

FEATURES OF THE WORKS OF THE FRENCH WRITER MARCEL PAGNOL

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Abstract. *This article has been prepared based on a study devoted to the problem of transmitting cultural context when translating a work of fiction. The study is based on two accompanying works of fiction authored by Marcel Pagnol.*

Key words: *modern, writer, famous, critic, success, cinema.*

ОСОБЕННОСТИ ТВОРЧЕСТВА ФРАНЦУЗСКОГО ПИСАТЕЛЯ МАРСЕЛЯ ПАНЬОЛЯ

Аннотация. *Настоящая статья подготовлена на основе исследования, посвященного проблеме передачи культурного контекста при переводе художественного произведения. Исследование основано на двух сопутствующих художественных произведениях Марселя Паньоля.*

Ключевые слова: *современность, писатель, знаменитый, критик, успех, кино.*

Modern French literature would be completely different if it were not for Marcel Pagnol, a famous writer, playwright and filmmaker, who dared to leave teaching for the sake of art. Marcel Pagnol was born in Oban, France, the first child in the family of a school teacher and a seamstress. Under the influence of his father, Marcel learned to read at an early age. According to urban legend, he soon stopped reading because his mother believed that reading caused brain inflammation in children. Be that as it may, young Marcel's talent for words became evident when he began writing love letters to his classmates in high school.

Pagnol received his bachelor's degree in philosophy in 1913 and graduated in literature from the University of Aix-en-Provence. While studying, he founded *Fantasio*, a literary magazine that later became one of the leading publications of the era. After graduation, Marcel followed in his father's footsteps and became a school teacher. In 1922 he went to Paris to teach English at the capital's prestigious colleges. While in Paris, Pagnol met other people interested in literature, and his passion for writing flared up with renewed vigor. He co-wrote the play *Merchants of Fame* by Paul Nivoy, and in 1928 wrote the satirical play *Topaz*. This work became Pagnol's first serious work - the play ran for two years in Paris, was adapted for the Broadway stage, and then for film in 1933.

The plays *Marius* (1929), *Fanny* (1931) and *César* (1936), known as the *Marseille Trilogy*, were also crucial to his career as a playwright. The trilogy was also later adapted into the Broadway musical *Fanny*. Seeing the potential of cinema after watching one of the first sound films in London, Pagnol decided to focus his efforts on the film industry. He contacted Paramount Pictures and offered to adapt his play *Marius* for film. Over the next decade, Pagnol created his own films, taking on many different roles in their production: financier, director, screenwriter, studio executive and script translator. At the same time, he worked all the time with the greatest French actors of that period.

After the end of World War II, Pagnol returned to writing, but now took up novels, most of which became autobiographical. During this period, Marcel focused on his childhood experiences and wrote his famous series of books, *Memoirs of Childhood*, published between 1957 and 1977. In these short stories, the writer recounts the significant events of his early years and the invaluable lessons he learned from his family and friends.

Marcel Pagnol died in Paris on April 18, 1974. He is buried in Marseille in the La Treille cemetery next to his mother, father, brothers and wife. The combination of the names Giono and Pagnol may surprise. Giono is a writer of interesting style and exceptional imagination, while Pagnol has established himself only as an author with a good command of the colloquial language, who is interested in good humor. One of them is a great artist, the other is a popular writer. What do they have in common? Both of them were born in Provence in 1895. If Giono often praised his native Manosque, where he wrote almost all of his books, Pagnol loved to remember his Aubagne, “which is near Garlaban, crowned with goats in the time of the last shepherds.” But if Giono in his youth did not like big cities, Pagnol at the same time worshiped them. The son of a school teacher, he brilliantly continued his education in big cities and became an English teacher. From Marseille he moved to Paris. Pagnol became famous as a playwright and as the author of satirical works denouncing modern society. Criticism placed him next in line after Beck and Mirbeau. His greatest success was his play *Topaz*, which appeared in the same year as Giono's *The Hill*. There is nothing in common between these works. Then Pagnol wrote “*Marius*” and “*Fanny*” - plays that gave the Parisians, and then the whole world, the pretty and picturesque inhabitants of Marseille. Only later, having become a good screenwriter, Pagnol begins to talk about his native places, and having met Giono, he happily writes the scripts “*Geufroy*” and “*Angela*” (1934), “*Otava*” (1937) and “*The Baker's Wife*” (1939) based on his works. Pagnol clearly influenced Giono, as the latter began to dream of the fame of a playwright and screenwriter, which Pagnol already had. The script for “*The Baker's Wife*” was written by Pagnol, based on one of the short stories in Giono's collection “*Blue Jean*.” In 1942 Giono wrote his own version of this dramatic story. A comparison of Pagnol's film and Giono's play reveals a difference in the source of inspiration for both writers.

At the beginning of the occupation, the film “*The Digger's Daughter*”²⁰ was produced based on Pagnol's original script. Then he returned to adaptations and wrote the script for *Letters from My Mill*.

He was probably always more the son of Alphonse Daudet than the brother of Giono. When you read today Pagnol's script based on Giono, it seems that it is Giono revised by Daudet himself. If the scripts had been created by Giono, they would hardly have received such great and sincere success among the popular audience.

One of Pagnol's favorite themes is the theme of a girl-mother. *Fanny*, *Angela*, the navy's daughter are condemned by their families as dishonored creatures; they are expecting a child without being married. Their situation, it would seem, should be very difficult, but times are changing. After the liberation of France, women were granted all rights, including the use of contraceptive pills. Women gained the right to abortion,

chastely called “artificial termination of pregnancy.” All of this together has led to great changes in our society and our families. The concept of morality has changed a lot.

Everyone finally understood that moral principles are not discussions about what is “good” and what is “no good,” but following certain social rules. What was important was not that the girl made love before marriage, but that she was expecting a child without first appearing before the mayor.

The birth control pill deprived marriage of a sacrament that even atheists respected because it also served their interests. Now little Fanny would not marry old Panisse so that her child would have a father. This is exactly what Pagnol writes about: Fanny “sells” her body to an old man in order to save her honor. The play did not become a dark drama; the audience found it touching. Panisse turned out to be a nice man.

After the war, Pagnol would write memoirs of his childhood, *For the Glory of My Father* (1957), *My Mother's Castle* (1959) and *A Time of Secrets* (1960), which received enormous and well-deserved success. Pagnol left us in 1974. His last book was “*A Time for Love*” (published in 1977).

REFERENCES

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