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TRANSMEDIA NARRATIVE AND METALEPSIS IN THE PROMOTION OF THE NOVEL: ``ANTIHÉROES`` (IRIA PARENTE AND SELENE PASCUAL)

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Abstract: This article analyzes the promotion campaign of the novel ``*Antihéroes*`` (by the authors Iria Parente and Selene Pascual) considering its status as a transmedia narrative and the use of metalepsis in said campaign. Firstly, the introduction of the work addresses the different phases that made up the advertising strategy of the novel and succinctly explains how the marketing of the novel was carried out. ``*Antihéroes*``. Subsequently, the article reflects on whether the texts included in said promotional campaign can be considered narrative texts, that is, whether they meet the conditions of narrativity proposed by Marie-Laure Ryan.

At the same time, the belonging of these new texts shared on social networks to the same transmedia world of the novel is analyzed.

Later, the presence of metalepsis or rupture of the fictional logic in the promotion strategy of ``*Antihéroes*``, seeing that, in the promotional campaign, some narrative instances of the novel, belonging to the world of the characters, interacted with extratextual instances from the real world, such as the authors, other writers under the Nocturna publishing label, or even the fans.

Finally, the article reflects on the intrinsic relationship that exists between the use of new technologies and social networks for the expansion of transmedia stories and the rupture of fictional logic. We argue that new forms of dissemination of texts have brought about a great democratization of literature, which has resulted in the effects of literary techniques such as metalepsis occurring on a much larger scale.

Keywords: metalepsis, transmedia narratives, narrativity, ``*Antihéroes*``, Iria Parente, Selene Pascual

INTRODUCTION

The present work aims to study, from the perspective of transmedia narratology, the promotion campaign of the novel ``*Antihéroes*`` that its authors (Iria Parente and Selene Pascual) launched through social networks. The book was published in March 2018 by the Nocturna publishing house, but the advertising strategy began in January of that same year.

The authors used Twitter (now X) to share detailed information about the novel's characters, presented in the form of psychological reports. They also included interviews conducted by the CIRCE organization (a fictitious mental health institution) with each of the protagonists.

Simultaneously, a more complex promotional strategy was implemented, which involved fans through social networks and represented a break in the logic of fiction. This strategy began with the publication of a first report about the character Mei Bayón, where the authors shared the supposed email address of Mei's mother. The fans, intrigued, communicated from their personal emails and obtained responses from the character's supposed mother.

Furthermore, on January 16, Parente and Pascual's official Twitter account (@iriayselene) pretends to have been hacked because the authors have shared "personal information of a minor," violating the Data Protection Law. Of course, the minor in question does not exist and is only a character in the novel.

Subsequently, Pascual and Parente say they have finally recovered their Twitter account, at which point the promotion of the novel reaches its peak. Other authors who published under the same publishing label joined the advertising strategy, sharing on their Twitter profiles "strange" experiences that they said had happened to them. For example, H.M.

Zubieta, the author of the house, mentioned having had a peculiar encounter on a train with a strange man and having subsequently received a call from an unknown number. She later discovered that the number corresponded to that of the (real) public entity CIRCE, belonging to the Spanish Ministry of Economy, a fact that fans were quick to verify. This event led Iria Parente (author of the novel) and Zubieta to go to the Chamberí station in Madrid to investigate what happened (the place where the fictional institution CIRCE theoretically has its headquarters according to the novel). The two women recount their adventure through H.M.'s Twitter profile. Zubieta.

This strategy also involved fans, who shared their own experiences with the authors through networks, expanding the plot beyond the main thread of the novel.

To summarize what was discussed in this first introductory part, we could say that the commercial strategy of the novel: ``*Antihéroes*``, it was carried out using different strategies that entailed a greater or lesser degree of narrativity (as will be seen in later parts of the work) and that generated in the recipients a greater or lesser experience of breaking the logic of fiction. The work addresses transmediality and metalepsis in this advertising campaign, considering the criteria of narration and transmediality according to research by Jenkins (2003), Klastrup & Tosca (2004), Ryan (2005) and Scolari (2009, 2013). The concept of metalepsis is also explored, based on the works of Genette (1989, 1998, 2006) and Martín Jiménez (2015a, 2015b, 2016).

