

الماركسية والنقد الأدبي

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المخلص

لم يقترح ماركس ولا إنجلز ولا بول لافارج ولا لينين أو تروتسكي نظرية الأدب. اتخذت تحليلاتهم الأدبية شكل كتابات عرضية ، دون تأملات متعمقة حول خصوصية الأدب أو وضعه الأيديولوجي. منع عدم وجود مجموعة مخصصة للأشياء الأدبية بين النصوص الكلاسيكية للشبوعية لفترة طويلة من ظهور نقد أدبي ماركسي مستقل نسبياً عن القضايا السياسية. ومع ذلك ، فمنذ التحرير ، تطورت المقاربات الماركسية للأدب واهتمت ، من الناحية المادية ، بالتحديدات الاجتماعية للإنتاج الأدبي ، مقابل التقاليد المثالية السائدة. خفت السيطرة الأولية للحزب الشيوعي الفرنسي على المجموعات الماركسية ثم على توزيعها منذ منتصف الخمسينيات ، وذلك بفضل الأزمة الدولية التي افتتحها المؤتمر العشرين للحزب الشيوعي الفرنسي الذي بدأ نزع الستالينية. في الوقت نفسه ، تتكاثر الإشارات إلى الماركسية في المجالات الثقافية والفكرية. النقد الأدبي الذي يدعي الماركسية غير التقليدي ، والذي يأتي غالباً من أعضاء اليسار المناهض للستالينية ، ثم يعيد استثمار مسألة الأشكال ، مقابل فكرة أن الإنتاج الفني ليس سوى "انعكاس" لظروف إنتاجهم المادية. بالنسبة للبعض منهم ، فإن الأمر يتعلق أيضاً بإبراز آليات القوة التي تنقلها الخطابات بفضل ممارسة النقد الأيديولوجي. في سياق تحولات النقد الأدبي الفرنسي ، تتنوع مقتنيات الماركسية وتغطي تدريجياً الممارسات الفكرية والمواقف السياسية غير المتجانسة. منذ السبعينيات ، إذا وجد بعض الأكاديميين الذين يوسعون بناء المقاربات الماركسية مكاناً في الجامعة ، فإن الادعاء الصريح للماركسية في تراجع..

الكلمات المفتاحية: ماركسي، نقد، أدب، شبوعية، ماركسية.

Marxism and literary criticism

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Abstract

It was never suggested that there be a theory of literature by Marx, Engels, Lafargue, Lenin, or Trotsky. Their literary analyses take the form of sporadic publications, lacking in-depth analysis of the specifics of literature or its role as an ideology. For a very long period, a Marxist literary critique that was mostly free of political concerns did not exist because there was no corpus of literary objects among the classic writings of communism.

However, Marxist approaches to literature emerged after the Liberation and, in opposition to the predominately idealist traditions, took an interest in the social factors influencing literary output from a materialist perspective. The international crisis sparked by the XXth Congress of the CPSU, which started de-Stalinization, allowed the French Communist Party to relax its initial control over Marxist corpora and later its control over their dissemination beginning in the middle of the 1950s. Marxism is being discussed more and more in the intellectual and cultural spheres at the same time.

The subject of forms is then reinvested in literary criticism, which frequently comes from anti-Stalinist leftists, in opposition to the notion that creative creations are only "reflective" of their material conditions of production. For some of them, it also pertains to the practice of ideological criticism, which involves making the mechanisms of power communicated by the discourses evident. The appropriations of Marxism are broadening in light of the changes in French literary criticism and gradually including many intellectual activities and political stances. From the 1970s onward, the explicit claim of Marxism decreased as some academics who extended the building of Marxist approaches acquired a place in academia.

Keywords: (Marxism, criticism, Literature, communism, Maxis).

The introduction

A literary theory was not put out by Marx, Engels, Paul Lafargue, Lenin, or Trotsky. They only sometimes wrote on literature, without delving deeply into the specifics of the literature or its role as an ideology. For a very long period, Marxist literary criticism was prohibited from emerging in a way that was mostly unrelated to political matters because of the lack of a corpus of literary objects among the canonical works of communism.

