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#JeSuisCharlie & #PeaceForParis: appropriation, reformulation, and circulation of “Liberty leading the people” on socio-digital networks during the Paris attacks

Justine Simon*

Abstract

The discourse analysis which is proposed concerns mechanisms of appropriation, reformulation and circulation of the painting *Liberty Leading the People* of Eugène Delacroix on socio-digital networks during the events of Paris : attack against *Charlie Hebdo* the 07/01/2015 and attacks in Paris the 13/11/15. The article studies how net surfers have compared the events of Paris with the symbolic strenght of the famous painting. Its aims to enlighten the processes of circulation of discourses on socio-digital networks and also wants to analyse the interdiscursive dimension of the original reformulations.

Keywords: Discourse analysis. Appropriation. Reformulation and circulation of discourses. Interdiscursive dialogism. Social-digital networks.

Resumé

#JeSuisCharlie & #PeaceForParis : Appropriation, reformulation et circulation de “La Liberté guidant le peuple” sur les réseaux sociaux numériques durant les événements de Paris

L’analyse du discours qui est proposée s’intéresse aux mécanismes d’appropriation, de reformulation et de circulation de la toile La Liberté guidant le peuple d’Eugène Delacroix sur les réseaux sociaux numériques durant les deux événements tragiques que Paris a connu en 2015 : l’attentat contre Charlie Hebdo le 07/01/2015 et les attaques de Paris le 13/11/15. L’article étudie comment les internautes confrontent ces événements à la force symbolique de la toile. Il a pour objectif de souligner les processus de circulation des discours sur les réseaux sociaux numériques ainsi que d’éclairer la dynamique interdiscursive des reformulations.

Mots clés: Analyse du discours, Appropriation, reformulation et circulation des discours, Dialogisme interdiscursif, Réseaux sociaux numériques

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The proposed discourse analysis concerns multimodal tweets that posted the painting “Liberty leading the people” by Eugène Delacroix during the Paris attacks of 2015.

In 2015, France was subjected to two tragic terrorist attacks on January 7, 8, and 9 – with the most famous attack against the satiric newspaper *Charlie Hebdo* and the hostages being taken in a *kosher* supermarket – and a series of shootings and murderous suicide attacks on November 13 in Paris and Saint-Denis. In reaction to these attacks, several events to support the victims were organized. Several gatherings, called the Republican Marches, in tribute to the victims took place on January 10 and 11. However, following the November 13 events, demonstrations on the public highway were forbidden when a state of emergency was declared by President François Hollande the day after.

At the same time, socio-digital networks constituted a privileged space for militant and citizen expression allowing people to share their points of view and emotions. This kind of 2.0 citizenship belongs to a participative culture. In homage to the victims, some citizens reclaimed, for instance, the symbolic force of the painting “Liberty leading the people”. This famous picture by Eugène Delacroix is one of his best known works in France and other countries. It generally establishes the symbol of a united people, fighting for Freedom. In the contexts of these two attacks in Paris, it particularly became a symbol of Freedom of expression – both Freedom of expression of the press (in support for the murdered *Charlie Hebdo*’s caricaturists) and Freedom of expression of citizens (Freedom to give a point of view and demonstrate it on the public highway). Moreover, the meaning of Delacroix’s painting shifted from a symbol of Liberty to a symbol of Freedom of expression, then to a symbol of national unity (January attacks), and finally a call for solidarity with Paris (November attacks).

The discourse analysis proposed in this article concerns the mechanisms of appropriation, reformulation, and circulation of this painting on socio-digital networks during these two tragic events. The appropriation concerns the faithful use of the original painting, the reformulation corresponds to a personal reinterpretation of the work, and the phenomena of circulation can occur in an intermedia manner (in relation to other media information or to information published on other socio-digital networks) or in an intramedia manner, within a particular socio-digital network. In these three configurations of “reproducibility” (ROBIC, 2008), “Liberty leading the people” was interpreted by people online by putting it into a new sociopolitical context.

As a result, this article raises the question of the sense and the interpretation, given that nothing can be put into discourse without interpretation (RASTIER, 2007)¹. The aim here is to better understand the various interpretations of Delacroix’s painting by people online in different historic and cultural contexts. The work of Delacroix regained prominence in new historic situations and was thus given new value by networkers. More specifically, the dual objective of this study is to shed light on the processes of circulation of discourses on socio-digital networks and to analyze the interdiscursive dimension of the original reformulations of “Liberty leading the people”. The two questions we wish to answer are: 1) what are the communicational goals of networkers’ publications and 2) what are the differences in their reactions to the two events?

The article is composed of two parts. First, we will analyze the original discourse², the painting of Delacroix, and demonstrate that it can be qualified as a “visual formula” because of its reappropriation on socio-digital networks. Then, we will synthesize every form of reprise and reformulation of the painting with all the data we gathered on Twitter. This approach has the advantage of offering both a

1 The discourse analysis carried out herein is also dependent on an act of interpretation corresponding to an objectivizing construction of the data.