THINK TRANSMEDIALITY

Before beginning the analysis of the case at hand, it seems necessary to establish what we understand by transmediality or transmedia narrative. Transmediality as a phenomenon has attracted the attention of researchers, especially in recent years, which has generated "a terminological galaxy that makes orientation in the field difficult" (Corona Rodríguez, 2016, p. 36), although the underlying concept It's quite similar. The term transmedia is the one that has been most successful and, therefore, it is the one that we will use in this work to talk about this particular form of creation.

According to the studies of Jenkins et al. (2009), transmedia stories "are stories told across multiple media" (p. 46), so that we could define NT (transmedia narratives) as "a type of story where the story unfolds across multiple media and platforms." of communication, and in which a part of the consumers assumes an active role in this expansion process" (Scolari, 2013, p. 46). According to Jenkins, for a narrative to be transmedia, there must be expansion and each part must be "self-contained" (2003). Active audience participation is also crucial (Jenkins et al., 2009). Transmedia content also implies the introduction of new elements instead of simply reusing them on different platforms (Scolari, 2013).

Along the same lines, the notion of transmedial worlds (a concept related to that of transmedia narrative) refers to "abstract content systems from which a repertoire of fictional stories and characters can be updated or derived across a variety of media forms" (Klastrup & Tosca, 2004, p. 409). The followers "recognize the world by its abstract properties" (p. 409), since the entity of transmedia worlds goes beyond a mere story with a concrete plot.

The studies of narratology expert Marie-Laure Ryan are situated in this same sense,

who considers that in order to find an appropriate definition of narration from a transmedial perspective, it is necessary to expand the concept beyond the purely verbal. The scholar starts from the idea that history is independent of the techniques that support it. It can be, therefore, adapted or expanded from one medium to another without losing its most basic properties, since history "exists only at an abstract level" (Chatman, 1978, p. 37). Consequently, the narrative manifests itself as "a certain type of mental image, or cognitive template which can be isolated from the stimuli that trigger its construction." (Ryan, 2005, p. 4) To interpret products as part of the same transmedial world, they must maintain consistent elements such as mythos, topos and ethos (Klastrup & Tosca, 2004).

After this brief introduction, we can now venture into a somewhat deeper reflection on the case at hand. To understand transmedia narratives, it is essential to define the concept of "medium". This word, which comes from the English term media (media), is complex due to its ambiguity. According to Marie-Laure Ryan (2005), the definition of the term includes two meanings: "(1) A channel or system of communication, information, or entertainment/ (2) Material or technical means of artistic expression" (page: 14). This implies that the media can be both communication channels and artistic languages. For example, radio, gramophone and an mp3 player could be considered different media according to the first definition, while verbal language, sound and image would be considered different media according to the second definition.

However, the question arises as to whether devices such as a turntable and a CD player must really be considered separate media. While it is true that the technology they use is different, is the consumer experience different? The answer is probably negative. On the other hand, television and cinema, despite being designed to reproduce audiovisual content, offer essentially different experiences due to factors such as seriality and technological advances.

To determine what constitutes a distinct medium, it is crucial to establish criteria that distinguish a transmedial narrative from one that is not. According to Ryan (2005), "what counts as a medium is a category that truly makes a difference as to what stories can be evoked or told, how they are presented, why they are communicated, and how they are experienced" (page: 14). Media affects the way stories are told and perceived, suggesting that mediality is a relative rather than absolute property.

It is at this point where we must carefully analyze whether the case at hand meets the criteria of being both a narrative and a transmedial narrative. According to Ryan (2005, p. 4), there are a series of constitutive features of narrative that go beyond the purely verbal and that fit perfectly with a transmedial definition of the term. These characteristics include the existence of a world populated by individual agents and objects; not completely predictable changes caused by unusual events; and the association of physical events with mental states and events to give coherence and motivation to the plot. For a story to be considered such and have narrativity, all three features must be present.

In the first phase of the promotion of ``*Antihéroes*``, the authors shared detailed information about the characters in the form of "medical reports." Although they present the physical and psychological characteristics of the characters, these documents are descriptive and not narrative, which does not meet the second condition of narrativity according to Ryan (2005).

In later stages, the interaction between fans and the characters' "guardians" provides a narrative element by posing interconnected

situations. Although they do not constitute autonomous plots, these email exchanges do have a certain narrativity; this way, the second condition proposed by Ryan is fulfilled, although the third of them only in a certain way.

