

A DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF *SEXO, PUDOR Y LÁGRIMAS*

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From the first scene of *Sexo, pudor y lágrimas* one observes an urban way of life in the dress, in the way of getting along, and in the defeño-style (chilango) vocabulary. It is a very Mexican language with its idiomatic expressions and derivations and its quality revealing the city, the huge metropolis in its atmosphere of the upper middle class. In fact, what is presented is exclusively people who are well to do, an excellent part of the city, exclusive restaurants, parties and private events. It is an ode to the concept of V.I.P. and the whole ideology behind it. Film shots take in the very symbols of the city, symbolic for any Mexican or foreigner with a knowledge of Mexico City. The viewer is presented with University Stadium, and the accompanying shots are from a helicopter in flight, as a mediator through the radio and traffic congestion. This all is reinforced by the Mexicanicity internationally represented by the grotesque dances inside the stadium.

In each of the scenes rhythmic mixtures can be identified. From electronic music, through the cumbia, jazz, and balades to ska. At other times, the sounds of the city are musicalized, giving rise to turns in the dialogue (evasions, silences, aggressivity). Each musical type is at the disposal of the characters and their situations.

Characters operate as signs, and, in the story, all the characters are clearly drawn. Ana is clearly identified as an independent and sexually active woman; she is *socially recognized* by the viewer. For his part, Carlos is also socially recognizable as a **referential** sign. He is an independent intellectual, a bohemian writer who supports his mother and his wife. Though they show their essence during the course of the film, they begin in one way and end up with another: Ana goes from castrating to whining, and Carlos goes from impotent to modest.

Miguel is shown as masking, in an envious social reality and with his incurable emotional shortcomings; he is the Don Juan, the Latino

male. In another moment he is compared to mythology; María compares him to the Minotaur. For her part, Andrea is coldness, superficial beauty, stupidity; for her all women are treated as the same stereotype where ugly women are the unfortunate. Both these referential characters are transformed. Miguel ends up alone and has to start life over, and Andrea says goodbye, comes to a sense of her existence, and moves from the banal to the transcendent.

María is the fourth referential character, and she also shows masking tendencies. She is presented as an intellectual, caught up in her zoological studies and independent of the male gender. She feels ugly, and she thinks that men feel sorry for her and despise her.

The sixth referential character is Tomás, whom the narrative refers to and later will be analyzed as anaphoric. He represents freedom, nomadism, travel without destination. He is different from the group because of his way of life and his social behavior.

It is possible to identify a seventh referential character in Cirilo, a teddy bear, refuge from Tomás' nomadic lifestyle. If anyone knows Tomás' pain and suffering, it is he. His company gives Tomás security, and he transfers his emotions to an external reality to that point inanimate. He represents the childlike world.

As an eighth referential character there is the model from the fence, who is charged with watching the interactions of the men living in the apartment. It is a vantage point which is located in front of the men's apartment.

As for the **deictic** or **connecting** character there is only one. Carlos' mother appears during the eightieth minute of the film, and the scene lasts only two short minutes, but they are enough for us to discover why the couple's interactions are as they are. The old woman belongs to the upper class, she takes over supporting Carlos, and therefore, supporting the couple. She is influential in their relationship, she manipulates Carlos and treats him like a child. Her character is presented as a connector between situations, she gives us additional information about Carlos, and she allows us to understand other situations.

Also Tomás is presented to us as an **anaphoric** character. He is the hero of the film because "hace referencia al sistema propio del relato. Sus atributos o figuras privilegiados son el sueño premonitorio, las

confesiones o confidencias, las predicciones, los recuerdos del pasado, los proyectos, la fijación de un programa, etc.” (Jiménez, 1993: 285). Tomás has no clear destiny; he only moves or escapes. His buddy is Cirilo, in whom he confides.

