that can know the outside world. Our text of reference will be Théophile Gautier's Constantinople. The elevation often assumed by Th. Gautier shows that he is not always a fervent supporter of description, and he has not set himself the task of restoring reality in its totality with minute accuracy. His mimetic discourse often uses a stereotyped discourse, a second-hand knowledge.

Keywords

Intertextuality, Stereotype, Stereotyped Images, Travel Narrative, Théophile Gautier

1. Introduction

Intertextuality, defined as interrelationship between texts or as a textual reference within some text that reflects the text used as a reference, includes the phenomenon of stereotypes, clichés, topoï or commonplaces. In regard to this aspect, intertextuality is reduced to words, images, more or less fixed images of reality that the traveler gives us. He sometimes conceals that he already possesses a prefigured image of the East.

2. What is Stereotype?

The stereotype (s) is / are

- A pre-conceived and frozen image of the things and beings that the individual receives from his social environment;
- It is a pre-conceived image that the traveler carries in him about the Turkish or the Oriental Man;
- It is an opinion or belief that assigns a set of general traits to all individuals belonging to the same group.

These identical definitions make us say, following Edward Said, that our traveler, like many other travelers, defines the Orientals according to attributes familiar to the reader: the stereotyped images: "*In the system of knowledge about the Orient, the Orient is less a place than a topos, a set of references, a congeries of characteristics, that seems to have its origin in a quotation, or a fragment of a text, or a citation from someone's work on the Orient, or some bit of the previous imagining, or an amalgam of all these.*" (Said, 1980:177).

3. Sources of Stereotyped Images

What are sources of these stereotyped images? The social imagination is in direct contact with the texts and the iconography of its time and past epochs. It is inspired by it and nourishes it incessantly. It is through the books and the pictures that the traveler first perceives the Oriental reality and image. The works that deal with it abound. The existence of travel books in the East only in the nineteenth century proves the preponderant place of this territory in the cultural space of the West. The traveler prepares naturally for his journey from his readings.

As regards to painting, several Orientalist painters have visualized the various aspects of life in the East. The frequent references of the traveler to painters and their paintings clearly show it; among them, we have Alexandre-Gabriel Decamps, one of the representatives of orientalist painting. He painted a dozen canvases inspired by the Orient, for example, "*A Turkish merchant smoking in his shop*", "*La Ronde Turque*", "*the Zeibecks*" ... all of them are constant references for Gautier. The paintings of Delacroix are another main reference for Gautier. "*The Massacres of Scio*" and "*The Women of Algiers*" (Gautier emphasizes in "*La Presse*" of August 26, 1836, the representation of the two faces of the East: the extreme grace and the extreme horror; the romantics artists make this quality an essential theme of the literature and Gautier will remain attached to it), or "*The*

Death of Sardanapale” which illustrates the faces of the warriors. Salvator Rosa’s baroque paintings, famous in the romantic period by his soldiers, battles, and scenes of military life, brings images of brigands and soldiers. Germain Fabius Brest, a specialist and especially in the views of Constantinople: “*A Turkish Café*”, “*The Bosphorus*”, “*A Street in Constantinople*”, who stayed four years in Constantinople, is another reference for Gautier. We can count among these Orientalist painters Theodore Goudin with “*An Embarcadere of Orient*” and “*Constantinople and the Bosphorus*”; Frédéric Henri Schopin exhibited at the Salon of 1852 “*The Paradise of Mahomet*”, which Gautier had seen; He reported in *La Presse* on 8 April 1847 to “*La Tuerie des Janissaires*” by Charles Emile Callande de Champmartin and wrote before his trip to Turkey the preface to Camille Rogier's “*La Turquie*”, a collection of twenty-five plates having for subject essentially scenes of Turkish life.

4. Some Stereotyped Images on Orient

The representation of the Orient by nineteenth-century painting is associated sometimes with images of cruelty, sometimes with the atmosphere of luxury. The paintings of these various painters gave to his representation a visual expression. Sensuality, idyllic pleasure, harem, seraglio, slave; despotism, fatalism, laziness, terror, so many images and painted themes that Gautier remembers. At no time he does not remain insensitive to the prevailing images of Turkish reality. For him, the journey does not constitute the refutation of the déjà-vu, of the conventional images. He gives access to the actual original model that the paintings have copied. His attitude is directed towards the verification at the source of images already strongly anchored in his mind. In Turkey, he was able to see these Zeibecks which Asian pictures of Decamps have made the face familiar to everyone or that charming fountain of Arabic style that the English engravings made familiar to everyone.

Frequent references to pictorial works serve, once the traveler has arrived in Turkey, to authenticate the local color of the painting, while pointing out that the Turkish East is there, since there is adequacy with the image fixed by the writing, as evidenced in Pera by the young people (who) are put like engravings of Jules David.

Gautier saw in Constantinople human pictures conforming to what he had already seen, he does not hesitate to derive reality from the image. The traveler takes refuge in clichés that have become immutable.

