

The Sociological Writing According to Abdelkebir KHATIBI “Tattooed Memory” –as Model- Socio-Semiotics Approach

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Abstract

This article aims to question the theme of “writing linked to the social” and the vision towards what is written in the intellectual text in Abdelkebir KHATIBI, through a socio-semiotic approach, based on the trilogy of Charles Sanders Peirce: the representation, communication, and meaning. Indeed, the application of such a semiotic approach can reveal to us the importance of the theme studied and help us treat the subject with a precise and scientific treatment that responds to a major problem represented in the way in which the theme appeared through our use of his autobiographical story entitled “Tattooed Memory”.

Keywords: *Writing, Semiotics, Tattooed Memory, Abdelkebir KHATIBI, Charles Sanders PEIRCE.*

INTRODUCTION

What terrifying questions does writing raise horizontally, from an irresistible desire to understand transitions and ruptures, the passage from oral to written, the imprisonment of speech in words, and the trapping of breaths, then their forcing into letters, the contraction of sounds, their abandonment of their transcendence, and their pouring downwards, towards their death, where they will be mummified and become the hostage of the other, representations of the other, interpretations of the other, their connection and the beginning of the era of sins.

As for the horizontal level, the paradigmatic axis, it will be an archaeological excavation, searching for latent connotations and bringing them to light. It is the “pleasure of the text” written as much as a concern for writing shared, between KHATIBI (1938- 2009) and others, like Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault, crossing borders who never tire of renewing their skin from time to time, sometimes expressing their affection, and with what can be framed by nostalgia in other moments.

And his autobiography, “tattooed memory”, constitutes the cornerstone of this work, through the intentions it reveals and the questions it stores. It expresses KHATIBI's project and conceals it, conceals its connotations, then announces it as a distinctive semiotic work which requires reflection, the multiplicity of tools and techniques to question it, here we can bring the semiotic trilogy of Charles Sanders Peirce: "representation", "communication" and "meaning", as elaborated by Gerard DELEDALLE. and we can strengthen our analysis from time to time with the central core of Jean-Claude ABRIC, and The Vision of the World by Lucien GOLDMANN.

Thus, “sociological writing” is strongly present in the work of the thinker Abdelkebir KHATIBI, and constitutes a synchronic and diachronic axis of work. On the syntagmatic vertical level, “invoking interpretive practice will be a necessary matter, and its necessity arises from its attachment to symbolic thought” (AZZAH, 2005:07),

About Abdelkebir KHATIBI:

Abdelkebir KHATIBI is a thinker who resists framing, he does not accept being locked into a specific specialty, and cannot be framed in a specific box, because he is an inimitable traveler to virgin worlds, transcending borders and maps.

KHATIBI was of multiple formations and did not originate from a single land, it is therefore evident that he was multi-oriented, not recognizing boundaries, dispelling the illusions propagated by those who "see with one eye, speak with one language, and see things either as black or as white, either as oriental or western" (SALIH, 1987:152), he is sociologist writer who breaks the taboos of specialization and the puritanism of barriers, the gentle who abhors harshness, the multiple writer, who "announces himself with rare humility, demanding to be considered as a writer, and only a writer" (AFFAYA, 1988:77).

So, wasn't KHATIBI a hyphen? Didn't it want to be this hidden passage between the different disciplines of the human sciences, denying the illusion of framing, breaking down -in a language closer to a whisper- all the walls of separation, no lines, no borders, no points, no commas, just... a world of pleasure, of professional play, of listening to the depth of man in his manifestations, in his dark and bright corners Just as Najeeb El-Awfi said that KHATIBI is "a link between philosophy and literature, between the rationality of thought and the sensitivity of the creator" (EL-AWFI, 308, 1986:44), let us emphasize that the first step that KHATIBI took was to build a bridge between sociology and literature in his thesis in 1965 on the Maghreb novel.

Roland Barthes is considered the first to discover KHATIBI when he wrote "What I owe to KHATIBI" as an introduction to KHATIBI's book "The Wounded Arab Name". In this introduction, he revealed the importance of what KHATIBI discovered. KHATIBI works, stating that he shares many interests with him: "KHATIBI and I are interested in One things, with images, evidence, traces, letters, signs, and at the same time KHATIBI m 'learns something new, disrupts my knowledge, because it changes the place of these forms, as I see them, taking me away from myself, towards its own land, while I feel as if I am at the end of myself- even.