Nonetheless, Marxist approaches to literature emerged after the Liberation and, in opposition to the predominate idealist traditions, took an interest in the social factors influencing literary output from a materialist perspective. The international crisis caused by the XXth Congress of the CPSU, which started de-Stalinization, allowed the French Communist Party (PCF) to loosen its initial control over the Marxist corpora and then its control over their dissemination beginning in the middle of the 1950s. Marxism is being discussed more and more in the intellectual and cultural spheres at the same time.

The subject of forms is then reinvested in literary criticism, which frequently comes from anti-Stalinist leftists, in opposition to the notion that creative creations are only "reflective" of their material conditions of production. Some of them find with the activity of ideological criticism, the processes of power communicated by the discourses can also be made evident. The appropriations of Marxism are broadening in light of the changes in French literary criticism and gradually including many intellectual activities and political stances. From the 1970s onward, the explicit claim of Marxism decreased as some academics who extended the building of Marxist approaches acquired a place in academia

- **The introduction of Marxism into literary criticism (the 1950s): The French Communist Party facing the literary question**

The PCF was interested in literature before 1945, as shown by the existence of communist literary critique in various journals during the interwar period (especially *L'Humanité*), as well as the importance that was placed on authors and artists in the anti-fascist battle. The PCF then fluctuated between promoting writers viewed as progressive (mainly French) and using literary themes for political purposes. Only following the Liberation did he establish a particular strategy for literature. In chronological difference from the cultural and intellectual policy of the USSR, the orientations of the PCF testify to a belated consideration of official cultural issues. If socialist realism, the cultural doctrine of the USSR promoting a figurative and Andre Jdanov had been imposing heroic portrayal of the people against the avant-garde art movements since 1934, but the PCF did not adopt it until 1947, as a result of an ideological hardening that, like in the USSR, signaled the start of the Cold War.

If socialist realism represents both a "method of creation and [...] a category of criticism" [1], its principles are multiple and can refer either to a "rigorous aesthetic definition [which] singularly narrows its domain", or to a "broad definition [which] ultimately reduces it to an ideological and political criterion without any real aesthetic content" [2]. Its definition is thus an object of conflict. For Georg Lukács and his followers, 19th-century French realism represents a model to follow.

Garaudy, in his orthodox positions within the PCF, refuses to reduce socialist realism to a simple formal aesthetic in favor of an ideological conception of art, faithful to the principles of Jdanovism demanding to make politics a "guide" [3]. From *D'un réalisme sans rives* (1963), his position turned away from this ideological conception and evolved towards a "metaphysics of creation ("the artistic work as a projection into the future of the human possibility")" [4].

Last but not least, the 1950 debate between Francis Jourdain, a painter, and André Wurmser in the journal *La Pensée* demonstrates how the PCF and Marxism's definition of the role of art in society continues to oppose a "rough" conception (instead of the political conception of art) and a "modest" conception (to the detriment of the freedom in art): a table of logarithms. Let me decline this overly modest Marxism, which would apologize to His Majesty the artist by knocking on the door of the studio: "Oh! I apologize; I was on the incorrect floor" and would descend to the shoemaker once more, vowing never to rise above the shoe. 133 [5].

The PCF's decision to publish authors who are Marxists as part of an investment strategy in intellectual spaces gained significance at the same time. Hence, the Éditions sociales include translations or reprints of literary works by Marxist authors, supplemented by in-depth talks by Jean Fréville (1895-1971).

This is the case with the reissue of the anthology of texts by Marx and Engels on literature and art (1954, preface by Maurice Thorez), *Art and Social Life* (1950) by Georgi Plekhanov or a selection of texts by Lenin, *On Literature and Art* (1957). It is for the PCF to constitute a Marxist canon of interpretation of literary and artistic objects, as well as to register socialist realism in the history of Marxism on the one hand and in the French national tradition on the other hand, as Maurice Thorez's preface to the texts of Marx and Engels shows, in which he writes "that with the first collection: *On Literature and Art*, Marxism burst into areas that the coryphées of bourgeois criticism. [...] Marxist thought provides the theoretical foundations for realism centered on social progress and the transformation of the world.[6].

