



TRANS-

Revue de littérature générale et comparée

7 | 2009

Le faux

Editorial



Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/trans/281>

DOI: 10.4000/trans.281

ISSN: 1778-3887

Publisher

Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle

Electronic reference

« Editorial », *TRANS-* [Online], 7 | 2009, Online since 06 February 2009, connection on 22 September 2020. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/trans/281> ; DOI : <https://doi.org/10.4000/trans.281>

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Editorial

- 1 This issue's central dossier examines literature from the category of falsehood. Without needing to make reference to the platonic devalorization of the poets "who know not of what they speak"—a devalorization that can be associated with an "ethical regime" historically dated of art (Jacques Rancière)—we must recognize that multiple writing strategies *play* with this category: literary impostures, authorial and narrative falsification of identities, alteration of a work's epistemological and generic categories. What meaning can be given to such an attraction to *trasvestism* or even mystification? To what degree does falsehood constitute a necessary element for the *truth* particular to the literary experience?
- 2 The articles in the dossier are organized along three axes of analysis: the first proposes the study of the different strategies of diversion that concretize themselves in "misleading initiations," both of the iconographic as well as the generic order. These thresholds in the form of "tromp l'oeil" call for a horizon of expectations that the writer deconstructs to subvert the established codes and conventions. In this case "falsehood" designates a strategy of distancing that passes through the captious quotation of a norm that must be upset.
- 3 Thus **Hidoteschi Nakamura** analyzes the subversion of a traditional iconography: the "false" Judgement of Paris that constitutes the frontispiece of the Marquis de Sade's *La Philosophie dans le boudoir* (*Philosophy in the Bedroom*). This luminal image, accompanied by a legend taken from Voltaire's tragedy *Orestes*, plays the role of a *captatio benevolentiae* by suggesting that the contents of the work are simultaneously gallant and philosophical, in the Enlightenment tradition. Nevertheless this "trompe l'oeil" does not escape the attention of the writer who desciphers its "logogriph": the traditional mythological figures are substituted for the image of a pair of sodomites while in the imperfect quotation from *Orestes* an inversion of Enlightenment thought operates by replacing the Voltaire's praise of nature with Sade's matricidal fantasy.
- 4 **Daniela Tononi** and **Roger Tro Dého** explore other "misleading initiations" in this case concerning the category of genre, which is essential for the constitution of the reader's horizon of expectations. Raymond Queneau's *Le Vol d'Icare* (*The Flight of Icarus*), whose title alone suggests an aesthetic of displacement and evasion, is a "pseudo novel" mined by the "form-dramatic work" that stages a novel in the process of being

written. At stake, explains Daniela Tononi, is a critical reflection on the novel, its canons, and its limits in a form that concretizes the derridean concept of “participation without belonging”: a kind of “anarchy of literary space.” It is again thanks to a process of generic contamination, this time in the forms of oral tradition, that Adiaffi’s text mishandles the novelistic genre: “the genre without genre” of the *n’zassa* (a term that refers to the metaphor of sewing) works to invalidate “the novel-identity” indicated by the paratext by invoking all forms of African orality. This orality, the author states, does nothing but extend the “ruse” insofar as it relates to a tradition in which the *written* text undermines in two senses: on the aesthetic and the political levels. If the text adopts the role of the *griot* as narrator, it inverts its “political” function by placing it at the service of the people and the oppressed in a social-political commitment that exposes the problems of contemporary Africa.

- 5 The second axis of analysis develops along the complex connection between writing and historical truth: these articles explore the fragile line that separates “writing history” from “writing stories” and address the question of the *falsification* of memory by an official truth that fiction works hard to unmask. Based on an analysis of García Márquez’s *Cien años de soledad* (*One Hundred Years of Solitude*), **Vera Elisabeth Gerling** interrogates the postulates of traditional historiography and underlines the “falsehood” in all historical narratives. Faced with attempts to manipulate the collective memory, literature defines itself as a space of resistance where other narratives can have a place. For his part **Guido Furci** explores the borders between document and fiction in the work of Melania Mazzucco, *Lei così amata*, novelized biography of Annemarie Schwarzenbach. Confronting the thought of J. Rancière, according to whom “writing history and writing stories depend on a single truth regime, the writer analyzes the form in which the documentary writer “adds legends to History” putting into question the separation between fiction and reality.
- 6 Through a completely different universe, that of the *virtual* world of post-exoticism, **Sarah André** proposes a reading of the procedures of the falsification of identity and genre as “an oblique gaze on historical truth.” The “fabulation of History” in A. Volodine, as a practice of heteronimity refers to a “will of subversion” an allows the reader to be confronted with disturbing “unofficial truths.”
- 7 Finally **Anne-Laure Rigeade**’s article opens a perspective on the scene of reading. The writer studies the Shakespearian intertext, and more specifically, “the work of imposture,” *Othello*, in *Les Mendiants* (*The Beggars*) by Louis-René Des Forêts and *Orlando* by Virginia Woolf. From the baroque to the modern a displacement from the ethical to the aesthetic sphere occurs: the power of falsehood is no longer morally condemned but rather celebrated to the extent that it suggests “a metamorphic vision of literature.” Reading (Woolf’s and Des Forêts’ readings of Shakespeare, but also any reading) is associated in turn with the creative power of falsehood as a space of productive “contradiction.” This brings to mind Paul de Man’s definition of “good” reading as “misreading”: “By a good misreading I mean a text that produces another text which can itself be shown to be an interesting misreading, a text which engenders additional texts.”