Semiotics of writing in "tattooed memory":

We prefer to start by addressing the different meanings by first addressing the architecture of the book, KHATIBI began his book with a dedication to his mother, "To my mother" then with an introduction, saying that it was written "in 1969-1970 and published by Denoël in 1970" adding that he published it today as it was, next comes the first section of the book entitled "Hazardous Series 1". This section will include the following titles: "Tattooed memory", then "Two parallel cities: El-djadida, Essaouira", then "Thus turns culture", followed by "Adolescence in Marrakech", then "The body and words", after "By unhooked gestures" and finally "Rive gauche", after that the second part of the book opens under the title " Hazardous Series 2", which in turn includes the following titles: "fugue on difference", "Variation on the difference", then "double against double (dialogue)" "first image", then "Second image", then "Final image", It is a questioning of the multiple sociological meanings of writing, its connotations, the dialectic of its presence and absence, and its various connotations in an important book by Abdelkebir KHATIBI, "Tattooed Memory" . In which KHATIBI collected all his ideas that would later appear in his subsequent writings, it is considered a reference for the true analysis of KHATIBI's thought and the state of Moroccan society and, through it, from Arab and Eastern society, which is on the path of development. It

is a book written in the form of an autobiographical novel, through which “he once again approaches personal life within a society that seeks to get rid of the colonial burden, he writes the alphabet of the dream of independence, and he manifests the suffering of the disappointments faced by this collective dream in the first years of independence” (BENNIS, 2012: 92).

In the middle of this general social context, the theme of “writing” will be presented by KHATIBI, and the proposal will be writing, a question, a wound and a tattooed memory. KHATIBI tried to start from the beginning, and tried to draw the space of her childhood with words, preserving the scenes, and trying to question them, without disturbing the atmosphere, the smells, the spaces, the childish questions and their innocent contradictions, such as “Split incest is the dream of so many children” (KHATIBI, 1971:23), By adding “the Koran dominated my speech while school was a library without the Book” (KHATIBI, 1971:55), In “Tattooed Memory”, the work on the theme of “writing” will be clearly present, sometimes declaring it and concealing it at other times. In the ad, he says: “and the book that I will write will then be religious thought” (KHATIBI, 1971:55), and in the implication he says: “Song first, the Koran is learned by heart” (KHATIBI, 1971:55), Was what was written here excluded in order to erase it?! Or to raise all the questions and constraints that slow down his writing?! Or was it deleted with the intention of installing it?! Multiple questions, and many more, are raised and fueled by the implications of KHATIBI's writings.

4- PEIRCE reader of the theme of “Writing” at KHATIBI:

KHATIBI's writing is mainly characterized by what he himself calls intersemiotics, which is based on several triads, including nudity, absence and situation. At its borders “cold academic writing disappears and a new writing emerges which has the rigor of research and the precision of analysis”, Since he and Barthes work in the same framework, it is natural that they agree that “semiotics” is part of a broader science, which is “linguistics” (contrary to what Ferdinand de Saussure preached), In other words, as Barthes says in “Elements of Semiology”: “In fact, we must now face the possibility of inverting Saussure’s declaration: linguistics is not a part of the general science of signs, even privileged part, it is semiology which is a part of linguistics” (BARTHES, 1986: 11), according to the progression of this vision, we can realize the importance of language and its central role (as a central core, according to Jean-Claude ABRIC) in the thought of “Abdelkebir KHATIBI”, This language, “Logos”, is a vision of the world – according to Lucian GOLDMANN – and at the same time an interpretation of this world: “If language is not for itself but for a world that it opens and reveals, then the interpretation of language is therefore no different from the interpretation of the world” (RICOEUR, 1994: 304).

Thus, we can walk reassured, but with epistemological caution -as KHATIBI taught us- according to a sustained rhythm in reading the manifestations of the idea in its tattoo in the memory, “and from lesson to lesson, disappear behind the words, taking care to eliminate any suspicious trace” (KHATIBI, 1971: 56), This is the foundation of semiotics in its manifestations according to KHATIBI, here is its language, “uncontrollable and captivating in the manner of Barthes, but by belonging to the Nietzschean tradition, as we observe, it arouses more than one desire and breaks the isolation of a bold attempt and seeks to break the obsolete and horizontal relationships between the reader and the text and then between the text and the creator” (BENAOUDA, 2005: 13), it is KHATIBI's fragmentation between reality and imagination, between existence and nothingness, between mother tongue and foreign language,

hence the importance of calling the trilogy of Charles Sanders Peirce to which we have given “triangle”, which can be formed as follows:

