



CLASSIQUES
GARNIER

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Emma GEE, *Mapping the Afterlife: From Homer to Dante*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020. 365 p. ISBN: 978 0190670481.
Bart D. EHRMAN, *Heaven and Hell: A History of the Afterlife*. London: Oneworld, 2020. 326 p. ISBN: 978 1786077202.

It is a profoundly human endeavour to imagine what might happen after the ultimate caesura of death. Knowing where ideas about the afterlife come from, how they have been thought about and represented in culture and society, and how they have changed over time reveals much about the long history of human existence and our interaction with the planet we call home. Whether or not we believe in an actual afterlife, all of us are familiar with how it has been conceived in various ways over the centuries in different cultural contexts. Far from being the sole province of religion and theology, visions of the afterlife are found across art, literature, and music from around the world. And, far from being a distant and separate existence from the one we lead in the present, such afterlives invariably reflect the here and now in which they emerge, as well as the individuals or communities that imagine them. Emma Gee's *Mapping the Afterlife: From Homer to Dante* and Bart D. Erhman's *Heaven and Hell: A History of the Afterlife* consider the topography and historiography of representations of the afterlife and the ideas that formed them from diverse disciplinary perspectives, which comparative scholars and more general readers will find stimulating and erudite in equal measure.

As well as offering several fascinating excursions into musical theory, psychology and cartography, *Mapping the Afterlife* principally provides detailed yet clearly articulated readings of works by Homer, Plato, Cicero, Virgil and Dante, as well as other classical writers. For readers of a comparatist disposition, it is extremely pleasing to find the original Greek, Latin, and Italian sources quoted at length, alongside published English translations. Paying great attention to the nuances of language, one of the book's purposes is to examine and challenge "the commentator's search for one truth, rather than many truths", which

“is as true of modern commentary as it is of ancient” (113). All of the afterlife texts that are mapped in her book evince multifarious tensions and contradictions, but for Gee this is less of a problem to be solved and more of a guiding principle. The main thrust of her argument consists in positing two kinds of dominant spatial idiom in classical visions of the afterlife: first, the linear journey of a soul through the landscape of the world beyond this one; secondly, a synoptic vision of the universe in its entirety contained within this journey. There is, for Gee, “a reciprocity between the landscapes of fact and imagination. Afterlife space cannot be constructed *ex nihilo*: it must rest on a foundation of recognisable characteristics of the physical world” (41). To that end, her book’s overarching contention is that the imagined topography of afterlife narratives in both the Greek and the Roman traditions, as well as in Dante’s *Divina Commedia*, constitute profound engagements with the state of scientific knowledge at their time of composition: “The afterlife is the shadowland where science and soul meet” (5). Far from being problematic or inconsistent, the resultant melting pot of different spatial elements reflects different modes of thinking, which is precisely the point of afterlife narratives. Eschatology provides an arena to explore elusive connections between humanity and the cosmos. As Gee observes, “what we call the afterlife is the desire in the present, unachievable and so projected into the future, for a joining of faculties, the dissolution of the divide between us and the universe, the closing of the perceptual loop between what we are and what is” (325). *Mapping the Afterlife* is an extended and nuanced exercise in critical negative capability. The crucial point lies not in whether the afterlife is real or scientifically accurate; literary representations of ideas about the afterlife provide the space to imagine connections between human individuals and the universe of which they are a component part. As humanity’s understanding of the universe’s spatial composition expands, so too do our visions of the afterlife.

Many traditional studies of the afterlife in classical literature tend to consider it in light of an apparent evolution towards a Christian view of the cosmos. Right at the outset of her survey of classical culture, Gee discards the “heaven” and “hell” dichotomy as a teleological category error. There exists, after all, no equivalence between the fields of Elysium and heaven, or between the prison of Tartarus and hell. Yet,