He lives in the present, but he is tied to the past; he discovers that he has lost ten years of his life and that his investment in those years has not brought him benefits. Even the love he feels for Ana did not last more than one fleeting night. He does everything necessary to bring Ana and Carlos together, he tries to help Miguel with his feelings of guilt, and he decides to justify his existence through suicide. The closing dialogue with Tomás represents the film’s climax, and in it, he paraphrases Carlos: “nada de lo que encontramos nos satisface... Nada, sólo resiste unos instantes y se va.” And here he offers the central question of our existence, “¿de qué se trata la vida?” And he asks for an answer, “Qué lástima que mi único amigo haya cambiado tanto.” Carlos throws him out of the house, he gives advice to each character, and he says goodbye. He addresses Ana, and he tells her: “Cuida a Cirilo.” And with this last sentence he tells her to continue watching over him.

There are always scenes and interactions that are key to understanding a film. In this sense the presentation of the first couple, Ana and Carlos, is representative, and it serves as the prologue to the film. The scene occurs in the livingroom of their apartment as Ana returns home with groceries. She is accompanied by bag boys, and she starts to flirt with one of them until she finds herself along with Carlos, who is meditating and watching her buttocks fixedly. The effect is achieved with a closeup of his face and then of her buttocks. Suddenly Carlos stops, he touches Ana with his action.

Ana: ¿Qué me ves?

Carlos: El culo.

Ana: ¿El culo? (*Happy and surprised*) ¿Y... ese milagro?

Carlos: Tengo una idea.

Ana: Ay...mi amor (*Happy*) nada más espérate a que se vayan los señores, eh (*Referring to the bag boys who came to the apartment*).

Carlos: (*Evassive...*) Ahora no tengo cabeza para eso.

Ana: Está bien, homo sapiens... Nada más no se te olvide que algún día...

Carlos: (*Ignoring her*) Escucha. Puede servir de prólogo (*Referring to a book he is writing, and, at the same time it could be interpreted as the prologue or beginning of the film*): "cuanto más admire un hombre a una mujer por sus éxitos, más difícil le resultará desearla. La nueva mujer es una fuente de impotencia masculina...una castradora y una causa de divorcio."

From this dialogue several strategies can be classified with respect to power and solidarity. Distancing pronouns are not used. A symmetrical treatment exists in the interaction, although displacements and twists appear in the dynamic. There is a clear ambiguity in the linguistic strategies. It is clear that, at that moment, Ana's buttocks is a source of poetic inspiration, while for her his interest is a sign of the sexual interests of her partner, an invitation to make love. Silence is a strategy, leaving the understood unspoken, leaving space for speculation. Ana defines her partner as a homo sapiens, ironically referring to the rational, and, when she alludes to "ese milagro", she is referring to the little activity or to the few propositions of her partner for sexual relations.

Between the intention of Carlos, his sentences and his words, and the reception of Ana, there appears a dynamic in which each decides how to use the text, how to proceed, how to respond. Presented is this process: subject (sender), proposition and subject (receiver), proceeding during the enunciation to the conversation twist, at which point the receiver becomes emitter and assumes the dominant role in the dialogue.

Interruption shows up as a mechanism for interaction, leaving sentences unfinished and allowing the other to take the lead in the conversation and to propose topics. If on the one hand Carlos' topic is literary, for the production of the prologue of his book, it is for Ana sexual, her desire to make love with her partner. With the sentence "tengo una idea," the polisemy is revealed, and each interprets it to fit his/her own needs. For Carlos it is his muse, and for Ana it is sex. Para Carlos, es la musa y para Ana es el sexo. When Carlos says: "ahora no tengo cabeza para eso", *eso* means sex.

With this scene and this dialogue the characters are presented as referential signs. At this point of the narrative we are shown their essence which, throughout the film, will be detailed in their faults and preferences

as the central aspect of their conflict. Sex is defined according to the needs of the partners. For Ana it is pleasure; for Carlos it is just another part, without great significance, of his existence. We see circumlocution here, "la preferencia del hablante por no afirmar taxativamente una idea" (Tannen, 1996, p.40) when the interaction does not directly call Anna castrating, nor does she proclaim herself impotent. It is an indirect conversational style. A parallelism appears when it defines woman as castrating and man as impotent. For him, it is the reality of couples in the nineties.

There is a scene, thirty minutes into the film, which is full of impact. It is the most violent scene of the film, and it takes place in the couples' bedroom. The sound is bad, and there is banging and shouting. Miguel is upset about the frequent disconnects with his partner, and he is "juiced" on cocaine.

