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The emotionality of the language in Fernando Vallejo's discourse of the defence of animals

Abstract: The paper discusses the emotional linguistic resources used by the Colombian writer Fernando Vallejo in his discourse on the defence of animals. The theoretical background includes two main contemporary approaches in the defence of animals and Vallejo's argumentation is presented. Secondly, emotional resources related to the lexical level and oral resources related to the syntactic level are analysed in four of his speeches. The paper proves that emotionality used together with an apparent scientific argumentation reinforces rather than weakens the discourse and is one of the main elements of Vallejo's approach to the topic.

Keywords: Fernando Vallejo, animal rights, emotions, ethics, bioethics

Emocjonalność języka w wystąpieniach Fernanda Vallejo w obronie zwierząt

Streszczenie: W tekście analizowane są środki językowe nacechowane emocjonalnie używane przez kolumbijskiego pisarza Fernanda Vallejo w dyskursie obrony zwierząt. Tło teoretyczne stanowią dwa główne współczesne nurty obrony praw zwierząt oraz argumentacja samego Vallejo. Analizie zostają poddane środki emocjonalne na poziomie leksykalnym oraz środki charakterystyczne dla języka mówionego w czterech przemówieniach Fernanda Vallejo. Udowodnione zostaje, że emocjonalność połączona z argumentacją pozornie naukową bardziej wzmacnia niż osłabia dyskurs i jest jedną z głównych cech postawy Vallejo wobec analizowanego tematu.

Słowa kluczowe: Fernando Vallejo, prawa zwierząt, emocje, etyka, bioetyka

Introduction

The concern about animal-related topics and the attempts to redefine the relationship between humans and other animals have grown considerably over the last few decades. However, in South America, it is not frequent for public figures to participate in this debate. One of the exceptions is the Colombian writer and intellectual Fernando Vallejo (born 1942) who denounces constantly in his texts, fictional as well as non-fictional ones, the abuse that non-human animals have suffered and still suffer from humanity.

The defence of animals is one of Vallejo's most important topics which repeats itself throughout his entire literary work. The author seems to consider it as one of his main aims: in an interview for the Argentinean newspaper *La Nación* he said: "La única intención que me mueve es acabar con los mataderos del planeta y volver a los siete mil millones de bípedos sabios que hoy lo pueblan vegetarianos"¹. As one of the most important Latin American contemporary writers, he seems to take advantage of his influence in order to spread the importance of the topic discussed. This discourse and elements of emotivity are strongly present not only in his essays or speeches but are also a constant in his novels, showing the author's almost religious devotion to the cause, which might be seen as a form of contestation of the prevailing religions, always criticised by Vallejo.

This paper analyses the emotional resources used by Fernando Vallejo in his discourse of the defence of animals, proving that, despite seemingly objective arguments from the point of view of a biologist², Vallejo uses emotionality to influence and convince the reader and/or the listener. Firstly, we characterise two main approaches in the contemporary theory of animal rights. Subsequently, we discuss Fernando Vallejo's arguments, who represents a third attitude, *sui generis*. Finally, we analyse examples of the emotional and oral resources in his discourse, seen as a way to strengthen his argumentation. Four Vallejo's lectures and speeches, compiled in the 2013 book *Peroratas*, are used: *Discurso para recibir el Premio Rómulo Gallegos* (2003)³, *Mi otro prójimo* (2005)⁴, *Los crímenes del cristianismo* (2009)⁵ and *Discurso para recibir el Premio de la FIL* (2011)⁶.

¹ José María BRINDISI, *Fernando Vallejo: "El vacío de la vida yo lo lleno de ilusiones y humo"*, "La Nación", 7.12.2012, <http://www.lanacion.com.ar/1505765-fernando-vallejo-el-vacio-de-la-vida-yo-lo-lleno-de-ilusiones-y-humo> [access: 2.01.2023]. "The only intention that moves me is to put an end to the slaughterhouses of this planet and to turn into vegetarians the seven billion of bipeds who live on it". The translation of all the quotes from Spanish into English is by the author of the present paper. Quotes in the original language included in the main text are the subject of the further analysis.

