



The Duras' Novels in the Light of the Practice Theory of Bourdieu*

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HUMAN beings are always guided by implicit patterns of perception, representations and interpretation of the social world and its mechanisms. This is how the writer simulates different parts of real society by narrating and describing them in their particular way. The descriptions of places, objects, characters and their relationships or interactions, the sequences of actions and events represented by writers, indeed reflect their vision of the world. Moreover, the first step in this area is the novelist's attempt to anchor his story in a time and place, often real, for the sake of authenticity. This reminds us of Lukacs's idea that there is not just one realistic movement in the history of literature, but that this is a constant requirement of any novelist.

The close link between society and the community goes back to Antiquity in the reflections of Plato and Aristotle. Since then, all types and genres of writing, even those apolitical, expose the concerns of writers and thinkers about the situation of human and his society: they are passing through the ideas of the classics and reproducing social and political facts until today. However, since the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution, then with the appearance of sociology, debates on this kind of relationship have been consolidated, from the romantics who favor the rise of the historical novel to the writings of realists and naturalists with their interests brought to various social zones.

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Many parallel texts approach the frescoes for reproducing socio-political events. To illustrate, let us regard "Chronicle of the 19th century", revealing subtitle of *The Red and the Black*. As for the mitigated twentieth century, in particular with considering the two world wars, we find other works, such as the committed books of the existentialists or those which retrace reification in / by the New Roman or the New Theater, or even the Things by Georges Perec, work subtitled "A history of the sixties", for the description of the time.

Thus, the novelists often bring the powerful knowledge on the social world and they approach some ethnological, sociological and historical works. Therefore, this is not uncommon to hear or read that novelists are also sociologists, even if the debate continues in this area. By the way, this work focuses on the study of two Indochinese novels by Marguerite Duras, *The Sea Wall* and *The Lover*, in the light of sociological concepts, without wanting to go very far and pretend or affirm that Duras sets the task of a sociologist. In reality, Indochina is redefined by the novelist as a fractured society divided into several dimensions of the human relationship in the literature. The characters are divided, in fact by social and racial inequalities, according to these two books and in the heterogeneous framework of Indochina. This study efforts to explain the new rise of all forms of human relations through their characters caught in the conflict of confrontations of two different cultures, the famous dichotomy: the East and the West, in the writings of Duras. The meeting of cultures often feeds misunderstandings and disagreements. Relations become more conflicted when they are woven between foreign-natives, women-men, as well as between two dichotomous cultures. The other hypothesis shows that sociology based on human relationships in particular on social classes would also open up to the cultural impacts of social phenomena; distinct lifestyles (not to say opposite) between Duras and the Indochinese, as well as between characters. Thus, the life experiences of the novelist in the Far East lead her to read and write the social in accordance with the context of emergence of these two books, through the prism of her birthplace. Contradictions between Asia and Europe, described by this western woman, favor the opportunity to study human relations in all their emotional, cultural, social and even racial complexity. Having regard to the reconciliation of both individual and social experiences, both European and Asian and in order to better examine the two books, we propose to present a social reading enriched with cultural clarifications. It will be an opportunity to better understand the confrontation between behaviors, classes, cultures, fairly distant lifestyles.

Poetics and politics are perfectly linked to emphasize the Duras's universe and it is in the light of Pierre Bourdieu's theory of practice that these two works represent the nature of human action. Whether individual or collective, allowing a new sociological reading of the two novels in

support of scientific concepts. Pierre Bourdieu, French sociologist and anthropologist, distinguished himself by proposing an approach similar to genetic structuralism inspired by the theories of his predecessors such as Marx, Weber, Althusser, Durkheim, Lévi-Strauss, Mauss, Merleau-Ponty, among others, that he calls "theory of practice". It is based on the study of *fields*, *capital*, *habitus*, *social classes*, *distinction*, etc. and its concepts seemed to us in this sense very conducive to the discovery of the social dimension of Duras' s writings. It should be noted that even if research on the Duras's work is abundant, the previous studies hardly mention the sociological aspect of the novels even less from the Bourdieu's point of view.

At first this study attempts to represent the key concepts of Bourdieu's theory, then highlights the important passages of Duras's socio-literary experiences and her predilection for writing Indochina. Next, it will focus on the story of book *The Sea Wall* and the characteristics of its characters with taking advantage of Bourdieu's concepts. As a next step, it will study not only the summary of *The Lover* and the analysis of its society, but also provides a comparative representation of these novels.

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