In another room of the apartment, María is worried with what she is hearing; she checks the closet and finds a bunch of dolls; and lullaby background music is heard. María is rummaging through the room to try to find identity clues to her partner. She is trying to recognize, from among the symbols in the home, what their relationship is about. Everything is happening while the couple is fighting in the other room. In the rape scene, Miguel and Ana are in the foreground, and, in the background is María, powerless in the face of what is going on and wanting to intervene. But she can only observe.

The dialogue goes like this:

Miguel: cállate la boca y abre las piernas (*Andrea tries to escape to the living room*)

Andrea: suéltame.

Miguel: ya que me quitaste el sueño, voy a hacer un pequeño sacrificio para ver si se te quitan las ganas de seguir platicando... eh, babosa.

Andrea: suéltame... animal.

Miguel: En la cama siempre se duerme con un animal mija... eh, una hiena... monstruosa. (*Miguel rips her clothes off, hits her, throws her on the bed, and orders her*) ¡Abre las piernas! Acuérdate Andrea, en la cama siempre hay uno que es más fuerte, siempre hay uno que termina debajo del otro, (*He*

penetrates her as he smacks her face and humiliates her. She cries... the scene ends.)

If any scene is viewed in great detail of humiliation and domination, it is this one. The dialogue is directed by the furious male, while the female is unable to achieve respect. An analysis beyond words needs the images, the setting, and the sound. Power is clearly exposed, and there is no indication of solidarity in the relationship. Adversity on this occasion is the product of the appearance of María in their lives. Now the couple opens a new phase in their interactions.

Although they use address of closeness like "mija" and proper names, they are employed in one direction in the form of domination (asymmetry), taking the victim to where he desires. Andrea's intervention in the dialogue is scarce or non-existent. Her silence is covered by sobs, shouts, and escape.

The trigger for the event is Andrea's recrimination for her sad personal and conjugal life, and, in an instant, Miguel gets fed up and he decides to punish his wife. In the one-directional dialogue there appear parallelisms between man and animals: "siempre se duerme con un animal mija... eh, una hiena... monstruosa"; he defines himself for the first time by means of circumlocution. Later, towards the end, he will define himself directly with the following descriptors: *inepto, vacío, superficial, inválido*. This is when he becomes aware that his relationship of dominance has brought with it the couple's loss of love and integrity.

As for silence versus fecundity, Miguel makes Andrea submit, and he reduces her to silence. Adversity is clearly represented through the conflict and verbal aggression. It is visible when orders are given to the subordinated, as for example with: "cállate la boca y abre las piernas". With this order, here Miguel is telling her that her mouth gets open when he wants, when he decides. Circumlocution is not present, only direct style.

If the dialogue between Ana and Carlos, the first couple offers space for participation and twists in the interaction. This dialogue is the complete opposite, where unidirectionality and his domination over her are the constants.

Miguel searches for an answer to his behavior. He appears putting on his bathrobe, in a partial nude shot. Frightened, María is waiting for him in the living room, and he breaks in with:

Miguel: No podías dormir.

María: *(She remains silent)*

Miguel: Yo tampoco... Sigue borracha

María: ¿Qué te pasó Miguel?

Miguel: *(He evades and then questions)* ¿No tienes cigarrillos?

María: Tampoco fumabas... No

Miguel: Me desespera... *(Miguel approaches her and begins to caress her breasts. Amid flirting and caresses, infidelity begins.)*

In this scene the viewer is presented with a desperate and guilty Miguel, after having raped his wife. Here, power is inverted, and María (the woman) dominates the dialogue through her silences.

Miguel cannot find the right excuse to begin the interaction, so he opens with a banal topic, insomnia. Proper names and first-person address are used. Through the symmetrical use of "tú" which confers closeness and confidence, presented is solidarity, which Miguel will later seek in the arms of María. This scene is dark and quiet. Amid shadows and whispers, it takes place in the living room of the apartment. The two of them had desired this moment since they found each other again, but, in view of the dynamic, situations take a more conflictive path.

The ambiguity of the linguistic strategies is presented by what the sender expresses and by what the receiver does with the message. It is clear when Miguel asks María a question and she remains silent that he establishes as a strategy answering the questions and looking for ways, in the interaction, to persuade María. In the second moment, roles are reversed, and María questions Miguel about his change, and he questions her about cigarettes, without responding to the question posed. She takes advantage of the moment and she lashes back again, reminding him that he didn't used to smoke.