in what is one of the more surprising theses of Bart D. Ehrman's most recent book, it is not only the case that the notions of "heaven" and "hell" have little purchase on classical literature; these ideas do not even extend back to the origins of the Christian faith itself. Synthesising much of his own prior scholarship and that of others, Ehrman charts a course through many revealing extracts of Biblical and apocryphal texts, alongside close readings of the ancient Mesopotamian *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Plato, Homer, and Virgil, as well as later quotations from Augustine and Shakespeare. His book offers a pithily told and carefully considered survey of the slow accretion over time of the notion that life after death not only exists, but entails forms of divine judgement and justice. Of particular interest to Ehrman's account is the shift towards "a more Platonic understanding of the distinction between the soul and the body, and the superiority of the former to the latter" brought about by "the increased Hellenization of the ancient Mediterranean world" (135-136). He places great store in understanding what particular groups and cults, societies and cultures, believed or imagined about life after death at specific moments in time and proves himself a clear-eyed guide as to how these understandings of afterlife existence have been altered over time and for what reasons these changes have occurred. It is fascinating to navigate across the history of Western culture, in which certain beliefs about "the glories of heaven and the fires of hell" (292) have proved so dominant for so long, and to uncover how these views are found neither in classical culture, nor in Jewish scripture, nor even in the historical teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. As Ehrman shows, the belief in "heaven" and "hell" is a later development, yet it is not to be dismissed. The persistence of these ideas is tied both to the agendas of the socially powerful and to deeply human needs and aspirations when faced with the injustices of the world, and throughout his book, Ehrman remains continually alive to their profound influence on and relevance to a wealth of art and culture.

If Hamlet wrestled with a "dread of something after death, / The undiscovered country, from whose bourn / No traveller returns, [which] puzzles the will, And makes us rather bear those ills we have, / Than fly to others that we know not of", then these books offer wise and comprehensive mapping of the imagined territories of the afterlife from distinct yet complementary vantage points. It is extremely rewarding

to read them – one by a classical scholar, the other by a professor of religious studies – alongside each other. Both individually and collectively they recall Eunoë, the fifth river of the dead. Not one of the classical rivers from Greek mythology, Eunoë was invented by Dante for his own purposes. In the thirty-third and final canto of the *Purgatorio*, having been washed free of the memory of past sins in the river Lethe, the poet is directed to Eunoë, which will strengthen the memories of his good deeds in life in preparation for the heavenly realm that awaits him. Specifically, the Dantean neologism “Eunoë” is derived from the Greek “eu-”, meaning “good” and “noë”, meaning “mind”, and it suggests not only retrospective positive recollection, but also good knowledge, clear and attentive thinking. While we may never know what comes after this life, careful consideration about how the afterlife has been and continues to be represented and referenced in art and culture is a rewarding and horizon-broadening pursuit. As Gee concludes, citing Plato’s *Timaeus*, “when someone dies, you are deprived of the physical body of the dead loved one: there is no way to detain them, to get them back. It is appropriate, then, that the form of the afterlife, as the habitat of the soul, proves, after all, impossible to pin down. The afterlife resists our attempts to simplify, reduce, render one-from-many. We can only ever tell an *εἰκόσ μῦθος*, a likely story about it” (325).

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Dirk GÖTTSCHE, Rosa MUCIGNAT, Robert WENINGER (eds.), *Landscapes of Realism: Rethinking Literary Realism in Comparative Perspectives*. Vol. I: *Mapping Realism*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2021. 814 p. ISBN: 978 9027208064. E-book ISBN: 978 9027260369.

Realism is as much elusive as it is persistent as a modern literary phenomenon in the horizon of world literature. *Landscapes of realism*, a two-volume interdisciplinary research, attempts to map the vast territory of the Western, non-Western and globally articulated forms of realistic literary representation. Describing the elusive yet everlasting presence of the literary phenomenon of realism, this study critically and methodologically presents realism from its pre-history to the present day. The final scope of this research is to reconsider literary realism through various comparative perspectives, as the volume's subtitle announces, while mapping the critical routes that have led scholars to theoretically define the realistic literary style.