² The fact that Vallejo graduated in Biology is confirmed i. e. in: *El día en que Fernando Vallejo insultó a un presidente de Colombia*, "El Espectador", 25.10.2014, <http://www.elespectador.com/noticias/cultura/el-dia-fernando-vallejo-insulto-un-presidente-de-colomb-articulo-524054> [access: 3.01.2023].

³ Fernando VALLEJO, *Peroratas*, Alfaguara, Madrid 2013, pp. 58–67. Speech given in Rómulo Gallegos Center for Latin American Studies in Caracas on 2nd August 2003 during the award ceremony of the thirteenth edition of the Rómulo Gallegos International Novel Prize received by Vallejo for the 2001 novel *El desbarrancadero*.

⁴ *Ibidem*, pp. 250–272. Lecture given at the University of Berkeley on 16th November 2005.

⁵ *Ibidem*, pp. 191–209. Speech given in Heredia Theater in Cartagena on 31st January 2009 during the Hay Festival.

⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 68–74. Speech given on 26th November 2011 during the International Book Fair of Guadalajara on the occasion of receiving the FIL Literary Award in Romance Languages.

Animal rights

Firstly, a theoretical overview of animal rights theories is needed. Animal rights are defended mostly in the abolitionist approach, also called animal liberation, which postulates to put an end to any animal exploitation. Its first main tendency is based on utilitarianism and its most famous representative is Peter Singer, author of the 1975 emblematic book *Animal Liberation*. This tendency defends all living beings' rights to equality based on their capacity to suffer. The other tendency, non-utilitarian, is represented by the American philosopher Tom Regan and is called by him, the rights view. Regan argues that non-human life has inherent value itself (and not only based on the capacity to suffer) given that nonhumans as well as humans have their particular interests and aims which, if accomplished, define the value of their lives. Moreover, in his 1975 essay, *The Moral Basis of Vegetarianism* Regan affirmed that moral rights can be attributed to nonhumans based on the same cognitive capacities as they are in humans. According to him, there is no feature that could be attributed to all humans and only to them:

What clearly would be needed, in short, is what we have found to be needed and wanting all along – namely, the specification of some morally relevant feature of being human which is possessed by all human beings and only by those beings who are human. Unless or until some such feature can be pointed out, I do not see how the differential treatment of humans and animals can be rationally defended [...] ⁷.

Tom Regan criticised utilitarianism because of its tendency to give importance to the interests and feelings of an individual, but not an individual seen as a value itself. This is why, Regan observes, if an animal is given rights, it is strictly based on their capacity to suffer, but not because they matter as an individual. Moreover, according to utilitarianism, moral duty consists of acting in a way which allows the collective satisfaction to increase, which does not guarantee every individual's satisfaction. Thus, utilitarianism may allow to sacrifice the well-being of an individual if this, seen from the collective perspective, favours a bigger group. Hence, if it turns out that a particular animal's suffering contributes to collective satisfaction, it is justified to sacrifice it, which might lead to the justification of exploitation. Actually, the right to exploitation is defended by the supporters of animal welfare, a tendency which claims that humans have the right to use other animals if these are not mistreated and are provided with good life conditions. And although according to utilitarianism every being's suffering has equal relevance, Regan considers its collective character and rejection of inherent value of an individual as disadvantages which cannot guarantee a real equality of all species:

⁷ Tom REGAN, *The Moral Basis of Vegetarianism*, "Canadian Journal of Philosophy" 1975/5/2, p. 213.

Utilitarianism has no room for the equal moral rights of different individuals because it has no room for their equal inherent value or worth. What has value for the utilitarian is the satisfaction of an individual's interests, not the individual whose interests they are⁸.