Miguel's objective was to approach his former lover, and the dialogue was an only an excuse; thus, the verbal exchange is not so important as the caresses. He is empty, and he is looking for an answer to what he is missing, in the shared ideals of the woman he once loved.

María tries to be Andrea's friend. Following the previous night's incident she tries to be supportive of Andrea in her relationship. The dialogue and its symbols make reference to gender, generation, and status.

María: Cómo ha cambiado esta ciudad... Esto es como Wall Street. (*While Andrea ignores her.*)

María: Te acuerdas el Minotauro, mitad toro y parece ser que ahora mitad publicista. Pues, ese bicho devoraba mujeres... si no se moría.

Rather than a dialogue, this scene is presented as a monologue. María is impressed by the changes in the city, and she establishes two interesting symbolologies. She is introduced to the viewer as a worldly woman who knows New York, and she already had been presented as coming from Africa. She evokes the Greek mythology when she uses the "Minotauro". This speaks to us of her sophistication level. And, when she refers to the changes in the city, she also situates us in time, indicating she has been out of the country for a few years.

She attempts to justify the rape through the Minotaur myth. It is an attempt at getting at the life of the couple, offering unconditional gender support offering it to her through circumlocution.

María and Miguel engage in other games of seduction. After seduction games from apartment to apartment, intragender conversations and reflections, the next day contacts between the two genders are begun. María looks for an excuse to run into Miguel. She heads for the guys' apartment, and she only finds Miguel whom she asks for Carlos, who at the time is not at home. She evades by saying she had come for a book she had asked him for. Miguel lets her in while he gets dressed, playing at seducing her in order to wield power. The dialogue starts:

María: ¡Miguel!

Miguel: Sí.

María: ¿Tú volverías a fijarte en mí?

Miguel: ¿Después de todo lo que pasó?

María: Pasó lo que tenía que pasar.

Miguel: No.

María: ¿Por qué?

Miguel: María... Ya todo cambió.

María: Sí, si te lo dije cuando llegué, ya no eres el mismo.

Miguel: Efectivamente ya no soy el mismo, ya no me impresiona ni tu seguridad, ni tus teorías, ni tu carácter invulnerable. Ahora prefiero convivir con la gente que se equivoca.

María: ¿Y si probamos de nuevo? (There is silence, and a horn sounds in the distance.)

Miguel: ¡Qué bonito suena! ¿No? (*Referring to the sound of the horn and obviating María's proposition*)

In this dialogue the change of power is presented. Now, Miguel feels ownership of this situation, and he leads María to his terrain as a displacement in the power dynamic occurs. Although reciprocal forms of power and solidarity appear, associated with the use of proper names, Miguel uses the displacement of María to the apartment to get his revenge for the rejection she had given him years before, when she decided to leave him and continue her studies abroad. In that memory, she did not discount the possibility of starting a new relationship, one which she had postponed for other reasons.

The polysemia of linguistic strategies is clearly presented when María asks him if they can start over, and he, taking advantage of the sound of a car horn, uses irony and expresses to her: "Qué bonito suena", referring to the proposal she just made. This also could be identified with circumlocution, when one does not say directly what one wants to say, but it is left understood.

With respect to *similarity* and *difference*, several times in the interaction, María has questioned the change in Miguel. She had left him with his way of life, and she now finds him different. The difference is not only marked by his lifestyle, interests and goals, but also by his way of behaving in interactions. Now, he does not trust in security with her, and he decides for a practical life, one in which he does not have to reflect on every move he might make. Utopia is no longer part of his goals to be achieved.

The silence Miguel uses is to unsettle María, who cannot figure out what to do in the face of that situation. She needs to ask for something,

but she is ashamed. It is expressed in the trilogy *to want, to know and to be able to* (*querer, saber y poder*), which are achieved by *doing* (*hacer*), in interaction. Though the proposition originates with María, Miguel seizes the moment to humiliate her in her role of begging for tenderness. There is no conflict nor verbal aggression; the persuasion of each and their respect for communication space organize the conversational strategy.