2 The notion of “discourse” is considered by using a multimodal approach. It corresponds to any discursive production being a matter of an act of enunciation. Discourse is extended to any production, which simultaneously mixes several codes such as verbal, visual, audiovisual, and sound codes.

quantitative and qualitative vision to our analysis of 421 multimodal tweets.

1. “Liberty leading the people”, a visual formula circulating on socio-digital networks

1. 1. *The symbolic force of the painting*

1. 1. 1. *Context of creation and constitutive elements of the painting*

“Liberty leading the people” – symbol of the struggle of the French people for Freedom – is one of the most famous French paintings. It refers to a precise moment in French history – July 28, 1830. Since 1789, regimes have succeeded each other rapidly. After Napoleon’s definitive defeat in 1815, the French monarchy was restored. Twenty years after the French Revolution, two brothers of King Louis XVI successively came to power. The second, Charles X, a tenacious defender of the Church and of the monarchical tradition, had been on the throne for six years when, on July 26, 1830, he made a mistake by censoring the press and reducing the right to vote, which was already very limited. It was a violation of the Constitution. The reaction was immediate. The people of Paris led by Polytechnic School students built barricades and rebelled. During the so-called “Three Glorious” days (July 27, 28, and 29), revolution came to the streets of Paris. Charles X was dethroned and forced to leave France. However, the monarchy was not replaced by a republic. The bourgeoisie preferred to entrust power to the former king’s cousin, Duke Louis-Philippe d’Orléans, a more liberal and, to all appearances, bourgeois prince who rapidly revealed himself to be just as authoritarian and unpopular as his predecessors. All in all, no real change followed until, eighteen years later, the next revolution managed to install the Second Republic. Thus 1830 was in reality a failed revolution.

This historic episode inspired Delacroix, who created the painting during the time when France was not a republic but a kingdom. Most analyses in art history refer to Delacroix’s painting having a set of characteristic features. Let us consider five constitutive elements of the painting:

1) On the painting, the scene takes place in Paris, as indicated by the towers of the Notre-Dame Cathedral emerging out of smoke in the right corner of the background;

2) A crowd of rebels is breaking through a barricade made up mostly of ordinary men, laborers and workers. The only character with a different profile is the Polytechnic School student situated in the left corner of the background. The representation of a rebelling people is the second constitutive element of the painting. The scene represents a bloody conflict staging real fighting characters as well as fictional characters. The victorious dominate the victims represented in the foreground. The young man in the center of the background, situated to the left of the central character, is the symbol of youth outraged by injustice. With his velvet beret he evokes the character of Gavroche from “*Les misérables*”, which would be published thirty years later;

3) One mythical character is present in the left foreground: the character of the half-naked body of Hector, a hero from the Trojan War who is dragged by Achilles’ cart. The presence of weapons and of victims of the conflict helps to define the third constitutive element: fighting and rebellion;

4 & 5) On the top of the pyramid of corpses, at the point where slanting lines meet, Delacroix painted a half-naked woman who attracts the eye. The rifle that she is holding in her left hand is a 1816 model that makes her real, contemporary, and modern. Her breast, her bare feet, and the serpentine line of her body are borrowed from Ancient Greek statues of goddesses such as Aphrodite of Milos. She incarnates an abstract idea and is in fact an allegory for Freedom. This lively, dashing common

girl is a new vision of the allegory of Freedom and incarnates rebellion and victory. She wears a red Phrygian cap with her hair fluttering on her neck and evokes the 1789 Revolution, the *sans-culottes*, and the sovereignty of the people. The flag symbolizing the struggle seems to be a unity with her arm as it unfolds, and undulates backwards in blue, white, and red. Two constitutive elements can be emphasized: the allegory of Freedom and the republican symbols (Phrygian cap and the blue, white, and red flag). It should be noted that these two elements are closely related. This association means that the central character is both a symbol of Freedom and a “Marianne”, an allegory for the French Republic.

Delacroix’s painting is very different from other ones representing the “Three Glorious” days. Rather than remaining on a strict level of authentication, Delacroix juggles with several modes of narration, namely monstration, which authenticates the real event (representation of Paris, fighting characters); fiction (representation of the young Gavroche before his time, the mythical figure of Hector); and the representation of symbols (republican symbols and allegory of Freedom).

1. 1. 2. Reformulations through the centuries

“Liberty leading the people” is a 19th century painting and one of the most used in the 20th century for official, advertising, or scholarly purposes (HADJINICOLAOU, 1979). Its heavy political resonance has meant that it has often been used to convey strong messages about the struggle for Freedom or for Freedom of expression. In France and abroad, its patriotic roots make it a republican symbol that was also reused at the start of the 21st century. However, its historic roots in the “Three Glorious” days of 1830 are sometimes forgotten by the general public. The painting is often associated with the 1789 Revolution as it ignites the memory of these moments of Freedom. The symbolic force of the painting goes beyond its historic roots, which is one of the reasons for its great reappropriation through the centuries and beyond French borders.