Mapping Realism, the first volume of this collaborative research, edited by Dirk Götsche, Rosa Mucignat and Robert Weninger, is organised in five chapters, each presenting one core essay and between three and seven case studies, in which the main issue is always approached from a transmedia, transnational and comparative perspective. The core essays are meant to introduce the reader to the fundamental and epistemological questions raised by the study of realism. The first of them – written by Thomas Pavel and Galin Tihanov – considers the “ideas and debates” that have critically involved realism in the history of literary criticism. The second explores the routes that led the theory of literature to examine realism from multiple perspectives – a core essay written by Dirk Götsche, Ann Caesar, Anne Duprat, Rae Greiner, Anne Lounsbury and Stephen Roberts who together delve into realism’s “multiple beginnings”, its “shared catalysts” and its “transformative dynamics”. The third – signed Svend Erik Larsen and Rosa Mucignat – moves to the “fleeting moments and unstable spaces” that necessarily come to mind when we think realism in its spatial and chronological aspects. The fourth core essay – written by Dirk Götsche – shifts its focus on the analysis of the challenging idea of evaluating realism as a “literary playing field in motion”, which has to be re-mapped and re-read in its nineteenth-century manifestations. The volume concludes with an essay written by

Robert Weninger who appraises all the transformations undergone by the post-1900 realism, from the *Bildungsroman* to the Historical Novel, to the Postmodernist Narrative.

Such extensive research successfully presents the reader with the main problems and contemporary needs in assessing nineteenth- and twentieth-century realism as a “response to modernity” (2). The fundamental starting point of this theory, as the authors declare, is Reinhart Koselleck’s idea and sense of *Verzeitlichung*, “a temporalization of life that is epitomized first and foremost by the French Revolution of 1789, but also by the more gradual transformation of European culture brought on by the rise of modern science and a secular worldview” (3). Since the questioning of experiencing the world is first and foremost expressed in bringing to public awareness such questioning through creative forms of expression, realism asserts itself as a privileged object of study for a re-thinking and re-mapping of modern European literary phenomena. With an eye on method, this volume’s attempt is “to approach the topic not just in an ambitiously interdisciplinary comparative approach, but one that is mindful also of realism’s remaining uncharted territories” (14). Hence, the relevance of this volume’s case studies, which are designed “to complement the core essays in terms of aspect, detail of analysis and coverage across languages, periods or media” (20).

Every core theory is associated with between three and seven exploratory essays set in chronological order. They range from the contextualisation of the modern critical problematic issue of realism to the meeting between realism and its transmedia manifestations in post-1900 global aesthetics. This research makes thus possible to approach, through Robert Weninger’s study, the German Marxist “debates on realism” (65-81), moving on to Sascha Ebeling’s study of “the emergence of the novel in India and competing modes of realism” (89-101). At the same time, as the volume gets closer to postmodern aesthetics, it is possible to compare Francesco Di Chiara and Paolo Noto’s essay on the role of state institutions in making Italian neorealist filmography “transnational” (697-715), together with Birgit Neumann’s study on “Realism and Postcolonial Subjectivity in the British Black *Bildungsroman*” (735-751). Apart from bearing in mind that some works echo many of the case studies presented in the volume, a key reference in the timely analysis of the various manifestations of nineteenth- and

twentieth-century realism is Erich Auerbach's masterpiece, *Mimesis: The Representation of Reality in Western Literature* (1946), as well as the most recent work by Frederic Jameson, *The Antinomies of Realism* (2013).

On the whole, one of the most intriguing *films-rouges* of the volume is the political relevance attributed to the evolution of aesthetic realism in its variant and constant, traditionalist and revolutionary, concordant and antinomian forms. Thus, the aforementioned analysis conducted by Robert Weninger on the German Marxist "realism debates" meets the dialectical opposition of the realist function of space-time, which – keeping Bakhtin's *chronotope* in mind – is studied by Svend Erik Larsen and Rosa Mucignat as a political opposition that sees the encounter/clash of public and private in nineteenth-century European metropolises (249). In Dirk Götttsche's analysis, the political implications of studying realism meet the Nation-Building Theory in the breakdowns of the Western phenomena of modernisation, theoretical understandings and consequent artistic representations of the modern European reality. This involves, for instance, a re-reading of nineteenth-century colonialism, according to which the study of the dialogue between colonialism and post-colonialism is conceived in the light of the relationship between realism and the phenomena of world colonisation. All phenomena understood by the authors as forms of "transformation of the world", from which it follows – as quoted by Götttsche (453) – that realism tends at times "to perpetuate stereotypes; at others it attempts to question them" (Yee, *The Colonial Comedy: Imperialism in the French Realist Novel*, 2016: 29).

