



PASSION AS A METAPHOR FOR THE ACT OF WRITING IN THE NOVEL “PASSION SIMPLE” BY ANNIE ERNAUX

Liyanage C.

Department of Languages, Cultural Studies and Performing Arts,
Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,
University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka
charitha.liyanage@sjp.ac.lk

Abstract

Ernaux writes *that writing should attempt to give the impression provoked by the sexual act on a screen, that anguish and stupefaction, a suspension of moral judgement.* (Ernaux, 1992). In this study, we examine how passionate love is used as a metaphor for the act of writing, based on the novel *Passion simple* by the French writer Annie Ernaux. “All the traits that define passion are found there in writing: quest towards an impossible object, the extreme tension that binds the subject to its object in a dual relationship, a mixture of elation and pain.” (Mion, D. 2010). Literary analysis was applied to examine the text, which revealed the analogy between the extreme obsessive passion of the narrator for a married man, and the nature and the different stages of writing. The analysis of the semantic fields and the form of the text reveal that passion is short, intense, and traumatizing, leaves indelible traces in the narrator, parallel to her act of writing which originates through the sparks of inspiration, but forces to relentless work in isolation to create an everlasting literary work. Passion is also portrayed as raw, immoral, more shameful for the female narrator, like the act of writing auto-fiction for a female writer portrayed through the technique of “flat writing”. The technique of stream of consciousness was used to describe the process of depersonalization of a writer. As per the narrator, it’s an “existence lived entirely for someone else” which clearly implies the intention of a writer. Writing is also described as therapeutic, with the emotional discharge on a paper as well as an attempt to relive an experience by retelling through words. What makes Ernaux stand out as “a writer” among the other accounts of confessions, is the objectification of her personal experience.

Keywords: *Passion simple, Annie Ernaux, Writing, Passion, Auto-fiction*