It is interesting to underline the fact that Delacroix’s painting has been interpreted in various ways over the centuries in connection with several political events, which were completely different from the 1830 Revolution, whether it be by artists or by ordinary contemporary networkers, as we shall see it in the analytical part.

Furthermore, in a previous article analyzing several reformulations of “Liberty leading the people” (SIMON, to be published in 2017), we insisted on the fact that this painting is part of a *déjà vu* (in reference to the concept of dialogism suggested by the Circle of Bakhtin), which is endlessly reactivated in contemporary contexts. Every discourse, independently of its semio-discursive materiality, is part of a continuous communication. Applied to the analysis of a visual discourse, we can say that “Liberty leading the people” also works by ceaselessly reactivating a form of *déjà vu*.

We also concluded with the idea that the features of this painting were close to the “formula”³ in the semantic sense defined by Alice Krieg-Planque (2009). As a textual formula, “Liberty leading the people” is characterized by its faculty to circulate and reflects ideological confrontations inherent to the public debate. These three features (reformulation, circulation, and ideological dimension) suggest a continuation of the analysis of “significant paths” (MAINGUENEAU, 2014) created by these reformulations from the point of view of their dissemination (reappropriation and diversion).

3 First of all, the formula contains a discursive functioning in a sense that it corresponds to discourses, which may be observed in some tangible data. When considering a specific context, this position makes the formula to contribute to political and social issues. It is then characterized by its circulation, its capacity to be used in public debate. Moreover, the formula is intrinsically linked to the process of capturing. It is indeed constructed thanks to relatively stabilized discursive units, mainly from a semantic point of view. Finally, the formula possesses a polemical character. It is a reflection of inherent conflicts in public debate that show the ideological content of the discourse giving place to confrontations of interpretations as numerous as the different enunciation sources concerned.

This suggested that it was of interest to speak about visual formula to characterize the strong reappropriation of the original painting. The painting is not a textual discourse but we may still consider that it works as a formula.

The communicational objectives of the diversion of the initial painting evidently depend on the context and vary in accordance with the actors concerned:

– The symbol of struggle for Freedom is an omnipresent symbol in reuses centered on weapons and on the raised arm, as in the following examples: Jean-Pierre Rey’s May 1968 photographic representation entitled “The young girl with a flag”, which became famous under the name of “The Marianne of May 68”; the painting of the Chinese artist Yue Minjun in 1995-1996; the painting of the photographer Gérard Rancinan in 2008 entitled “Disclosed liberty”; the *tableau vivant* of “Liberty leading the people” created by a group of protesting mountain climbers opposing the Sarkozy government in 2009; the *tableau vivant* of a demonstration against the oligarchic model governing Bulgaria in 2013 etc.

– Certain reformulations insist more precisely on the struggle for Freedom of expression. Olivier Schopf’s caricature of the Egyptian people rebelling against the regime of Hosni Mubarak during the 2011 Arab Spring replaces weapons with the Internet and social networks. Among the reformulations that circulated in the aftermath of the January attacks praising the struggle for Freedom of expression, we wish to insist on the following: Plantu’s press drawing “Liberty will always be stronger”, which was published on the front page of “Monde” on January 9; Stéphane Mahé’s photograph “The pencil leading the people” for the Reuters’ agency and which was on the front page of “Times” on January 12; the photograph by Martin Argyroglo baptized “The triumph of the Republic” (in reference to the statue dominating the square of the nation) appeared on the front page of “L’Obs” in the same week. These are not the only reformulations replacing weapons by “pencils” to pay tribute to the victims, and the present article aims to detail these phenomena of reappropriation, which exploited the visual metaphor (FALARDEAU, 2015, p. 163-167)⁴.

The various interpretations of Delacroix’s painting depend on different historic and cultural contexts. We shall see in the analytical part that the meaning of Delacroix’s work has shifted on socio-digital networks from a symbol of Liberty to a symbol of Freedom of expression, to a symbol of national unity (January attacks), and finally to a call for solidarity with Paris (November attacks).