Realism is thus a persistent but multifarious phenomenon that travels literarily, theoretically and critically, between the superficial and the fundamental. This volume seeks, ultimately, to guide the reader's attention in a new direction: one not pointing to a pluralisation that entails a compartmentalisation of its subject, but rather to an open and comparative perspective "linked to a clear sense of literary-historical and media traditions, cultural connectivities and the historicity of the realist poetics and aesthetics involved" (13).

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Katherine E. BISHOP, David HIGGINS and Jerry MÄÄTTÄ, eds., *Plants in Science Fiction. Speculative Vegetation*. New Dimensions in Science Fiction. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2020. 254 p. ISBN: 978 1786835598

Plants in Science Fiction: Speculative Vegetation, edited by Katherine E. Bishop, David Higgins, and Jerry Määttä, brings together ten original essays, focusing primarily on literary texts ranging from the late 19th to the 21st century, from Arthur Machen's "Novel of the Black Seal" (1895) to Jeff VanderMeer's *Southern Reach* trilogy (2014). Contributions are grouped thematically by "Abjection", "Affinity" and "Accord", indicating a progression "from alienation to understanding" (5) of the multi-faceted human perspectives on and relationships with plants portrayed in the literary and filmic texts examined.

Katherine E. Bishop's concise introduction provides a brief panorama of plant and plant-human hybrid appearances in human culture and stories before honing in on plants' pervasive significance in science fiction, drawing attention to the fact that "[w]hen we try to think of plants on their own terms, in terms not dominated by human experience, we encounter a domain that is strange, difficult to describe, alien." (2) Objectification and anthropomorphisation are common strategies when trying to approach the "alien" plants descriptively (and are, ultimately, strategies of erasing their otherness). The alien, whatever shape it may take, is of course a literal and metaphorical feature that is closely associated with science fiction and an object of fascination and intellectual exploration for writers and readers of the genre alike. The past decade has seen a dramatic increase in critical thought engaging with plants, both in the form of scientific investigation in the field of biology and interdisciplinary studies of plants in the arts, literature and philosophy, in turn affecting the manner of representation, interrogation and interpretation of plants and plant-like beings in fiction. The inter- and trans-disciplinary nature of the study of plants in literary texts and other artistic productions is inherent in the fact that the disciplines of biology and botany have traditionally been concerned with plants from a scientific perspective.

The volume impressively illustrates that the commonalities between plant and human life may be greater than the differences. The first section, “Abjection”, opens with Jessica George’s essay on the weird tale as a suitable context for articulating anxieties concerning the status of the human. “Weird Flora: Plant Life in the Classic Weird Tale” analyses the predatory plants in texts by Algernon Blackwood, Arthur Machen and H.P. Lovecraft, “exploring the ways they weirdly destabilise anthropocentrism in the wake of evolutionary theory and anxieties around common descent, hybridity and degeneration” (12). The author shows that plants embody an absolute alterity in the texts discussed, such as Blackwood’s “The Willows” (1907) and Lovecraft’s “At the Mountains of Madness” (1936). At the same time, they grapple with “the disturbing notion that the radically Other body of the plant may also be our own” (17). Through their flouting of distinctions between animate and inanimate, monstrously hybrid plants call into question seemingly natural, anthropocentric ways of looking at the world. The concept of hybridity and of crossing species boundaries is a theme in almost every essay of the volume, and George points out that “[t]he notion that a trace of the plant remains within the human is a recurring one in critical plant studies” (23).