Fernando Vallejo's approach

As has been mentioned, Fernando Vallejo's approach differs from the two main approaches described above, as he uses scientific-bioethical arguments to disagree with human superiority. His lecture *Mi otro prójimo*⁹ starts with Darwin's evolution theory and genetic relationship between species. Vallejo enumerates various features (such as two nostrils, two teeth rows or a similar functioning of the circulatory or digestive system) that humans share not only with great apes but also with other mammals, such as cows or dogs. Moreover, it is emphasized that humans are genetically related to other mammals and even all vertebrates. It is also reminded that the genetic proximity between humans and great apes reaches 98% as far as orangutans are concerned and 99% in the case of chimpanzees. Vallejo follows:

Somos como los perros, los gatos, las vacas, las ratas... Lo que nos separa de ellos y los restantes mamíferos es insignificante. Hasta tenemos las mismas enfermedades. Las ratas nos contagian la peste, pero del mismo modo nosotros se la contagiamos a ellas. Y a los perros les da diabetes, como a nosotros [...]. Y les da cáncer, como a nosotros. Y envejecen, como nosotros¹⁰.

In another text, *Discurso para recibir el Premio Rómulo Gallegos*, Vallejo denies the thesis about human superiority based on the fact of having developed a spoken language. He argues that although only humans developed an advanced spoken language, their brain structures and those of other vertebrates work in the same way, because we all come from the common ancestor¹¹. In the same text, he establishes his hierarchy of living beings, taking as the criterion the complexity of the nervous system which reaches the most developed level in humans and other mammals. Vallejo emphasizes that a well-developed nervous system allows humans as well as other animals to experience feelings and emotions:

Los animales no son cosas y tienen alma y no son negociables ni manipulables y hay una jerarquía en ellos que se establece según la complejidad de sus sistemas nerviosos, por los cuales sufren y sienten como nosotros: la jerarquía del dolor. En esta jerarquía los mamíferos, la clase linneana

⁸ Tom REGAN, *The Case for Animal Rights*, [in:] P. SINGER, *In Defense of Animals*, Basil Blackwell, New York 1985, <http://www.animal-rights-library.com/texts-m/regan03.htm> [access: 2.01.2023].

⁹ See VALLEJO, *Peroratas*, *op. cit.*, pp. 251–252.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 252, "Mi otro prójimo": "We are like dogs, cats, cows, rats... What separates us from them and other mammals is insignificant. We even have the same diseases. Rats transmit pestilence to us, but in the same way we transmit it to them. And dogs have diabetes like we do [...]. And they get cancer like we do. And they get old like we do".

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 63.

a la que pertenecemos nosotros, están arriba. Mientras más arriba esté un animal en esta jerarquía del dolor, más obligación tenemos de respetarlo. Los caballos, las vacas, los perros, los delfines, las ballenas, las ratas son mamíferos como nosotros y tienen dos ojos como nosotros, nariz como nosotros, intestinos como nosotros, músculos como nosotros, nervios como nosotros, sangre como nosotros, sienten y sufren como nosotros, son como nosotros, son nuestros compañeros en el horror de la vida, tenemos que respetarlos, son nuestro prójimo¹².

Vertebrates feel fear and pain, suffer hunger or experience joy thanks to a nervous system, by which the soul is produced¹³. Such a concept of soul is similar to the Aristotelian theory according to which the soul is mortal. According to Vallejo, atheist (and anticlerical), the soul also dies together with the nervous system. In this way, Vallejo undermines the Christian conviction of the superiority of the human soul. He turns to Aristotelian categories of hunger, thirst or fear to emphasize that the capacity to experience these sensations depends on the existence of a complex nervous system which works in the same way in humans as well as non-humans.

With the base on the criterion of feeling pain, Vallejo strictly opposes himself to experiments on animals, regarding that, as nonhumans feel pain in the same way humans do, their suffering cannot be considered relative. According to Vallejo, to the extent that an animal is similar to us, we do not have the moral right to experiment on them (because it would mean seeing their suffering as relative), and to the extent that they are not similar to us, experiments are ineffective as they cannot bring proper results¹⁴.

Furthermore, one of the main elements of Vallejo's thought is a strongly critical and anticlerical attitude towards the Catholic Church for defending impregnated human cells, which cannot feel pain, while it does not do enough, according to Vallejo, to defend nonhumans, raised massively on industrial farms. In the speech, *Los crímenes del cristianismo* Vallejo even accuses the Catholic church of encouraging people to eat meat with the basis on Augustinian and Thomist thought, and attacks Christianity, particularly Pope John Paul II, and other confessions of favouring human species and of encouraging, according to Vallejo, nonhuman suffering:

Wojtyla no fue un criminal de los de horca y cuchillo [...]: fue uno más sutil, un santurrón taimado y dañino.