However, the last phase of the novel's advertising campaign is substantially different from the previous ones. At this time, the authors, people around them and some fans begin to create stories in which characters appear, located in specific places, in which different events occur that are connected to the plot of the book. An example of this are the stories shared by H. M. Zubieta through her Twitter account. In them, we meet the characters of the story (Iria Parente, the author, and H. M. Zubieta, her friend), we know the place where the events take place (Madrid in the year 2018) and, in addition, Zubieta tells us what what they are going to do and accompanies their statements with photographs taken at the time. In the same way, fans tell stories on social networks like the ones we see on Zubieta's profile. All of this is, of course, related to the world presented in the novel. ``Antihéroes`` and together with this it forms a transmedial world.

In summary, although some phases of promotion do not constitute narratives, the texts shared in the last stage meet the three essential characteristics of narrativity according to Ryan (2005).

Once it has been demonstrated that this advertising strategy is based on the creation of parallel stories to the history of ``Antihéroes``endowed with narrativity, we must ensure that it is also transmedial. As previously stated, the term medium is ambiguous, since we can refer to either a language or a communication channel. There is no doubt that, when a story goes from one language (say, verbal) to another (such as, for example, audiovisual) we are talking about a change of medium. However, in the case at hand we are faced with stories that use the same language, in this case, verbal. If, for example, the authors of a certain novel published a spin off, we could not consider it to be a transmedia story, even if the characters were in the same world and the stories were related.

So, how can we affirm that in this case it is a NT? The key seems to be found, again, in the studies of Ryan (2005), who stated that we can consider that a story has passed from one medium to another and, consequently, is a NT when the experience of the receivers changes radically. by consuming said story in one medium or another.

Consequently, making use of the "current media ecosystem" (Corona Rodríguez, 2016, p. 33), Iria Parente and Selene Pascual's advertising strategy turns consumers into prosumers. This makes a notable difference compared to other forms of participation in the creation of stories, such as in video games or collaborative writing platforms.

THE BREAKDOWN OF FICTIONAL LOGIC

Metalepsis, understood as the transgression of the limits between narrative levels, has been addressed by Genette (1989, 1998) and developed in a textual model by Martín Jiménez (2015a, 2015b, 2016). For Genette, metalepsis is what occurs "when an author (or his reader) is introduced into the fictional action of his story or a character from that fiction intrudes into the extradiegetic existence of the author or the reader", generating a "problem of distinction of levels" (Genette, 1998, p. 60).

Taking this definition into account, and with the help of the terminology of the theory of possible worlds, Martín Jiménez (2015a, 2015b, 2016) offers a unifying proposal for a textual model that allows these ruptures in fictional logic to be explained easily. This

taxonomy focuses on the representation of the poles of identity and alterity, and defines three categories that cover all literary forms of expression: world of the author, world of the characters and the possibility of both developing together (Martín Jiménez, 2015b, 1993).

This proposal by Martín Jiménez facilitates the explanation of the ruptures in fictional logic caused by metalepsis in the narrative. The categorization is based on the representation of the poles of identity and alterity, and allows us to understand this phenomenon more clearly.
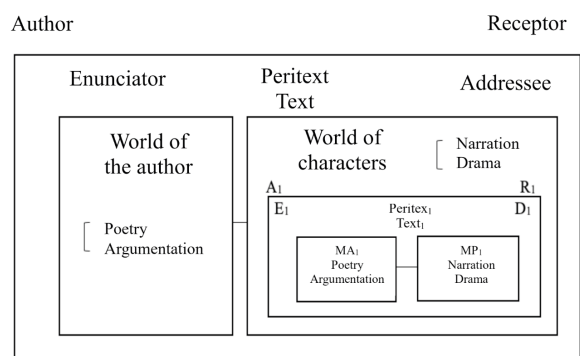

Figure 1. Proposed textual model of literary genres. Adapted from (Martín Jiménez, 2015b, p. 56).

> The statement itself is formed by the natural generic categories of the world of the author and the world of the characters, which appear joined by a horizontal line that represents the possibility of both categories being developed at the same time in the text. And inside the world of the characters a new textual scheme is included, which aims to account for the possibility (...) that the characters create new texts inside the original text (Martín Jiménez, 2015b, page: 57).

This scheme also allows us to account in a very visual way for those cases in which a metalepsis or a break in the logic of fiction occurs in the text. For example, if a narrative instance of the characters' world interacts with an instance of a higher level, such as the AUTHOR, a metalepsis is configured,

an impossible transgression of narrative levels. This is illustrated in ``*Niebla*``, by Miguel de Unamuno, where the character of Augusto Pérez visits Unamuno in his office at ``Universidad de Salamanca``.