1. 2. “Liberty leading the people” 2.0

We know that it is difficult to say that socio-digital networks are totally free and equal spaces insofar as the economic and legal context in which they exist is concerned. The growth of these networks has contributed to the emergence of an “informational capitalism” where Internet users give up their intellectual property rights (to images as well as ideas themselves). It is more certain that inequalities exist between users in accordance with their technical-social skills. It should be equally noted that these networks have developed a trend towards individualism (ALLARD; VANDENBERGHE, 2003), and this is not the only limit that could be pointed out. The democratic use of socio-digital networks obviously needs to be put into perspective, but they are also recognized as being digital participative spaces, which enable a form of political commitment to develop via citizens’ expression. The possibilities for interactivity offered by the device, although restrictive, help to increase the visibility of the viewpoints very quickly. In this new configuration of information exposure, every receiver is a powerful emitter. Socio-digital networks have thus reconfigured the traditional public

⁴ Plantu replaced weapons by pencils and evoked the failed revolution against Charles X, who suspended Freedom of the press, among other rights. By a metaphorical shift, the caricaturist of Charlie Hebdo has become a combatant.

media space. In this new form of horizontal exchange communication between peers – corresponding to what Manuel Castells (2006) calls “individual mass media” –, publications are produced on an individual scale and are potentially visible all over the world.

These networks have echoed current political events on multiple occasions. During the Arab Spring, they played a role in the circulation of information and in the mobilization of citizens. In the aftermath of the January attacks in Paris and during the demonstrations on January 10 and 11, there was a great participation of web users on the socio-digital networks.

The reference to republican symbols has largely been used through representations of Marianne and the French flag and, more widely, through the use of blue, white, and red from that flag. All the interdiscursive references to Delacroix’s painting were not necessarily explicit, but they were made to circulate greatly thanks to Internet users. For example, Martin Argyroglo’s photograph of the mobilization during the Republican March on January 11 attracted the attention of specialists on the Reddit network. It triggered, without counting the answers, 6,209 retweets and 4,162 likes for the day of January 12 alone on Twitter.

Twitter was not the only space for expression in the context of the tragedies that affected Paris in 2015. Numerous Internet users showed their creativity reappropriating Delacroix’s work through drawing, photo or video montage. We could observe an improvement of original reformulations by visual arts professionals (Image 1) and by amateurs. The semiotic materiality of these reinterpretations is varied – fixed images for the majority on Facebook, Instagram, Flickr, Tumblr, or Pinterest, and animated images on Vine and Periscope.

Image 1 - “Liberty leading the people” by Romanski



Source: Facebook (ROMANSKI, 2015)

2 Twitter, an interdiscursive space defending Freedom of expression

Now that we have presented the general centering of the analysis (historical context of creation of the painting, description of its constitutive elements, contemporary context of reappropriation of the painting, use of socio-digital networks etc.), we shall move on to analyze – both quantitatively and qualitatively – the various interpretations of the painting that were made by Internet users following the tragic events of January and November 2015 in Paris. The following part synthesizes the comparative

analysis of 421 multimodal tweets, which try to make an appropriation, a personal reformulation, or a circulation of reformulations of “Liberty leading the people”.

2. 1. Components of the corpus

Guidelines on the role of socio-digital networks highlighting “Liberty leading the people” 2.0 were important in order to underline the scope of citizens’ expression in reaction to the Paris attacks. To shed light on the interdiscursive dynamic of the reappropriations of Delacroix’s work in the most precise way, a systematic statement of publications on Twitter was made thanks to a research via keywords.

The *corpus* that we built is composed of all multimodal tweets referring openly to the original painting – that is to say those that mention the title of Delacroix’s painting in the text of the tweet. For two searches related to the January and November events, we used the French title “*Liberté guidant le peuple*” and the English one “Liberty leading the people”. Keywords used for the search n° 1 were the following: “7 janvier”, “Charlie Hebdo”, “Je suis Charlie”, “Nous sommes Charlie”, and “Marche 11 janvier”. Keywords used for the search n° 2 were “13 novembre”, “Attentats Paris”, “Paris attacks”, “Peace for Paris”, and “Pray for Paris”.

To include reformulations that might have started on the subject of the polemic about Freedom of expression (Freedom of the press and the right to blasphemy) quickly after the attacks of *Charlie Hebdo*, we also searched for tweets containing both the reference to the painting and the following keywords: “*Je ne suis pas Charlie*”, “Charlie Coulibaly”, and “Charlie Kouachi”. This search did not give any results.

All in all, 336 multimodal tweets were found making reference to “Liberty leading the people” after the attacks of January during the period from January 7, 2015 to August 9, 2015. 85 multimodal tweets (four times fewer), from November 13, 2015 to November 30, 2015, made reference to Delacroix’s painting after the November attacks.

2. 2. Multimodality and intermediality

Multimodality has been studied by several researchers (KRESS; VAN LEEUWEN, 2001; NORRIS, 2004) in Linguistics, Semiotics, and Media Studies. Multimodal discourse analysis is an approach to discourse that focuses on how meaning is made through the use of multiple modes of communication as opposed to just language. The conceptual framework that I present here concerns digital networks and more particularly multimodal tweets (SIMON; TOULLEC, 2016 and to be published 2016) while focusing on two or three communicative modes: verbal, visual, audiovisual. The objective is to analyze how the “Liberty leading the people” visual formula is reappropriated in both text and image. What are the stabilized discursive units mobilized in text and image? Do the reappropriations show their polemical character? We wish to specifically underline how networkers reinterpreted the visual formula with a specific goal. The subject also focuses on the contemporary practices of social networkers in two different social contexts: the January and November attacks.