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 61. "Animals are not objects and have soul, and they are not negotiable nor manipulable, and between them there is a hierarchy based on the complexity of their nervous systems which cause them to suffer and feel like us: the hierarchy of pain. In that hierarchy the mammals, the Linnaean class to which we belong, are situated on the highest level. The higher level an animal occupies in that hierarchy of pain, the biggest is our duty to respect them. Horses, cows, dogs, dolphins, whales, rats are mammals as we are, and have two eyes as we do, and nose as we do, intestines as we do, muscles as we do, nerves as we do, blood as we do, they feel and suffer as we do, they are our companions in the horror of life and we must respect them – they are our fellow creatures".

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 251.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 271.

¡Dizque defensor de la vida! El que se las daba de guía moral de la humanidad no tuvo una palabra para denunciar las monstruosas fábricas de carne de nuestro tiempo: los pollos criados en unas jaulas tan pequeñas que ni se pueden mover, parados día y noche sobre sus propios excrementos, destrozándose el cuerpo a picotazos, sin ver desde que nacen y hasta que se mueren la luz del sol y producidos por miles de millones como objetos. Y las vacas y los cerdos producidos también al por mayor, acuchillados en los mataderos y exhibidos con la más encegueda impudicia en las carnicerías para que se los coma la grey carnívora del Crucificado. Y ese paporro, la guía moral de la humanidad, que se prodigaba en sermones y discursos hablando hasta por el sieso, defendiendo un óvulo fecundado por espermatozoide. El óvulo fecundado por una espermatozoide tiene el tamaño de una ameba, no se ve a simple vista y hay que verlo con microscopio, y no siente nada porque no tiene sistema nervioso. En cambio los pollos, las vacas y los cerdos sí lo tienen, y tan complejo como el de nosotros, en virtud del cual sufren como nosotros: la sed, el hambre, el frío, el miedo, el terror a la muerte...¹⁵

The emotive resources: lexical level

While in his texts Vallejo uses arguments that relate to scientific knowledge, it is also important to note that there are, at the same time, many subjective elements. First of all, it should be noted that the bioethical aspects are subjective themselves. Moreover, objectivity is weakened by the emotivity, used by the author on purpose. Although Vallejo is in the habit of preparing his speeches in advance and reading them out, emotivity and orality are still present in them as well as in his novels, and not only, for example, in spontaneous answers to the listeners' questions or during interviews. Therefore, we consider it as a resource used by the author consciously and purposely.

Despite stating the biological equality of humans and other species, Vallejo bases his discourse of defence of animals on a strong contrast between humans and non-humans. Thus, on one hand, he focuses on the nonhumans' value, and, on the other hand, multiplies insults towards humanity with an evident subjective valuation. We discuss, therefore, some of the emotive formulations that question objectivity. To begin with,

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 208. "Wojtyła was not a criminal of those of gallows and knife [...]: he was a more subtle one, a sly and hurtful sanctimonious person.

Supposedly a defender of life! The one who wanted to be seen as the moral guide of humanity did not even have one word to denounce the monstrous meat factories of our times: chickens bred in such small cages that they cannot even move, standing day and night in their own excrements, damaging their own bodies with bites, without seeing the sunlight since they are born to the moment they die, billions of them produced like objects. And cows and pigs also produced wholesale, stabbed in slaughterhouses and exhibited with the blindest shamelessness at the butcher's shops so that carnivorous flock of the Crucified can eat them.