The case of the promotion of ``*Antihéroes*`` reveals a notable breakdown in fictional logic as the authors and fans interact with the book's characters through pretense orchestrated by the writers and the publisher.

Although it may seem unusual at first, consumer interaction with fictitious instances is relatively common. In video games, for example, players select avatars to interact with the game universe. However, this process implies a fictionalization of the consumer in the context of the game, without transgression of fictional levels, since both the avatar and the other characters in the game belong to the world of the characters.

The dynamics between readers of ``*Antihéroes*`` and its characters have more similarities with what happens in ``*Niebla*`` than in video games. A transgression of narrative levels is evident, leading to the creation of an impossible world. The receivers of ``*Antihéroes*``, they are situated at the pragmatic level, maintaining contact with the characters through their personal email or Twitter accounts, without creating a fictional alter ego that interacts at the same narrative level as the characters. Although it is true that publications on networks become in some way an autofictional story (Adarve Martínez, 2019; Pérez-Chirinos Churruca, 2012), of course the creation of these profiles on Twitter or Gmail does not imply the same level of fictionalization than creating an avatar in a video game.

In conclusion, at the most prominent moment of the promotion of ``*Antihéroes*``, the authors, their friends and fans shared stories on social networks where they were the protagonists. Furthermore, elements from the

novel appeared in them, such as the CIRCE organization, which suggests that the stories published on networks and the novel belong to the same transmedia universe. This dynamic also implies a rupture of fictional logic, since fans claimed to have seen characters from the novel (belonging to the characters' world) in the real world (pragmatic, non-textual level). Therefore, transgression occurs when characters move from one level to another. But, on the other hand, the authors and the fans self-fictionalize, becoming characters in a plot related to ``*Antihéroes*``, so we could interpret it the other way around, and think that it is the real people who transgress a narrative level and enter the world of the characters. Without a doubt, this deserves a deeper reflection that can lead to very fruitful investigations, since, unlike what happens in traditional novels, the characters have contact not only with the authors, but with each reader who wishes to interact with them, generating a metalepsis on a much larger scale.

CONCLUSIONS

The promotion of the novel: ``*Antihéroes*``, by Parente and Pascual, It uses the possibilities offered by transmediality and the rupture of fictional logic. In this advertising strategy, transmediality and metalepsis are dialectically related, so that one enables the existence of the other and vice versa.

Although it is true that there have been stories with an impossible transgression of narrative levels for centuries (just think, for example, of Don Quixote), in all of them the transfer of narrative instances across barriers was limited. The massive arrival of social networks has radically altered this paradigm. The Internet allows people separated by many kilometers to exchange messages in a matter of seconds, speeding up communication and promoting a more collaborative way of telling stories. Narrative creation (especially

verbal, since it requires a minimal economic investment) is no longer in the hands of a few authors whom publishing houses have decided to include in their catalogues. Anyone can tell a story that reaches thousands of readers: social networks have caused an unprecedented democratization of literature.

This transformation in narrative creation has not only diversified the experience of the recipients, but has also led to a renewal of the use of narrative techniques that were previously conditioned by more traditional media. Now that receivers have the opportunity to become senders, the possibilities of metalepsis multiply.

In traditional stories, metalepsis involves the relationship between the world of the characters and an extratextual instance such as the author. However, when multiple authors write about the same characters and they cross the barrier between fiction and the real world, the metaleptic experience is magnified. The distinction between reality and fiction, between truth and story, becomes blurred, recalling concepts such as post-truth and post-fiction.

This research has demonstrated the close relationship between transmediality and metalepsis, highlighting how transmedial narrative expands the possibilities of the metalepsis story. There is still much to explore in this area. Theoretical studies are needed that focus on the relationship between these two elements, considering how the rupture of fictional logic is presented in a more plausible way in media not traditionally dedicated to fiction, such as social networks.

Furthermore, it is pertinent to delve deeper into the relationship between metaleptic narratives and post-truth, especially in the current digital context, where identifying the properties that distinguish a discourse as fictional becomes increasingly challenging. This research also raises the question of

the extent to which a person fictionalizes themselves in their social networks, which leads us to consider whether a metalepsis similar to that proposed in this study occurs.

In summary, the relationship between metalepsis and transmediality is undeniable, especially when stories are shared on platforms not usually intended for fiction. Although much remains to be explored in this field, this article contributes to understanding a phenomenon with vast possibilities for study.

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