In her crisis, Andrea's fears appear, and she delivers a monologue with minor interventions from Ana and María:

Andrea: Siempre me lastimaba (*Ana takes a photo to capture the moment*). Nunca le importó, o más bien creo, nunca se enteró... Siempre creyó que mis gritos eran de placer.

Andrea: Mi vagina es demasiado estrecha.

María: ¿Qué sentías?

Andrea: Pues, al principio me dolía mucho... Después nada.

Andrea: Bueno... Si sentía algo... me sentía como muerta por dentro, ahí echada mientras él subía y bajaba y me apretaba.

María: Andrea... No tienes que seguir.

Andrea: Luego sabes que pensaba... Pensaba que yo era otra mujer. Que el cuerpo que Miguel penetraba no era el mío... El de una de sus tantas amiguitas. Y era entonces, cuando yo lo miraba... Y miraba como gozaba y se veía tan hermoso.

This monologue is based on gender solidarity. It is Andrea's chance to express everything about her sexual failure. The castrating relations are silenced by the victim, until there appears a moment for reflection, and she takes advantage of it to let loose of her fears.

The character has sought control mechanisms in order to be able to deal with pain and to deny herself the chance for pleasure. For her, Miguel's pleasure is meaningful only in opposition to her suffering. If we return to the rape dialogue, we will remember that it was controlled by Miguel, and there we are shown the sexual interaction of the couple: she shouts, cries, and, then, is quiet.

In this monologue, another Andrea is discovered strong and determined, a transformation which will be presented as the narrative proceeds. Here the ambiguity of linguistic strategies is non-existent due

to the fact it occurs intragender, by means of the solidarity that María and Ana lend to it.

The couple's communication crisis is evidenced when Andrea reveals that she does not know if Miguel was aware or not of her suffering. They were never that open, and Andrea's pain was interpreted by Miguel as pleasure. The sending subject sends a message in shouts, and the receiving subject assumes it to be a message of his partner's arousal or sexual pleasure.

Two interruptions appear: the first when Ana takes the photo, and the second when Marías tells her to be quiet or more damage will be done. However, Andrea is determined to express her situation, and she fees ownership at that moment. She goes about her monologue ignoring the interruptions which her confidants supportingly offer her.

As for the proposal of topics, at this moment Andrea is determined to talk about the tightness of her vagina. The monologue takes place in the guys' apartment, where Miguel defines himself as *inepto*, *vacío* and *superficial* (an invalid), that is his individual identity, while what he projects, what people see in him is the stereotypical triumphant male, with money and women. In a conversation with Tomás, Miguel whines and says: "A veces me gustaría volver a tener doce años". During that month of separation Miguel experiences the crisis in his relationship and the desire to start life over from puberty.

Picking back up on the opening scene, but with the transformations of the characters, Carlos shows his essay to Ana, and he reads her the title: "**Sexo, pudor y lágrimas.**" Ana retorts: "Sexo, pero, ¿tú qué sabes lo que es el sexo?" He hands it over to Cirilo, and they agree on the details of the move. When Ana says goodbye, they both turn around, and at the same time, they both say: "¿Me perdonas?"

Carlos: Quiero hacerte el amor.

Ana: ¿Qué te metiste?

Carlos: Llorona.

Ana: Pudoroso.

From the strategy of circumlocution in the couple's first dialogue there is a switch to a direct style. Parallelisms are not sought for the purpose of indirectly saying what one is thinking. No, now adjectives are

used directly. Carlos defines the game, and he courts *llorona*, and she courts him as *pudoroso*.

Topics of discussion are obviated. When Ana retorts: "pero, ¿tú qué sabes lo que es el sexo?", Carlos ignores the comment, and though silent he manages to avoid conflict. At first glance, this is a symmetrical dialogue where solidarity and power are equally distributed in the interaction. However, at this moment Carlos directs the dialogue, and he manages to reconcile with his partner.

Adversity, taking over conflict and verbal aggression, is exchanged for dialogue and negotiation, to the couple's benefit. Now their faces of guilty and resignation invite them to give themselves a second chance.