And that's it, that rubbish-talking pope, the moral guide of humanity, who showed up in his sermons and speeches talking out of his ass, defending the ovule impregnated by a spermatozoon. An ovule impregnated by a spermatozoon has the size of an amoeba, cannot be seen at a glance and needs to be looked at through the microscope, and does not feel anything because it lacks nervous system. Chickens, cows and pigs, however, do have it, and it is as complex as ours, by virtue of which they suffer like we do: thirst, hunger, cold, fear, terror of death".

we observe resources that emphasize the compassionate attitude towards nonhumans, seen as the victims of humanity. In the lecture *Mi otro prójimo* Vallejo speaks of “pobres, inocentes, indefensos animales, que ya no tienen ni siquiera el derecho a la luz del sol y al mínimo espacio que les permita darse vuelta en sus lóbregos calabozos”¹⁶. The aim of the enumeration of adjectives with a high emotional value is to cause compassion among listeners and readers. Furthermore, Vallejo emphasizes the bad conditions in which animals live with the use of epithets, such as “mínimo espacio” (“minimal space”) o “lóbregos calabozos” (“dreary cells”), which show the lack of most basic rights. In another fragment he states: “Ceguera moral es pensar que un pobre cerdo, un animal indefenso, no merece respeto. En Colombia a los cerdos el día de la Navidad los acuchillan para celebrar la venida a este mundo del Niño Dios. Sus aullidos de dolor aún me siguen resonando en los oídos después de tantos y tantos años transcurridos”¹⁷. Once more the same adjectives (“pobre”, “indefenso”) are used as related to a pig and, thus, their impotence facing the atrocities imposed by humans is emphasized. The last sentence, in which words related to the sense of hearing are accumulated (“aullidos”, “oídos” and “resonando”, which stand for “screams”, “ears” and “echoing”, respectively), aims to cause compassion appealing to the listener's or reader's sensibility.

The same can be observed in *Discurso para recibir el Premio Rómulo Gallegos*: “Y los que duden de que los simios son como nosotros, mírenles las manos y mírenlos a las caras y a los ojos. No hay que saber biología molecular ni evolutiva ni neurociencias para descubrir el parentesco [entre los seres humanos y los simios]. Sólo hay que abrir el alma”¹⁸. With the last sentence, of a metaphorical character, Vallejo diminishes the weight of the scientific arguments and tries to appeal to the empathy to convince any kind of recipients, regardless of their education or knowledge.

The use of insults is another emotive resource which appears in Vallejo's fictional texts as well as the non-fictional ones. According to Pablo Montoya, another Colombian writer, Vallejo rants about Colombia because Colombia hurts him and his giant hate is directly proportional to his love¹⁹. This affirmation can be extended towards the topics discussed here: the use of insults as a critical tool is a resource typical of

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 269–270. “[P]oor, innocent, defenceless animals who do not even have the right to the sunlight and a minimal space anymore that would allow them to turn around in their dreary cells”.

¹⁷ *Ibidem*, p. 261. “It is moral blindness to think that a poor pig, a defenceless animal, does not deserve respect. In Colombia on Christmas day pigs are stabbed to celebrate the Holy Child's arrival to the world. Their screams still keep echoing in my ears after so many, many years have passed”.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, p. 63. “To those who doubt that apes are like us, look at their hands and look into their faces and eyes. It is not needed to know molecular or evolutionary biology or neurosciences to discover the relationship [between humans and apes]. All you need to do is to open your soul”.

¹⁹ Pablo MONTÓYA, *Fernando Vallejo: demoliciones de un reaccionario*, Colección Bitácora, Bucaramanga 2009, p. 4. Original quote: “Vallejo despotrica sobre Colombia porque le duele Colombia. Y su odio gigantesco es directamente proporcional a su amor”.