The end of a monopoly

If the PCF invested in more and more intellectual spaces following the Liberation, it was also because it faced competition in this field from intellectuals who were not members and who were increasingly interested in Marxism. Thus, against the PCF's claim to a monopoly, some of them, with Jean-Paul Sartre in the lead, refused the "Marxist" label while sharing some of its principles.

In *What is Literature?* (1948), Sartre opposes traditional literary criticism and formulates his theory of the responsibility of the writer, which he conceives as a new form of intellectual and artistic commitment detached from partisan issues. A committed author and promoter of a materialist critique of literature, which he implemented in *L'Idiot de la famille* (1971-1972) devoted to Flaubert, Sartre maintained ambiguous relationships with Marxism throughout his career, then with the Communist Party.

The early writings of Georg Lukács are currently being imported into France by left-leaning intellectuals who are critical of Stalinism and are gathered around the review *Arguments* (1956-1962). His writings were widely read thanks to Lucien Goldmann (1913–1970), who wrote a lengthy essay on the Hungarian theorist titled "Introduction to the First Writings of Georg Lukács," which was published in *Les Temps Modernes* in 1962. In opposition to what he terms the "of reflection" Marxist theoreticians (Georgui Plekhanov and Franz Mehring in particular), as well as the sociology of empirical literature developed around Robert Escarpit (1918–2000), Lucien Goldmann developed a unique epistemology and methodology that was attentive to social structures and their changes.

The core of his sociology of literature is this "genetic structuralism," which rejects both the reduction of the work to its context of production, which, in his view, mechanistic Marxist supports, and the biography of its author, which is mobilized in literary education. He exhibits this in *The Hidden God* (1955).

Pascal and Racine both said that to be understood, one must have a "view of the universe," or a "collection of goals, feelings, and ideas that unite members of a group (often of a social class) and pit them against other groups.[7]

This tragic vision of the nobility of the robe being brutally devalued by the royal power is present in Jansenist theology as well as the structural frameworks of the works of Racine and Pascal, where God is both omnipresent and absent. It is a paradoxical view of the world without the possibility of transformations - without history.

By simultaneously asserting the need to consider the context in which the works were produced, including classical works, as well as their irreducibility, the rereading of the works of the young Lukács, along with the selection of a prestigious corpus and the Marxist analysis of the texts, constitute a double positioning: concerning the political line of the PCF and about the dominant literary criticism.

Promoting heterodox Marxism

The reception of Brecht in France also helped to advance unorthodox Marxism at a time when the PCF was under fire for supporting the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956. During the war, Brecht was not well-known, and it wasn't until the 1950s that he achieved success in French theaters.

Although it is thought to be too formal and too far from socialist realism's tenets by the PCF, it represents, on the contrary, the possibility of a "Marxist reflection but by Brechtian ways", as Bernard Dort will writes, theatrical criticism. To combine the pleasure of the theatrical performance with the educational role of the theatre, Brecht formulates his theory of "distancing" by which he refuses the theatrical illusion of the Italian stage, as well as the identification of spectators with characters.

Regarding *Mother Courage*, for example, which narrates a mother's blindness in the face of war, the playwright writes that "the spectator should not experience what the characters experience but put them into question". He, therefore, proposes a new theory of artistic engagement to deconstruct the dominant ideology rather than carry out propaganda.

The Brechtian aesthetic-political project was introduced and supported in France by Roland Barthes who, in *Mythologies* (1957), set himself the project of tracking down ideologies by observing, in everyday objects and discourses, "how a lexicon and a grammar can be politically engaged" [8]. Both theoretician and artist, Brecht was thus able to represent during this period a "model" both aesthetic and political, while (the old) Lukács, by his accommodation to Stalinism, acted as a "foil" [9].

Both of these forms of heterodoxy about communist orthodoxy—the first, in keeping with the work of the young Lukács, refusing to sacrifice the works on the altar of social determinations, and the second choosing a non-ideological criticism of ideology in the manner of Brecht—are opposed to the "theory of reflection," a pejorative term used to describe the criticism mobilized within the PCF's sphere of influence (which is itself in the process of being renewed).