The multimodality study aims to understand the interdiscursive dimension of multimodal tweets, and the intermediality study aims to enlighten the processes of circulation of discourses on socio-digital networks.

2. 2. 1. Multimodality

Let us specify that tweets taken in consideration highlight either directly a visual or audiovisual content or an URL link referring to an image (fixed or animated image generally present on another socio-digital network). Furthermore, it is important to insist on the fact that the multimodal tweets we encountered involve technical or material complexity (depending on the media) and semiotic complexity (Image 2 shows this complexity).

Image 2 - Multimodal tweet with a digital photo of a scene taking place in the Louvre museum in Lens



Source: Twitter (GC, 2015)

Several types of multimodal contents have been observed: publication of one or several images that were already digitized (reappropriations of “Liberty leading the people” – an image that can easily be found on the web); digitalization of a handmade drawing; digitalization of a scene or image using a digital camera (examples of photographs of scenes during the demonstrations, photographs of the original painting in Louvre, photographs of a reproduction of the painting - selfies, among others); photo or video montages done with a specific software (compilation of photographs, photo montage copy-paste, gif montage etc.); card⁵ linked to a web publication (the image alone or accompanied by textual elements mentioning the press media or the site having initially published the visual).

2. 2. 2. Intermediality

Intermediality (MOSER, 2007) corresponds to a link relating to two publications on two different medias. The presence of a card, mentioned earlier, typically corresponds to this interdependence between two publications. In the following example, the inserted card represents a “summary large image” and allows it to be related to the original article.

⁵ When a tweeter publishes a piece of information – generally from a website –, the multimodal content is automatically added and is called a “card” by Twitter. It may be in the form of an image alone (card called “photo”), an image with text (“summary” or “summary large image” card), a slide show (card “gallery”), or a video (card “player”).

Image 3 - Multimodal tweet containing a card representing a broad summary



Source: Twitter (ROBERTS, 2015)

Intermediality does not uniquely concern the media, but also occurs at the scale of social networks. In the *corpus* created, it is interesting to note that nine other socio-digital networks are represented via tweets under study: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Flickr, Tumblr, Deviantart, Pinterest, Vine, and Periscope. How these links function between networks varies according to whether automated publications are involved or not and depends on each of the networks.

Let us introduce a few specifications.

Instagram gives its users the possibility to automatically publish content on another network. However, on Twitter only a link to Instagram will appear, and not the visual content. The automation of a publication could also lead to a shortened tweet – as in the following example –, which is not really ideal as far as the clarity of information is concerned.

Image 4 - Multimodal tweet containing a URL link referring to a photograph on Instagram



Source: Twitter (R., 2015)

On the contrary, Flickr's, Facebook's, and Pinterest's creators have integrated a card related to the publication, which makes the content visible directly on Twitter.

Publications on Vine relayed by Twitter allow people online to directly see the video or the gif animation. The link to the network is discretely created on the logo of the Vine brand present at the top to the right of the image.

2. 2. 3. Intramediality

With the Twitter socio-digital network, there are different ways of connecting several contents and, thus, several accounts. There are multiple possibilities for a tweeter: replying to a tweet, liking a

tweet, retweeting or creating a new tweet and mentioning the sign “RT” (retweet), often accompanied with the sign “via”, thus quoting a tweet that then appears in a specific insert.

Image 5 - Multimodal tweet created by tweet quotation



Source: Twitter (RUAULT, 2015)

The use of statements or addresses (constituted thanks to the @ (“at”) technosign)⁶ is an essential element for the principle of intramediality as it allows users to mention the enunciative origin of an original tweet or to address a particular account⁷.

2. 3. Analysis of the interdiscursive dynamic of tweets after the January attacks

2. 3. 1. General view

As can be seen in the summary chart below, the most important phenomenon to notice among multimodal tweets is the reappropriation of reformulations of Delacroix’s painting (those of Plantu, Mahé, and Argyroglo). From an enunciative point of view, we are dealing with the second level of interdiscursive dialogism (reappropriation of a reuse of the original discourse). Generally speaking, the reactions were thus largely influenced by the media coverage of the attacks (through Plantu’s caricature published in *Le Monde*) and of the mobilizations that followed (like Mahé’s and Argyroglo’s two photographic representations).

⁶ On the subtleties of the use of mentions and addresses, see Bigey & Simon (2016).

⁷ Let us notice the major difference in how the two attacks in January and November were treated. Indeed, the tweet circulation of the *sub-corpus* n° 1 was generally done by tweet quotation (36 cases out of 64, line n° 4 of the Table 1), whereas no publications are concerned by this circulation phenomenon in the *sub-corpus* n° 2.

