

## **The role of self-perception and images in two autofictional nouveau-roman (Georges Perec: *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*, Marguerite Duras: *L'Amant*)**

Diána Mosza

University Eötvös Loránd, Budapest, Hungary

The role of self-perception and images in two autofictional nouveau-roman (Georges Perec: *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*, Marguerite Duras: *L'Amant*)

The nouveau roman renewed the genre of autobiography, authors like Nathalie Sarraute, Alain Robbe-Grillet, Raymond Queneau, Georges Perec and Marguerite Duras changed the way of writing, reading and understanding the term self-narrative. Narrating the self and creating the self became parallel activities and the act of reading evolved into an intellectual game and sometimes a multimodal adventure. The present paper analyses two of these fascinating works: *W or the Memory of Childhood* from Georges Perec (*W ou le souvenir d'enfance*, 1975) and *The Lover* from Marguerite Duras (*L'Amant*, 1982). Both novels' reception consists of interesting approaches on autobiographical storytelling, Perec's autofictional works were thoroughly examined by Philippe Lejeune (1991) and Duras's were analysed by Aliette Armel (1990). The paper would also consider the results of Daniel Punday on corporeal narratology (2003).

Georges Perec's partly autobiographical novel claims at the beginning that Perec has no childhood memories. Nevertheless, he attempts to somehow reconstruct and understand what he had instead of joyful family moments. The puzzle-like act of remembering and the experiment of filling the spaces of absence creates a fascinating parallel world where everything stands for something else. Orphanage is a very special type of being the child of someone, since the lack of parents is not only a lack of bodily closeness, but a lack of a mirror. This absence hinders and sometimes even blocks the development of the self. On the other hand, being the witness of these lacunae requires remembering and storytelling to stand for the ones who couldn't narrate their own story. (See more at Hirsch 2012, Davis 2017.)

Duras's short novel has a very special frame, namely the watching of a fictive photography that could have been made on the day when she met her lover on the ferry. Although their love story starts in the moment of noticing each other, the possibility of being seduced and of quitting her family was present months before the passage on the river Mekong. When she got her hat that she would wear on the ferry, she looked in the mirror and suddenly saw herself as an Other, this Ricouerian turn (1990) changed her self-perception. This sensual autobiography with its multimodal setting provides great opportunity to see how the self is depicted as an embodied agent.

My paper aims to search for the visual and corporeal narrative gestures in the novels that reveal hidden messages on the compound structure of power and morality. Presence and absence, faces and clothes would help us to understand the subtle dynamic of these two self-narrations from the era of the nouveau roman.