From Marxist theory to literary theories (1960s – 1970s): Marxism, communism and literary structuralism

Following the process of de-Stalinization, a series of transformations marked the evolution of the PCF in the 1960s and favored the dissemination and appropriation of different Marxist orientations in matters of literary criticism. Between the need for intellectual renewal and fear of political openness, the heartbreaks of the communists can also be read in their treatment of literature. In 1960, the Center for Marxist Studies and Research (CERM) was created, which published the International Marxist Bibliography in 1964.

At the same time, the rise of the human sciences was marked by the development of structuralist approaches to culture. And more specifically literature. These are questioned very early on about their relationship to Marxism. The center of Cerisy-la-Salle, a place of a Marxism "politically anti-Stalinist, non-Leninist and also non-Maoist, and intellectually anti-Althusserian" [10] hosted in 1959 one of the first conferences devoted to structuralism, "Genèse et structure", jointly organized by Maurice de Gandillac, Lucien Goldmann and Jean Piaget.

A few years later, it was the ethnologist Lucien Sebag who, in *Marxisme et structuralism* (1964), questioned the possible continuities between these two approaches. The dialogue between Marxism and structuralism gradually changed form during the 1960s with the emergence of structuralism in its Althusserian version, which promoted a scientific Marxism that broke with the heritage of Lukács' thought.

The importation of Russian formalists, initially framed by PCF networks, contributed to this transition. The French appropriation of Formalist works, whose representatives were opposed to Soviet Marxist-Leninist criticism, served both the criticism of Jdanovism and the renewal of literary criticism and aesthetics [11].

From then on, if Aragon had declared himself in 1959 in favor of the abandonment of socialist realism, the most autonomous communist intellectuals gradually took part in the constitution and promotion of their "own theory of literature, the middle way between the theory of reflection and Telquelian formalism" [9], which was developed at a distance from Aragon and from Garaudy. However, the doctrine of socialist realism was only officially abandoned in 1966 during the Central Committee of Argenteuil [12].

This is also a moment of dissemination and discussion of the works of Althusser, whose works are quick to feed literary theories. Close to new disciplines (semiology, linguistics, etc.), they met with significant success in academic, intellectual, and literary spaces that were then highly politicized.

The proliferation of journals, the growth of modern letters in universities, the rise of structuralism, and the challenge to the traditional model of literary studies are also at the origin of a global transformation of literary criticism, in which the work of Marxist inspiration occupies a growing and essential place for theoretical formalization.

The organization of a public debate at the Mutualité in February 1965 by the Union of Communist Students (UEC) and its newspaper *Clarté*, both critics of Jdanovism, on the theme "What can literature do?" testifies to this investment in literary questions and divisions within Marxism.

The debate opposes Jean-Pierre Faye and Jean Ricardou, then promoters of theoretical approaches to literature, to Sartre and Simone de Beauvoir who defend their vision of committed literature, while Jorge Semprún tries to (re)make literature a lever revolutionary.

Within the theoretical revival of literary criticism, heterodox appropriations of Marxism dominate. The trajectory of Roland Barthes (1915-1980), one of the main figures of theoretical approaches to literature, is thus placed under the sign of a dissident Marxism and a "recoding" of the Marxist lexicon

which testifies as much to his attachment to Marxism than its refusal to fully embrace it [13]. Never a member of the PCF, Barthes maintained a critical distance, throughout his career, concerning communism and its literary figures.

From his first work, *The Zero Degree of Writing* (1953), he targeted Garaudy and André Stil. Barthes envisaged Marxism as a method to which he claimed only retrospectively. The critique of ideology, associated with semiology, was a way of challenging the “academic critique” to which he opposed, and of proposing literary analyses, such as that of the effect of reality. Barthes' – distant – participation in *Arguments*, his defense of Brecht's theater, and his temporary proximity to Goldmann also anchored him in networks marked by heterodox uses of Marxism.

Theoretical practice and renewal of literary studies

The journals *Tel Quel* and *La Nouvelle Critique* were at the origin of two conferences held at the Abbey of Cluny in 1968 and 1970, respectively entitled “Literature and Linguistics” and “Literature and Ideologies”.

During this second symposium, particularly stormy according to its organizers, certain canonical texts previously monopolized by the PCF, those of Lenin in particular, were the subject of conflicting appropriations.