Table 1 - Multimodal tweets referring to “Liberty leading the people” after the January attacks (from January 7, 2015 to August 9, 2015)

	Appropriation of the original painting	Appropriation of the original painting (by photograph)	Circulation of Plantu’s reformulation	Circulation of Mahé’s reformulation	Circulation of Argyroglo’s reformulation	Original reformulation	Compilation	Other	Total
Original publication	27	1	14	48	62	25	39*	10	226
Intermediality Sites / Media	/	/	2	7	10	/	/	1	20
Intermediality Social networks	4	2	/	2	6	6	/	6	26
Intramediality Circulation on Twitter	2	/	7	15	18	3	19**	/	64
Total	33	3	23	72	96	34	58	17	336

* including 4 by Plantu, 22 by Mahé, and 13 by Argyroglo

** including 19 by Mahé

Source: elaborated by the author

2. 3. 2. Appropriations of the original painting

The 36 cases (first two columns) deal with an appropriation of the original painting represented in a faithful manner⁸. The tweeters use the Liberty symbolically to pay tribute to the victims of the attacks. The keyword #Liberty is added in the text of the tweet sometimes with #Equality and #Fraternity. The name of the creator of the painting is equally emphasized. The hashtag #JeSuisCharlie is added almost systematically. Some even visited Louvre to take the photo of the painting (column n° 2), which reinforces the personal investment in the tribute. @titi1960 published a photo of the painting accompanied with the following text: “I needed to see Delacroix’s Liberty Leading The People again #JeSuisCharlie #solidarity & #Free #louvre” (January 9). In all these appropriations, the meaning of Delacroix’s painting concerns symbols of Liberty and national unity.

2. 3. 3. Personal reformulations

The phenomenon of first-hand reformulation is indicated in the sixth column. It does not deal with ordinary citizens’ reinterpretations (Plantu’s, Mahé’s, and Argyroglo’s reformulations are analyzed in the circulation part). 25 are original reformulations directly published by their creator on Twitter, 6 refer to creations present on another socio-digital network, and 3 are reformulations that were reused on Twitter according to the different means of circulation described earlier. Among these 25 reformulations there are 5 drawings. There a reference is made to two constitutive elements of the original painting: the struggle and the allegory of Freedom. The people and the republican flag are not always present. We find again the key words #Liberty and #JeSuisCharlie among these tweets. In

⁸ Whether in the context of theories of enunciation or art theories, we need to insist on the fact that, even when an image is reproduced faithfully (as in a photographic reproduction), as soon as it is reinvested by a different enunciator, it will “never be the same image” (ROBIC, 2008, p. 14).

a motivational dynamic, @elenabubuch created the hashtag #AVosCrayons on January 11. The logic largely used in all reformulations is that of the substitution of weapons by pencils, paintbrushes or quills in order to emphasize Freedom of expression. These reformulations use a visual metaphor to insist more precisely on the struggle for Freedom of expression. Image 6 is a characteristic example marked by a high degree of personal investment as it represents Freedom of expression that is both wounded and struggling.

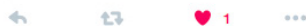
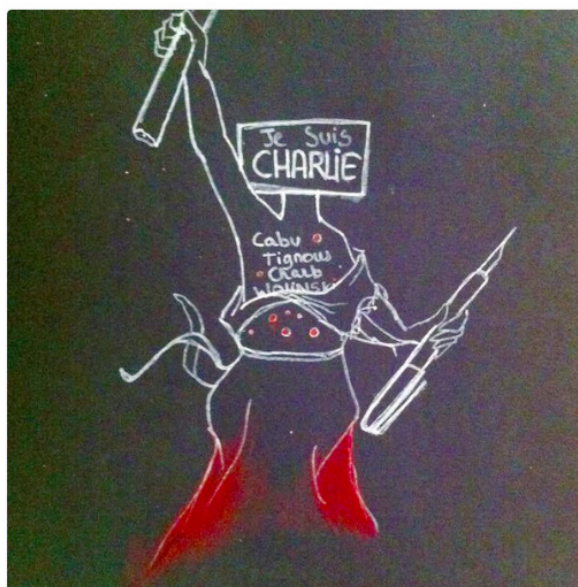
Image 6 - Reformulation in the form of a drawing



ana bernard @anabernard1 · 11 janv. 2015

Une nouvelle ère de Liberté (cf: La Liberté guidant le peuple-Delacroix)

#SoireeJeSuisCharlie



Source: Twitter (BERNARD, 2015)

Photo and video montages also highlighted the weapon for Freedom of expression: the pencil. @marcusaurele insists on the fact that “we could not have thought of a better name for Liberty leading the people #CharlieHebdo #JeSuisCharlie #Freedom”. It shows the original painting, which is modified with the superposition of pencils and the front page of *Charlie Hebdo*. Modification by reproduction in the form of a hashtag (as in Image 2) or in the form of a text – with the formula “Je suis Charlie” (example of the tweet by @MarinaVirtuelle, published on January 11) – while making the original painting visible in the background is an efficient way of creating a strong analogy between the attacks and the republican symbol.