A transformation in otherness appears when, in the first scene, in the midst of insults, Carlos defines Ana as castrating, she defines him as impotent. Now, in reconciliation, they both begin to see another dimension in their subjectivities. The plot shows with precision the chance which is presented to Ana and Carlos, at the same time it shows the end of the relationship between Miguel and Andrea.

In intragender interactions women as well as men speak about **the forbidden** freely and without fear. The following classifications appear when Ana tells us that there are three kinds of men: "su papá, su papacito y esos putos". In a more intellectual way that reflects her feminist discourse, María explains the three categories in the following way: "los que te prometen lo que nunca te van a dar, los que quieren que seas una dama en la mesa y una puta en la cama y los que buscan una madre como los que piden limosna, esos son los peores".

In another dialogue, Ana explains her concept of sexuality, and she enters into the theme of orgasms, when she asks them if one of the two knows what an orgasm is:

Ana: ¿El sexo?... El sexo, es la llave del mundo... Yo no lo niego, soy una fanática del orgasmo. De esa pequeña explosión en la que puede encontrarse el sentido de todo.

Andrea: Ay, ¡qué exagerada!

Ana: Para mí es como... (*At this moment María takes her picture.*) La foto, se trata de coleccionar instantes, ¿de eso se trata la vida o qué?

For their part, the men, when they question promiscuity and how hard monogamy and their relationships with women are, Tomás starts:

Tomás: No soy promiscuo; Carlos sólo busco una oreja...

Carlos: ¿Qué?

Tomás: Sí, sí, sí... Una orejita virgen que se deleite, que goce, que disfrute con mis maravillosas historias".

On repeated occasions, Tomás alludes to his competition with Miguel to see who is more promiscuous, even though Miguel argues he has bedded a woman just to see if he could achieve "la capacidad de enamorarse".

On the other hand, **separation** and **rejection** can be detailed in several scenes. The character who represents craziness is Tomás, who goes against institutions, against the establishment, against tabu. From another angle and ironically, there appears the permissiveness of publicity game and its codes, the space of the permissible. While Tomás is questioned and rejected, the game is desirable and accepted. Using the logic of institutions and their control mechanisms, social moralists and their institutions classify what is permissible and what is prohibited. An example is presented when Carlos attacks Tomás; he reproaches him: "tienes pánico que te vean tal y como eres".

As for the **true/false opposition**, this filmic text is pertinent. Persuasion is operant because the viewer allows it, and the film's contents are believable and quotidian; but they had been hidden. The narrative is a simple linear with a continuity of temporal planes in scenes which develop throughout the text. The film is intimate, for which are used close-ups, extreme close-ups, tight shots, and medium shots. Open shots are used less, and only for the purpose of offering a panoramic view of daily life, of the world of urban life. Reality is shown, but not by accident, because discourses do not grow from nothing, they are the product of the times.

With respect to the internal elements of the discourse, we run across **commentary** and **author**. As for the first, themes that make up sexuality are lived uniquely in each culture; however, there are some universals presented in the text. Monogamy, infidelity, frigidity, orgasm, among others, are recreated from generation to generation through oral

tradition. Information about sexuality is presented differently among women and among men, and these subtleties are what conditions the way sexuality is lived by each gender. In this sense, commentary is pertinent in gender; and that is why the women present the problems associated with their gender, and, on the other hand, the men offer topics and deal with them from their own perspective.

The creation of a cinematographic text is a team product, but in this case, Antonio Serrano is **author**, because he is both scriptwriter and director. The category of an author is intimately related to the prohibited; however, license is not given to all in equal measure. This depends upon the role played in a specific society, and it is conditioned by the importance conferred upon him by the text in which he is immersed. Serrano already had prepared the way for himself, because he had worked in other media, specifically directing several projects since 1987, and he made a name for himself in 1995 with *Sexo, pudor y lágrimas*, a great text for the creation of a cinematographic script. Later he will enter the world of television and will direct successful soap operas and special programs, *Nada Personal*, *Mirada de Mujer y Teresa*, to mention a few. More than his study abroad, his public recognition and exposure in the media, for almost a decade and half, have allowed him to offer a discourse in the area of sexuality and prohibited themes.

In this essay, I have used a variety of techniques and analysis categories belonging to Discourse Analysis and Semiotics, as well as a review of the more significant theoretical changes in the disciplines used in this study.