Among the regular contributors to *Tel Quel*, Julia Kristeva (1941-), born in Bulgaria and a student of Goldmann and Barthes, offers an approach to literature based on an alliance of semiology with an Althusserianism that marks the journal right from the start. of the 1970s. The notion of “intertextuality” proposed by Kristeva in the mid-1960s, which consists of detecting all the texts about a given text, formalizes the critique of ideology by endowing it with linguistic analysis tools that make it possible to claim a scientific basis.

At the same time, it makes it possible to distinguish the characteristics of literary language and to distinguish them from the “ordinary” uses of language, with which literature nevertheless finds itself in a relationship of continuity. The question of the relationship between literary discourse and the current uses of the language will be examined later by the linguist Renée Balibar, also within a framework of Marxist analysis close to Althusserian conceptions (*Les français fictifs. Le rapport des styles littéraires au français national*, 1974).

The application of Althusserian Marxism to literature is also the basis of Pierre Macherey's first work, for a *Theory of Literary Production*, published in 1966 by Maspero. Althusser's pupil presents an approach to literature that promotes Marxist “theoretical practice” as the vehicle for a scientific discourse on literature. This is possible, according to Macherey, only at the cost of a break with the practice of literature as well as with aesthetic judgment.

The reflection on the conditions of the autonomy of the writer, the taking into account the social dimension of literary “production” - a term which he replaces that of “literature” - which makes the writer the worker of his text, as well as the need to introduce mediations that contribute to literary production are major axes of this work. He discusses the texts of Lenin in Tolstoy, of which he criticizes the strictly political dimension, which allows him to question the conditions in which a

literary discourse is produced. It refutes reflection theories and hermeneutical and structural approaches to literature.

He considers the latter as a specific discourse that can only be understood relationally and which, above all, conceals a critical power such that it becomes a privileged instrument for the critique of ideology. At the same time, the Cahiers Marxist-Léninistes, created in 1964 on the initiative of the UEC group in the rue d'Ulm, promoted similar ideas. The issue "Powers of Literature" (1965-1966) testifies to the importance of literary questions in this group, which also appear as an object conducive to the debate of different conceptions of Marxism. The ironically titled article "Monsieur Goldman upsets science" in issue no. 3 of the journal speaks well of the internal fractures in Marxist approaches to literary objects. By criticizing Goldman for the "distortion" of his analysis of Marx, in particular his reading of reification, the authors assert that his work is of an ideological order and is therefore unable to become scientific.

The May 1968 crisis was a moment of intensification of theoretical production and a matrix of political radicalization, which nevertheless ended in the break-up of theoretical groups and the gradual delegitimization of Tel Quel [14]. Barthes is not indifferent to Althusserian approaches and shows his support for Sollers and his team. Two of his students, Gérard Genette (1930-) and Tzvetan Todorov (1939-2017) were at the origin of theories of literature that systematized the structural methods of literary analysis around the academic journal *Poétique* (1970).

This met with significant success in literary education and distanced the theories of literature from the networks marked by the spread of Marxism in which they were initially registered, even in their less politicized version – Genette had been a member of *Socialisme ou Barbarie* et Todorov, who had been familiarized very early on with the writings of dissidents of the communist regimes, was one of the main importers of Russian formalists. Finally, the publication of the monumental *Histoire littéraire de la France* entre 1974 and 1980 by Éditions Sociales, the historical publishing house of the PCF, shows that the cultural and intellectual authorities of the party do not cease to invest in the terrain of Literature. Bringing together collaborators from various backgrounds, the 12-volume collection affirms, in line with theoretical approaches, the need to break with biographical literary history while affirming the desire "not to separate the history of literature from 'just history'[15] and thereby restore to literary history its social and political dimension.

Mutations and decline of Marxism in literary approaches

From the middle of the 1970s, the statement of Marxism as a universal philosophy rapidly diminished. The PCF's decline in the academic community was not accompanied by fresh developments in the institutionalization of Marxist literary theories (at the exception, limited in the case of literary studies, of Vincennes). If references to Marxism had not disappeared in French literary studies, they have transformed: the theoretical vogue of the 1960s was gradually replaced by a more empirical and less doctrinaire approach to Marxism.