Several exceptions to these representations aiming at fostering “national unity” can also be noted. On January 12 @jesuisnicoaussi published a diversion of Mahé’s photograph, which was at the second level of reformulation. It replaces the man brandishing the pencil with Nicolas Sarkozy and adds the text: “#JeSuisNico #SarkoEverywhere #Sarkogatecrash”, in order to criticize the fact that Sarkozy was in the first row of the Republican March. The principal objective of the multimodal tweet is here to criticize Sarkozy. The personal reformulation opens up a new subject and another politicized issue rather than just defending Freedom of expression.

The principle of reformulation is equally present in the “other” column, which mainly corresponds to publications of photographs or videos portraying citizens in relation to the painting during events of January 10 and 11. Most of the time the citizens’ eyes capture a reality through the photograph associating it with the reality represented in Delacroix’s painting. By taking the photo, the author reactivates the visual memory of the painting, as it was the case with the “Marianne of May 68” or

of the “Pencil leading the people” by Mahé and of “The triumph of the Republic” by Argyroglo. To give one characteristic example, on January 11 @andrevornic published a photograph of a young girl carried on the shoulders of a demonstrator waving the French flag. The accompanying text is the following: “Delacroix 2015: Liberty leading the people #JeSuisCharlie”. The two types of symbolism involve the fight for Freedom and the fight for Freedom of expression.

2. 3. 4. Circulations of reformulations known in the public and media spaces

Among three reuses mentioned earlier, two are directly related to Delacroix’s painting. Plantu faithfully reproduces the constitutive elements of the painting, entitles his drawing “Liberty is always stronger”, and adds another symbol of Freedom, the dove, in the most explicit manner. Mahé entitles his photograph “Pencil leading the people” emphasizing the substitution of the weapon by the pencil and enhancing the people as well as the French flag. With Argyroglo’s photograph, “The triumph of the Republic”, the link is less evident. The pencil-weapons, the people, and the flag are present, but the title does not evoke the reuse. Some analysts have spoken of a mixture of “Liberty leading the people” and “The raft of the Medusa”. It is interesting to see how tweeters interpreted these images to create a significant link with the painting. Thus, on January 11, three separate Internet users published the following text accompanying Argyroglo’s image: “Liberty leading the people will certainly remain the photo symbol of this historical day”. Similar formulas accompanied Mahé’s photo: “Allegory of Liberty leading the people as a symbol of this historical day” (@pascalgiraud, January 11), or “This is the new #Marianne, symbol of the #Republican March” (@EmiliETN, January 11). The symbolism of Delacroix’s painting was thus exploited in order to create two other symbols. Mahé’s and Argyroglo’s photographs were interpreted as two works symbolizing the struggle of the French people for Freedom of expression. However, few people insisted on the fact that there is a switch between Freedom and Freedom of expression – we only found two uses of the hashtag #FreedomOfExpression.

The circulation mechanisms are represented through publications of these three reformulations (largely in original publications and thanks to the processes of intermediality and of intramediality) and also through compilations made by montages where the original painting is placed next to the new version. Here is the illustration:

Image 7 - Compilation for the purpose of comparison



Source: Twitter (LEFÉBURE, 2015)

The objective of these publications is to create new visual symbols, which compare with the strong symbolism of the original painting.

2. 4. Analysis of the interdiscursive dynamic of tweets after the November attacks

2. 4. 1. General view

As mentioned previously, the quantitative treatment is a differentiating element between the reactions to the January attacks and to the November attacks. It can be explained by the political context insofar as the terrorist threat had become an everyday problem, France was at war, and the state of emergency had been declared. The phenomenon of circulation is almost absent in the tweets under study. The tone has also noticeably changed. Generally speaking, publications only aim to pay tribute to the victims and convey a message of solidarity with Parisians. The emotional aspect was much more marked through a call for peace (#PeaceForParis, reinforced by the use of the viral logo “Peace for Paris” created by the artist Banksy), refusal of fear (#NousNavonsPasPeur), or prayer (#PrayForParis). The references to “Liberty leading the people” were not made to create a new symbol (Freedom of expression) but rather to deliver a message of support to Paris and France as a whole.

