

Abstract

“The Elegance of the Hedgehog” is a major novel that exemplifies Muriel Barbery's exploration of identity through a polyphonic narrative structure. Through the intertwined stories of Renée Michel, a self-taught and discreet concierge with "the elegance of a hedgehog," and Paloma, an exceptionally gifted teenager, the novel delves into the tensions between appearance and essence. Centered on the dual voices of Renée, a concierge, and Paloma, a precocious teenager, the study explores how their intimate journals become spaces of resistance and introspection amidst personal and societal crises. Key concepts such as polyphony, journal-writing, and the dialectic between concealment and revelation are foregrounded to illustrate the novel's intricate interplay between narrative voices and existential reflection.