The 1975 paper "On literature as an ideological form" by Pierre Macherey and Etienne Balibar, which purports to construct a theory of literary effects, seems more like an Althusserian farewell than a sign of a theoretical renaissance. The positive but sporadic reception of Marxist literary figures in

academia (such as Pierre Barbéris and Roger Fayolle), the emergence of the discipline of socio-criticism (marked initially by a Marxist sensibility but which is elaborated on new concepts), and the rise of the sociology of literature all reveal a concurrent, often interdisciplinary interest in Marxist-inspired methods and a rejection of Marxist theory as a whole.

The incarnation of a pulpit Marxism

One of the major figures of a Marxist conception of the field and methods of literary criticism within literary studies itself is [16], a teacher, researcher, but also political and union activist. Author of a considerable body of work, he became a recognized figure in the academic world, despite clashes with the Sorbonne or with critics, such as Bernard Guyon, who criticized him for a doctrinaire approach.

While a good number of literary researchers at the time showed a Marxist sensibility, Barbéris was one of the few to proclaim himself, throughout his career, a Marxist critic. He intends to inject a refined Marxist conception of history into the approach to literary texts and, to do this, departs from a certain Marxist orthodoxy (whether it is a question of an overly philosophical Lukács in his taste or Althusser's theoretician) than from a positivist or idealist vision dominating literary studies. The great works of Barbéris are mainly readings of classical texts (Balzac, Stendhal), based on Marxist principles, which the authors studied concerning the emergence of Marxist thought and the horizon of the class struggle.

The institutional position of Barbéris, both recognized and limited (he was a professor at the ÉNS in Lyon, then at the University of Caen) made it possible to extend the Marxist impregnation of the discipline somewhat. However, if his readings enthuse a generation of students (Gérard Gengembre, Jean Goldzinck, Nicole Mozet), it does not give rise to institutional extensions. Barbéris thus appears as the butte witness of an era when Marxism and literary research were quite closely linked.[17].

This institutional recognition that Barbéris was able to enjoy differentiates him from André Wurmser, a French journalist writer, and columnist at L'Humanité. If they both claim Marxism, Barbéris leads a classic academic career while Wurmser's critical summation of Balzac, *La Comédie inhumaine*, is generally mocked by specialists. Barbéris also distanced himself from Wurmser, whose Marxist label he criticized as purely "political" (Post-face du Monde de Balzac, 2000).

The development of a non-Marxist sociology of the literary field

The sociology of literature, which studies literature (whether in terms of the production or reception of literature) as a social fact, has gradually become detached from a Marxist approach, such as it was upgraded by Goldmann at the end of the 60s. The success of immanentist critiques and Goldmann's struggles to establish his critical methodology while adhering to the fundamentals of Marxist doctrines both served to undermine this Marxist sociology.

As a result, Goldmann was accused of being an anti-Marxist deviationist for using the concept of the social group instead of social class in *Towards Sociologie du Roman* (1964). After the abrupt passing of Goldmann in 1970, this sociology lacked a solid institutional foundation and failed to develop a following among sociologists or literary scholars. So, Goldmann's desire to develop a Marxist sociology of literature as a discipline will not be fulfilled. We might mention Pierre Bourdieu's

[18] new sociological approach to literature as an example. Bourdieu adopts basic Marxist terms, such as class or capital, but does so from a different theoretical and methodological stance. Bourdieu, who departs from the standard philosophy of Marxist history, on the one hand, sketches out a complex and fragmented social space by constructing the distinctiveness of a literary field constrained by specific rules (some Marxists thus reproach him for not specifying how these fields relate to each other, and thus not to propose a general theory of society).

Associating Lukács and Goldmann with Hegel and Marx, [18] asserts that he rejects both the autonomy of works and a clear connection between work and society. However, unlike Goldmann, the method of analysis of the literary field described by [18] (situation of the literary field within the field of power, internal analysis of the literary field, analysis of the writer's habitus) aims to understand the author's trajectories without connecting them to the expression of a trans individual existential situation.

The ambiguity of ecocriticism

Sociocriticism, which Duchet introduced in 1971 at the (University of Vincennes), appears "as a theoretical dissent from the standard Marxist approach" in the post-May 68 intellectual and political milieu in his article-manifesto, Duchet rejects both poetic readings that leave the social out of the text and the treatment of the social by Marxist literary analysis, which, in his opinion, is frozen by "*the theory of reflection, the concept of typical (...), an insufficient exploration of ideologies and the nature of the literary signified*" [20]. He does this to delineate a new approach that does not view the literary text as a social fact, like the sociology of literature.