Vallejo's style, used by the author to discuss topics particularly important to him; in this case, the defence of nonhuman animals. Therefore, invectives are a kind of strategy to hide pain: below a torrent of insults, there is the author's high sensibility and strong opposition to the violent reality, in front of which he feels helpless. At the same time, it is a provocative strategy, as invectives are used to talk about certain values that many people consider unquestionable; whose subversion always causes controversies. Hence, the insults are often directed against the Catholic church and the people who, motivated by religion, consider themselves superior to animals. In *Mi otro prójimo* Vallejo calls Thomas Aquinas "el ser más repugnante y depravado que ha parido el cristianismo"²⁰ ("the most repugnant and depraved being that Christianity has ever given birth to") for stating that humans have the right to dispose of the lives of other animals. In a fragment of *Los crímenes del cristianismo* which has already been quoted, Vallejo accuses the Pope John Paul II, calling him "santurrón taimado y dañino"²¹ ("sly and hurtful sanctimonious person") for his indifference facing animal suffering. Further on, he refers to Wojtyła as "ese paporro [...] [que habla] hasta por el sieso"²². "Paporro" is not only a pejorative augmentative form of the word "papa" ("pope"), but it is also a noun derived from the verb "paporrar", "to talk with no foundations, with no grounds", according to the Spanish definition²³. The demonstrative determinative "ese" when used in Spanish to refer to people is also pejorative and "sieso" stands for the lower part of the rectum. All these words aim to denigrate the importance of the pope's words. In the same speech, Vallejo offends not only Christians but also Muslims, referring to them as "los secuaces de Mahoma que rezan agachados mirando hacia La Meca y con el culo al aire apuntando hacia Jerusalén"²⁴ ("Mahomet's supporters who pray bent down looking towards Mecca and with their butt pointing at Jerusalem"). According to its Spanish definition, the word "secuaz" stands for somebody who "follows a party, a doctrine or another person's opinion" and is used mainly as pejorative²⁵. The word "culo" ("butt") is clearly offensive as a part of the body considered in Islam as impure²⁶. At the same time, "butt pointing at Jerusalem" is a clear offence to Judaism. In this way, Vallejo denigrates and despises the religions seen by a large part of

²⁰ *Ibidem*, pp. 267–268.

²¹ *Ibidem*, p. 208.

²² *Ibidem*.

²³ Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la lengua española*, 2014, <http://dle.rae.es> [access: 2.01.2023].

²⁴ VALLEJO, *Peroratas*, *op. cit.*, p. 198.

²⁵ Real Academia Española, *Diccionario de la lengua...*, *op. cit.* The English translation of the word "secuaz" (according to the Word Reference dictionary) is "follower" or "supporter", which in English is rather neutral, whereas in Spanish it is clearly pejorative.

²⁶ Magdalena ZAWROTNA, *Tabu ciała i seksualności w Egipcie. Analiza pragmatyczna nazw intymnych części ciała w dialekcie kairskim*, [in:] *Ciało w kulturze muzułmańskiej*, eds. Katarzyna PACHNIAK, Magdalena NOWACZEK-WALCZAK, Katedra Arabistyki i Islamistyki Uniwersytetu Warszawskiego, Warszawa 2016, p. 25.

humanity as one of the most important values (and also the main reason of animal suffering, according to Vallejo).

However, Vallejo also criticises what seems to be a contrast to the religion, that is, the science. In *Discurso para recibir el Premio Rómulo Gallegos* he calls scientists “mentirosos” (“liars”) and “pendejos”²⁷ (“idiots”, “jerks”), although these are traditionally related to the objectivity and searching for the truth. This is to show that religion is not the only one responsible for the nonhuman animal suffering, but it is also scientists, who use animals in experiments. Vallejo uses scientific argumentation, but at the same time tries to criticise, in a subjective way, the aspects of the science he does not approve.

Oral resources: syntactic level

Another strategy to increase the subjectivity is orality, a resource used by Vallejo also in his written works, such as novels, and speeches prepared in advance. Walter Ong in his 1982 book *Orality and Literacy*, mentions among the characteristics of orality additive rather than subordinative and redundant or “copious”²⁸. These, as well as enumerations, are frequent in Vallejo's texts. Let us go back to one of the fragments of *Discurso para recibir el premio Rómulo Gallegos*:

Los animales no son cosas y tienen alma y no son negociables ni manipulables y hay una jerarquía en ellos que se establece según la complejidad de sus sistemas nerviosos, por los cuales sufren y sienten como nosotros: la jerarquía del dolor. En esta jerarquía los mamíferos, la clase linneana a la que pertenecemos nosotros, están arriba. Mientras más arriba esté un animal en esta jerarquía del dolor, más obligación tenemos de respetarlo. Los caballos, las vacas, los perros, los delfines, las ballenas, las ratas son mamíferos como nosotros y tienen dos ojos como nosotros, nariz como nosotros, intestinos como nosotros, músculos como nosotros, nervios como nosotros, sangre como nosotros, sienten y sufren como nosotros, son como nosotros, son nuestros compañeros en el horror de la vida, tenemos que respetarlos, son nuestro prójimo²⁹.