In a rather paradoxical way, Gautier sets off in search of something he already possesses, since the picturesque images of the Orient have been fixed by several painters.

5. Other Sources of Stereotyped Images

The origin of the images goes back, on the one hand, to the paintings of various painters, and, on the other, to fictitious works or, as I have just mentioned, to travel accounts prior to Gautier's one.

For several travelers in the Orient, *The Thousand and One Night* become an obligatory reference. They impose an Orient of fantasy, offer a luxury and sensuality image, a figure of a sensual woman, faerie, palace ... where the writers have tapped to find a decoration and seductive themes and immediately identifiable by the reader (the sensual and fatal woman figure becomes a stereotype in the nineteenth century, where it is one of the great attractions of the journey in the East, from Nerval to Flaubert and even to Pierre Loti). The frequent comparisons of the elements of reality with *The Thousand and One Night* are merely reminiscences of book images. Gautier found, for example, the incarnation of an Orient of wealth and luxury in the bazaars of Constantinople. He leads the reader when describing the bazaar, between reality and the pages of *The Thousand and One Nights*:

It is very frequent to define the mentality of people. To the positive pole of the Orient of luxury, wealth, and sensuality is added a negative pole. Several travel accounts consider corruption, often associated to despotism, to cruelty, as a secondary trait of the East.

6. Presence of Stereotyped images in Théophile Gautier's *Constantinople*

The stereotyped images do not change much at Gautier's text. His text conforms, more or less, to the stereotypes of his time, evoked by his predecessors. He read the story of Chateaubriand and his text is inspired, in particular, by Victor Hugo's *The Orientals*, which is a constant reference in *Constantinople*. Here is his strange definition of the local color, but in conformity with the fixed representation of the East, as a land of cruelty for the West: "*It is said that, from here, the infidel odalisques or who had displeased the master, for whatever reason, are dragged into the Bosphorus, wrapped in a bag containing*

a cat and a snake ...” I relate it without criticism; If it is not true, it has at least the local color. ” (Gautier 2008:99)

It is a paradoxical attitude to bring the local color, whereas Gautier pretended to a sincere and real impression. The incident, "*it is said*" refers directly to *The Orientals*. The traveler accepts, without criticism, the stereotype: the cruelty of the Turks, a generalized image, in the name of the so-called local color; but he is still on a ship approaching the town; He has not yet dismounted; he had no direct relationship with the inhabitants and the Turkish life. Here is the stereotype, the received idea which is propagated and disseminated anonymously (although we know the origin of the image); they are repeated, they are always there, to be resumed and passed on. Gautier followed other travelers. From one text to another, the images, which we do not exactly know the origin, are repeated. This phenomenon of repetition of certain images through several texts from *Journey from Paris to Jerusalem, les Orientales, Constantinople* - proves the presence of stereotypes in Gautier's text.

7. Consequences of the Use of Stereotypes

What happens after the traveler has landed? First, He tries to reproduce the Turkish type, to fix his general and characteristic traits. Let me recall that, according to the definitions given by R. Amossy, the type, unlike the stereotype, derives from a reading of the real; it is a direct contact on the real, an empirical method resulting from a search that the traveler performs through the streets of Constantinople. At first glance the attitude of the traveler is to relate all the characteristic elements related to the physical portrait of the inhabitants, without forgetting their costumes.

The type, then, joins the moral portrait that stems from a reserve already acquired. The traveler defines Oriental man according to traditional stereotypes, images fixed by various sources. The (fixed) images he gives of the Turks are grouped around the negative qualities which are cruelty, violence, despotism, laziness; fatalism and certain positive qualities such as honesty, hospitality, and tolerance, these are qualities that all other travel stories previous to Gautier's one have already shown several times.

Thus, a frequent practice of the oxymoron appears in the description of portraits, it is a practice that unites often a real vision with a second-hand vision, a characteristic trait

that the traveler has discovered with a stereotyped trait or a received idea. Here are some examples:

The Orientals, often cruel to men, are very sweet to animals.

The black anfractuosités of a cave of brigands, though they were the most honest people in the world.

Barbarism and civilization come together in the same idea

The Turks, who are grave, slow, majestic for all the actions of life, hurry only for death;

The ferocious and quiet dignity of a Zeibek of Decamps. etc. (Gautier 2008: 135, 138, 149, 198, 200).

The images that Gautier gives about inhabitants are not in the pure state. A second-hand knowledge is always mixed to his narrative. The text which claims to reflect the reality cannot do so without being brought back to the already thought, the already-said or the already-read.

8. Conclusion

In conclusion, contrary to what Gautier claimed in his narrative, we were able to discover in his mimetic discourse several traces of stereotypes or clichés which are smallest forms of intertextuality, they show that his text is not a strict layer of Eastern reality. Gautier's travel narrative largely obeys the clichés of exoticism, because the writer does not want to overturn the images known to the public. He perpetuates them by reintroducing them in his text. The use of stereotypes sometimes arises from an obligation: the writer has not had sufficient access to Eastern life, he has not been able to come into contact with the Turkish world.

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