Planning to analyze the surface of text can be a first approach to it, to enter into the realm of the explicit, into what texts show us. But, the text is queried, and it does not answer; then, one enters a shadowy realm, the realm of the implicit, of the unsaid, and that is the area that interests semiotics and discourse studies.

The text is reaffirmed as an indissoluble unity of communication. In this case, the preparation to see a film and the commentary of viewer to their friends create space of textual interaction, in which semiotics and its limits with the non-textual create their own space.

Lotman's reflection and proposal consists of a text category which forms the center of his book *Cultura y explosión*, and from here comes the idea of culture as macrotext which is dynamically integrated and

restructured and defined as Semioshere. It is Lotman's first step in the proposal of an information theory, in which he discovers noise as a generator of new meaning, an epistemological break with Russian formalism and Jakobson. It would be interesting for a future study using this application to respond to how to observe differences in a homogenizing movement, like globalization.

In our case, the first text appears in the title of the film, *Sexo, pudor y lágrimas*. What the text might mean is that sex and modesty are related to tears throughout the film. In fact, all characters will cry tears of happiness or fear, but they will always be tied to pleasure and the forbidden. Joined to this, in film, image manipulates, and the movie was the vehicle employed in the construction of units of analysis. We delved into the transformations of the characters within the development of the plot and in their dialogues and the processes of discourse control.

Building on the concept of culture as dialectic among themes, it is worthwhile to review the overall concept of the film industry and the hyper localization of themes that are integrated into the cultural text. In that sense, the concept of fashion (trends) ought to be tied to current film production. Lotman reminds us that "la moda es un metrómetro cultural", fashion performs an informative function: it means, it communicates. Fashion means mode (*modus*). That is why beauty is what is fashionable; it is its characteristic efficacy. These are the models for interpretation of cultural industries. Fashion is a semiotic system, capable of semiotizing anything, capable of integrating any non-semiotic element into a semiotic space.

We ask ourselves: what is so special about this film? We find that theme, narrative and dialogues create its success. If we speak of depth, the themes treated are quotidian, but they are not banal. Scenes semiotize unexpected spaces, as the cultural syncretism emphasized in the analysis. Belonging was established through the treatment of dialogues and the precise moment at which they appear in the film.

From Mexico a text is produced, which without being overly localist, takes on an overall historical problematic, without diminishing traditions and signs of the city that indicate for the viewer the cultural context. A Latin American, if not Ibero-American, space is referred to; the natural language indexes it. However, the plot could have developed in any other part of the world.

Anyone who knows the great American cultures can locate traditions of the Mayan, Incan or Aztec world without altering the interpretation of the text. These symbols appear with the sole purpose of locating the viewer in a specific context. The "chilango" slang is easily understood by the inhabitants of the capital city. But, this does not exclude the rest of the country as viewer. No Spanish speaker runs the risk of getting lost in the interpretation of the product, because the slang is not a determinant, and besides it does not show up isolated, but rather integrated into the dialogue, the sequencing and the music.

After more than fifty years, there has been a cultural explosion in Mexican film. In this revitalization, overall patterns are integrated into the discourse, and because of this, drama and comedy flow together in the best of Hollywood styles; it is no accident that 20th Century Fox bought the film's rights.

Although stereotypes or referential characters appear (the Don Juan, the liberal, the bohemian, the intellectual), they are offered from a different perspective. There is a transition from the traditional way of making film in Mexico and in the treatment of the sexual theme. Although it does not signify a break, there are indices of changes in the country's film. It is a watershed in cinematographic production, in the way of narrating daily experience, and in interpreting lack and sexual games between genders in a generation of Mexican who are in their thirties.

To speak of the forbidden, the taboo has always produced pleasure, and in the text all controllers of discourse over thematics are touched upon. As for gender relations, observed were displacements, asymmetries, and intragender and couple negotiations. Also, the transformation of character as sign allowed for an understanding of referential, anaphoric, and deictic characters. The text itself directed its interpretation, and it found the repetition of sentences used at the beginning and the end of the film. Also, found were seven representative dialogues and phrases which index the film's essence.

Translation: Richard K. Curry

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