Uncertainty over the boundaries of a new academic area leads to symbolic conflicts and theoretical disagreements, with Marxism emerging as the loser at the turn of the century.

The term "socio-criticism" immediately fell victim to its success; claimed from a variety of angles, it struggles to define a specific methodology. After the Toronto Colloquium on the socio-criticism of the novelistic text in 1972, Henri Mitterrand succinctly expressed this embarrassment: "We have not succeeded (...) in releasing a definition of socio-criticism, nor even a clear awareness of its objectives, its perspectives, and its languages. This embarrassment is also evident in the introduction to *Socio-critique* [19], where Claude Duchet attempts to both honor and distinguish the sociology of literature, Marxist materialist criticism (and particularly Lucien Goldmann), by calling for a "reorientation of socio-historical investigation from the outside to the inside, that is, the internal organization of the texts, their systems of operation, their networks of meaning, and their tensions (...)." Authors like Edmond Cros (who leans on Althusser and Lacan) or Pierre Zima make similar claims about socio-criticism and further it (who draws on Adorno and the Frankfurt School). The debate between Pierre Barbéris and Claude Duchet in literary studies serves as an example of how Marxist and socio-criticism have a shaky relationship.

Duchet has defended his independence from Marxism more and more over the years. The socio-text, the sociogram, the context, and the triptych information, index, and value are among the new methodological notions that are established. [16], on the other hand, refuses to sever Marxism and ecocriticism from one another despite pushing for sociocriticism's role in the revival of Marxism. Sociocriticism has not experienced any real institutionalization in France, despite some theoretical

effervescence (particularly at the University of Vincennes, around the journal *Literature*), caught between post-structuralist approaches and the sociology of literature with Bourdieu's inspiration (unlike Belgium, Quebec, or Switzerland). Claude Duchet and Isabelle Tournier have expressed dissatisfaction that the educational setting favors "unifying schemas based on linguistics on ecocriticism" over techniques acquired from structuralism.

A sad conflict between stylistics or "the rightwing" and socio-criticism or "the leftwing" has been resolved thanks to the convergence of socio-criticism and discourse analysis but at the expense of a certain methodological weakening of socio-criticism. The divorce of socio-criticism from Marxists has been fully accomplished by this overlap with a more fashionable field.

Conclusion

Marxist approaches to literature in France have gradually shifted from a framing by the PCF to dispersed and relatively disparate initiatives that have allowed the diversification of import circuits and appropriations of Marxist texts. The transformations of the university and editorial spaces, which had participated in the promotion of certain approaches to literature claiming to be Marxist, were not long in reducing the place given to them in the aftermath of May 68. In the mid-1970s, the criticism of structuralism by certain initial promoters of literary theories, the media coverage of intellectual groups built on opposition to Marxism, or even the American reformulations of "theory" and the hostilities they fueled contributed to the distancing of materialism and the retranslation of anti-communism into anti-Marxism in academic, intellectual and literary spaces. Materialist approaches to literature, more or less close to Marx and the Marxist theoretical system, are nevertheless reinvested through the founding figures of the sociology of literature and sociocracies. It is therefore always in a conflictual space and strongly marked by the political opposition that Marxist approaches to literature are painfully maintained by the 20th century's end. However, the *doxa* that makes Marxism an obsolete heritage is opposed by a few more specific initiatives. Thus, certain philosophers, Marxists, former Marxists, or relatives (Badiou, Macherey, Rancière) have recently taken up the question of literature and its political role. We can also note, at the turn of the century, the reissues of Lukács in 1999 (*Balzac et le réalisme français*, published by La Découverte and prefaced by Gengembre) of Barbéris in 2000 (*Le Monde de Balzac*, by Kimé, with an afterword unpublished), then by Macherey in 2014 (*For a theory of literary production*, ÉNS Lyon editions, with an unpublished afterword by the author,) each of which asks this question: what can a Marxist approach to literature in the 21st century be? century ?.

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