In the first sentence triple repetition of the conjunction “y” (“and”) can be observed. Walter Ong observes the same characteristic in the first verses of *Genesis*. Considering Vallejo's critical attitude towards the Bible and Christianity for serving as the base of the conviction of the superiority of human beings, it could be considered that this kind of repetitive resource is used to imitate *Genesis* and introduce another system of values. Furthermore, in the last sentence of the quoted fragment there is an enumeration of mammals' species and eight repetitions of the same comparative structure “[...] como nosotros” (“[...] like we do”). This emphatic resource aims to underline the importance of the information transmitted and to convince the listener or the reader. At the same

²⁷ VALLEJO, *Peroratas*, op. cit., p. 63.

²⁸ See Walter ONG, *Orality and Literacy*, Taylor & Francis e-Library, 2005, pp. 36–39.

²⁹ VALLEJO, *Peroratas*, op. cit., p. 61, see footnote 12.

time, the repetition of the pronoun “nosotros” (“we”) and the determinative “nuestro” (“our”), which appears directly afterwards, aims to emphasize the solidarity with other animals’ species and the similarities between humans and non-humans. The enumeration and the syntactic parallelism can be observed also in another fragment, from *Mi otro prójimo*:

Somos como los perros, los gatos, las vacas, las ratas... Lo que nos separa de ellos y los restantes mamíferos es insignificante. Hasta tenemos las mismas enfermedades. Las ratas nos contagian la peste, pero del mismo modo nosotros se la contagiamos a ellas. Y a los perros les da diabetes, como a nosotros [...]. Y les da cáncer, como a nosotros. Y envejecen, como nosotros³⁰.

First of all, it should be observed that the strategies and repetitions are similar in two different speeches; hence the repetition can be observed not only in one case, but it is typical of a significant part of Vallejo’s work, as can be seen also in his novels. One more time the species are enumerated; it might be seen as an order according to the level of respect that an average human has towards them. Furthermore, we can observe a polysyndeton: repetition of the conjunction “y”, which the sentences start with, which could be considered as another imitation of *Genesis*³¹. By highlighting once more the similarity and the solidarity between humans and other species, Vallejo presents a kind of his own ethical principles. An explicit criticism towards *Genesis* can be found in the following fragment of *Mi otro prójimo*:

Autorizados por la Biblia, los Evangelios y el Corán, hoy dos mil millones de cristianos, mil cuatrocientos millones de musulmanes y diez millones de judíos se sienten con el derecho divino consagrado en el *Génesis* de disponer como a bien les plazca de los animales: de enjaularlos, de rajarlos, de cazarlos, de befarlos, de torturarlos, de acuchillarlos, en las granjas-fábricas, en los cotos de caza, en las plazas de toros, en los circos, en las gallerías, en los mataderos, en los laboratorios y en las escuelas que practican la vivisección...³²

The enumeration of atrocities that non-humans suffer from humans, together with syntactic parallelisms, aims to appeal to the listener’s or reader’s sensibility and cause an emotional effect. Another example of redundancy can be found in the following fragment of *Discurso para recibir el Premio Rómulo Gallegos*: “[...] dizque para producir una vacuna dizque para salvar dizque a la humanidad”³³ (“[...] supposedly to produce a vaccine supposedly to save supposedly humanity”). The colloquial word

³⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 252, see footnote 10.

³¹ See i. e. *Genesis* 1: 1–13.

³² VALLEJO, *Peroratas*, op. cit., p. 267. “Authorised by the Bible, the Gospels and the Koran, nowadays two billion of Christians, 1.4 billions of Muslims and ten millions of Jews feel entitled, according to the Divine law established in the *Genesis*, to dispose of animals as they please: to cage them, to slice them, to hunt them, to mock them, to torture them, to stab them in farms-factories, in hunting reserves, in bull rings, in circuses, in cockpits, in slaughterhouses, in laboratories and in schools that practice the vivisection...”