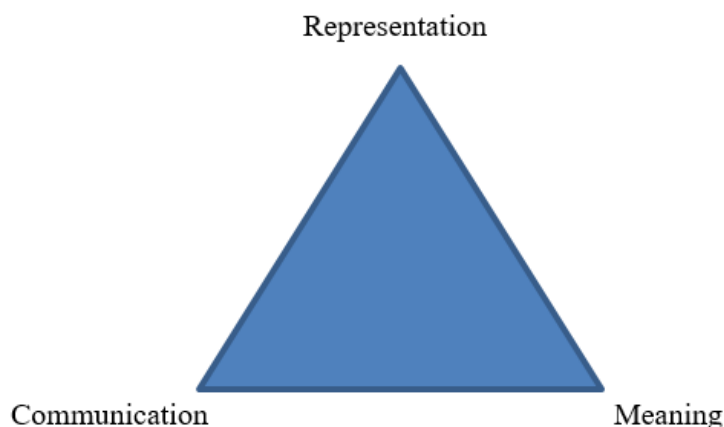


Figure 01: The Charles Sanders Peirce Trilogy

In the “representation” angle of Peirce’s triangle, which focuses on the “diachronic” dimension, segmentations and connections, we find KHATIBI speaking about his first encounter with writing, will remain a tattoo from a childhood,” A mediocre student at first, i scribbled the impossible and complicated letter, i also had a persistent habit of missing the straight line” (KHATIBI, 1971:52), the shock will then manifest itself in the fear of the written word, even if KHATIBI grew up in the arms of the letter in the hands of a father who wrote the book and who was healed with the letter swollen with ink swimming in all kinds of incense “No healing that is not in explicit writing” (KHATIBI, 1971:14), the father whose “The camphorated books [...]sometimes took an air bath” (KHATIBI, 1971:55), however, the shock will then be fear, “this fear in front of writing, fear of being devoured by it, as far as possible, and of dying as a conspirator at the end of an interminable monologue” (KHATIBI, 1971:53).

As for the "communication" angle, which refers in the "Peirce Triangle" to the role that the phenomenon studied plays in society, what it does, what it cancels or intensifies, what it can exclude or to call, and it is in this context the “phenomenon of writing”, which we can recall, by representing its role according to KHATIBI, what he considers to be its potential for rupture, as he refers to it in the following remarks: “Later, I wrote a play with Frankenstein Malabar as a secondary character who strangles his victims by saying: (Excuse my innocence, love made me Malabar) coming from the ogress coast, this play has the slightly macabre taste of my childhood” (KHATIBI, 1971:45).

"Communication" is evident in KHATIBI's choice to make his book an "autobiographical narrative", so that this choice gives him the opportunity to talk about his society, his environment, his visions and his ideas, while telling us about various events, what happened to him in his environment, the events which remained engraved in the memory, this conscious choice of this type of “writing” refers us to its role and its primary purpose.

In the “meaning” angle, which represents the “rituals” angle in Peirce's triangle, we can especially think of the “collective experience”, a concept forged by Jacques Bercque, who was KHATIBI's supervisor in his doctoral thesis, KHATIBI was therefore well aware -he who freely roamed the spaces of the human sciences- that writing is a "ritual" and that provoking representations is its basic pillar, He thus continues to seek to open different horizons, by getting closer to reality, through his various representations.

During her description of some of the "rituals" that constitute daily life, KHATIBI will sculpt new qualities of writing, as we will know that there is a "white writing" and an "authorized writing", on the contrary, through this, certain rituals will be present, rituals in their relationship to writing, continuation and complement of Pierce's semiotic triangle, including "the writing of harrouz", remedy against magic, and the most beautiful passage that we can read in this context is what KHATIBI writes:

“The charm then improvises at the back of the store, through a release of perfumes, a furtive litany around a set of silent instruments (...) at the spindly table of the healer and scribe of talismans, near a single candle, albeit extinguished. He says: you are divided on both sides of the body; you sleep with your fists against the ceiling. He says: you are haunted. He gives me a talisman, and he praises me with a nonchalant gesture. I then have the certainty of being protected, the street envelops me so closely that the medina and its allegories are echoed in the labyrinth of my sentences” (KHATIBI, 1971: 42).

CONCLUSION

At the end, we can said, that the theme of writing at KHATIBI –as Mohamed BERRADA says– is “a total adventure which requires deconstructing things and practicing a double critique of the heritage and knowledge of others, and which requires the elimination of artificial boundaries between genres literature and types of writing” (KHATIBI, 2009:08), so it became plausible for us that the work on the theme of “sociological writing” was not limited to revealing “tattooed memory”, but rather the writer went beyond it and continued to flirt with this desire. This is seen in his following biography "the scribe and her shadow" which will certainly be the subject of questions from other researchers, to pursue their passion for disturbing the contours of the text of KHATIBI, a text weighed down by possibilities infinite explosions.

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