Table 2 - Multimodal tweets referring to “Liberty leading the people” after the November attacks (from November 13, 2015 to November 30, 2015)

	Appropriation of the original painting	Appropriation of the original painting (by photograph)	Circulation of Plantu's reformulation	Circulation of Mahé's reformulation	Circulation of Argyroglo's reformulation	Original reformulation	Compilation	Other	Total
Original publication	44*	1	/	/	1	5	4**	5***	60
Intermedi- ality Sites / Media	3	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	3
Inter- medial- ity Social networks	11	5	/	/	/	6	/	/	22
Intramedi- ality Circulation on Twitter	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Total	58	6	/	/	1	11	4	5	85

* including 5 focusing uniquely on the character of Marianne

** including 1 by Argyroglo

*** including 1 selfie

Source: elaborated by the author

2. 4. 2. Appropriations of the original painting

Most of the interdiscursive references to Delacroix’s painting were made with the sole aim of supporting the inhabitants of Paris. Tributes were paid through a reproduction of the painting. In 58 cases out of 85, the painting is published as an image, which was already digitalized and circulating on the web. Delacroix’s work is no longer evoked in relation to the idea of Freedom but instead as a symbol of Paris and, by metonymy, of France as a whole. In order to personalize the tribute, some tweeters took photos of themselves in the Louvre Museum. One person even published a video-selfie via Periscope representing himself before the painting.

2. 4. 3. Personal reformulations

In the reformulations under study, the consensus on “national unity” is much less unanimous. There are some portrayals of Marianne drawn brandishing the French flag accompanied by the keywords #Paris, #AttentatsParis, #ParisAttacks, #DeuilNational etc. However, the exploitation of the republican symbol is not as common as in the reformulations that followed the January attacks.

On November 22, @Jrk_74 published a graffiti (initially published on Instagram) representing Marianne using a spray can to draw hearts. He created a diverted hashtag of #SprayForParis to enhance the #SprayPaint while paying a tribute. This publication involves a weak commitment in support of the French people.

On November 27, @Ant1Adam paid an absurd tribute with the publication of a photograph of three blue, white, and red bras with the text: “Liberty leading the people... We get better her outfit now 🇫🇷 #HommageNational #ViveLesFrançaises ❤️”. The tone adopted here is funny to support the French people in an amusing manner.

In a more critical vein, on November 20 – the day of the vote for the prolongation of the state of emergency –, @Mr_mecenat published a compilation of images representing the original painting, Mahé’s photograph, and an image of a flock of sheep. This criticism can be interpreted in several ways: criticism of the measures taken by the government, criticism of the people who were not rebelling against this restriction, or criticism of the mass of people who claimed themselves to be Charlie in January 2015 perhaps.

In the same critical vein concerning the state of emergency, on November 29 @ValentinSteph published a photograph of riot police evacuating the crowd and commented in the following manner: “Allegory: Liberty leading the people”. The November 13 attacks targeted a general lifestyle of French people. Freedom in France is badly perceived. French people can go wherever they like to have fun with friends or see shows or sporting events. French people have freedom to compose their own identity through the successive specific choices they make (POISSENOT, 2016). However, this publication seems to have a sort of dual message, namely that it was necessary to support Paris and fight inhumanity, but radical measures like the state of emergency are not sometimes the best ones to guarantee Freedom of the people. The ironic nature of the tweet tells us that in fact French people are not as free as might be thought.

As for publications in the “other” column, a selfie was created by a tweeter who personalized the tribute by showing his great pride in being French. The reference to the painting again insists on the symbol of a Nation rather than on the symbol of Freedom.

Image 8 - Tribute in selfie



Source: Twitter (PLAZA, 2015)

Conclusion

Moving on from this analysis, the first observation to be made concerns the communicational objectives of the interdiscursive references to “Liberty leading the people”. Different recognition features exploited after the January attacks allowed the symbolism of the painting to be transferred to highlight the struggle for Freedom of expression, whereas during the November attacks the interdiscourse was at the service of a much greater reference – Paris and the French nation.

From an argumentative point of view, we should then note the common orientation of all the publications in reaction to the Charlie attacks. This “national unity” is a reflection of the collective alignment of a great majority of the French who took over the formula “*Je suis Charlie*” and who participated in different demonstrations of support. The argumentative orientation is not that clear and unequivocal in the tweets engendered by the November 13 attacks.

Citizens’ use of this artistic reference on socio-digital networks to express themselves underlined two kinds of “emotional communities”. Following the January attacks, an emotional pact was created through the device forging an indivisible unity, which forbade criticism. The attacks committed in November engendered a much more singular and united sentiment of belonging.

The analysis of our 421 multimodal tweets finally highlighted different ways of reasoning: reproduction (thanks to the evocation of a symbol known by everyone), circulation (broadcasting, sharing, quoting etc.), and creation (originality, inventiveness). The personal reformulations that were made are perceived as forms of interartistic creations. Their manual production (by drawing or photo retouching) demanded time and investment. These creations represent a reflection of the figure of self that the tweeter wanted to shape. The will to produce images in a broader way – through drawings, diversion of the personal photograph – was a means to talk about oneself while participating in the tribute to the victims of the attacks. These indirect self-portraits illustrate the new form of social communication mentioned by Castells, which can also be applied to socio-digital networks. Expressive individualism, taken in a permanent interaction, allows self-exhibition while aligning with community values.

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