³³ *Ibidem*, p. 63.

“dizque” (“supposedly”) is used in Spanish to ironically quote someone’s words or a piece of news, putting them in doubt. Vallejo questions the point of experimenting on animals, seeming to be a part of the minority of the scientific world who condemn such practices. Vallejo sees it as unnecessary and argues using colloquial resources and highly emotive expressions which, once more, weaken his objectivity.

Finally, another resource that can be observed is the exhortation, which can be seen in the following fragment of *Discurso para recibir el Premio de la FIL*: “Quítate la venda moral que te pusieron en los ojos desde niño y [...] despreocúpate de Cristo, que ni siquiera existió”³⁴ (“Remove the moral blindfold that was put over your eyes since your childhood and [...] stop worrying about Christ, who did not even exist”). Vallejo addresses himself to the listener or reader in the imperative mode; it is a kind of an anticlerical sermon which encourages him to leave the community of the Church. The direct appeal to the listener or reader is not frequent in Vallejo’s speeches, as he prefers to use repetitions. According to what the French philosopher Gilles Deleuze affirms in the introduction to his 1968 book *Difference and Repetition*:

If repetition exists, it expresses at once a singularity opposed to the general, a universality opposed to the particular, a distinctive opposed to the ordinary, an instantaneity opposed to variation and an eternity opposed to permanence. In every respect, repetition is a transgression. It puts law into question, it denounces its nominal or general character in favour of a more profound and more artistic reality³⁵.

A few lines before Deleuze recalls an idea of Pius Servien’s, Romanian linguist and philosopher (1902–1959), who distinguishes between “the language of science”, which can be characterised by equality and the possibility of replacement of terms, and “lyrical language”, in which terms cannot be replaced, and this implies repetition³⁶. Thus, it can be stated that in Vallejo’s repetitions the preference for the “lyrical language” can be observed: Vallejo leaves apart the scientific argumentation and chooses the oral and emotive discourse, full of redundancies and enumerations, which aims to emphasize the particularity and importance of every animal species, contrary to the science or the industry that see animals as a whole or as a mass of resources. Taking into consideration Deleuze’s reflections, the accumulation of verbs and circumstances that denote the atrocities experimented by nonhumans from humans can be seen as Vallejo’s effort to draw attention to the suffering of each animal or every species in particular (Deleuze’s “singularity opposed to the general”). Finally, Vallejo subverts existing convictions,

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 74.

³⁵ Gilles DELEUZE, *Difference and Repetition*, translated by Paul Patton, Columbia University Press, New York 1994, pp. 2–3.

³⁶ See *ibidem*, p. 2.

protesting against the “general law” which is the exploitation of animals as a universal phenomenon.

Conclusions

In conclusion, Fernando Vallejo introduces elements of emotivity consciously and purposely, in order to reinforce the contents expressed and to draw the listeners’ and readers’ attention to the topics of high personal importance to him. Vallejo likes to provoke; in one of his interviews, he says he writes to “bother the Tartuffes”³⁷ and tries to affect to cause a reflection, as he is convinced that such an effect could not be achieved through a moderated and emotionally neutral argumentation. A British researcher Derek Edwards argues: “[a] narrative of emotional reactions can be used [...] not only to undermine rational accountability, but also to establish it”³⁸. Therefore, it can be considered that Fernando Vallejo takes as the base a structured biological knowledge in order to convert it into a discourse *sui generis* which is not less legitimate because of emotivity and subjectivity, but to the contrary, these elements reinforce the importance of the discussed topics and the necessity to rethink them on the global level.

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³⁷ Original quote: “molestar a los tartufos” Laurent NUNEZ, *¿Qué tal Colombia? Les Belles Étrangères* (documental film), 2010, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y67vrKc-3E0> (fragment) [access: 2.01.2023].

³⁸ Derek EDWARDS, *Emotion discourse*, “Culture Psychology” 1999/5, p. 276.

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