In the second section, “Affinity”, T.S. Miller’s “Vegetable Love: Desire, Feeling and Sexuality in Botanical Fiction” traces the interconnection between plants and human desire since the pre-modern era and the question of whether plants can feel and desire themselves, exploring how a “convergence of human sexuality and plant sexualities overturns the familiar and the comfortable in ways that can hold either promise or threat” (107-108). The essay intends to “[b]ridge the history of emotions and the emerging discipline of critical plant studies” (107). The author traces the link between female sexuality and carnivorous plants from the eighteenth century, pointing to “a large and varied tradition of botanical fiction engaging with sex and sexuality” (110) which is often inherently associated with transgression and, in particular, with the notion of female sexuality as transgressive. Communion with plants awakens rather than stifles human sexual desire in Boyd’s *The Pollinators of Eden*; however, nonhuman desire is always connected with a form of violence, and thus portrayed as inherently transgressive. The author compares the earlier novel with Pat Murphy’s 1985 short story “His Vegetable Wife”, which portrays the rape of the titular vegetable wife

by the man who bought and grew her, and her revenge, creating “a teeming site of resistance to the subordination of plants [that] lies in recent feminist discourses” (116).

The third and final section, “Accord”, includes Alison Sperling’s essay “Queer Ingestions: Weird and Sporous Bodies in Jeff VanderMeer’s Fiction”, returning to the Weird as a central aesthetic mode in science fiction writing. Sperling works with a definition of weird embodiment as “evocative of possible reconfigurations of intimacy, embodiment and weird reproductions, while also marking moments and bodies that deconstruct standardised, heterogeneous, often Western notions of the self and of subject-hood” (195). Ingestion and inhalation of spores figure as modes of connection between self and other, between plants, fungi and humans, but also threaten the possible erasure of individuality.

Katherine E. Bishop’s “The Botanical Ekphrastic and Ecological Relocation” considers instances of ekphrasis in both a classically weird tale, Algernon Blackwood’s “The Man Whom the Trees Loved”, and Jeff VanderMeer’s New Weird in the novel *Annihilation* of the *Southern Reach* trilogy. She moreover examines the botanical ekphrasis in Ursula K. Le Guin’s epistolary story “The Diary of the Rose” (1974) and William Gibson’s short story “Fragments of a Hologram Rose” (1977), while referring back to various other contributions in the volume. “The Man Whom the Trees Loved” (1912) features the “portrait” of a cedar that “queries the nature of plants, psychologically as well as physiologically, leading to a revelation that puts natural taxonomies and social echelons in conjunction, dislocating sightlines of imperial power.” (216) In “The Diary of the Rose”, the protagonist’s encounter with a hyperrealistic rose projected in the mind of one of the political prisoners whose thoughts she is attempting to penetrate in the name of the regime she serves leads to an ekphrastic epiphany.

In its multifacetedness, the collection of essays maintains a sense of unity and balance, providing inspiring perspectives in its engagement with plants in science fiction.

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Arleen IONESCU, Maria MARGARONI (eds.), *Arts of Healing: Cultural Narratives of Trauma*. London: Rowman & Littlefield International Ltd, 2020. 281 p. ISBN: 978 1786610973.

In the early 2000s, Joan Didion wrote in her bestseller *The Year of Magical Thinking*: “So many roads once; now so many cul de sacs”. If life once appeared as a vast and infinite world, full of endless possibilities, the unexpected death of her husband claustrophobically narrowed down the horizon to a still, motionless and immutable point, a symbol of what once used to be there before her eyes, and now was eternally lost. This is exactly the power of trauma: as the etymological sense of the word suggests (from the Greek τραῦμα, -ατος: “wound”), life gets permanently changed and, quite simply, just like scars – which may one day heal, but are sempiternal symbols of past suffering – it will never be the same again. *Arts of Healing* deals with the concept of trauma, but the scope of Ionescu and Margaroni’s approach is much wider: their analysis is not limited to the individual and private experience of pain (so-called “grief”), as in contemporary Trauma Studies, much attention is given to both personal experiences and to communal ones, whilst the focus remains on the cultural response people – or, more often than not, minorities – produce in the face of the greatest historical and political atrocities.

The fundamental starting point of this volume is Freud’s method of treatment of both traumatic and war neurosis. In *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, he deemed WWI’s shellshocked veterans’ melancholia to be a compulsive repetition, since – according to him – those patients that re-lived past traumatic events through the act of remembrance (usually nightmares) narcissistically identified themselves with the lost objects. To start the healing process, one had to gain critical distance from the traumatic event in order to start actively engaging with the present. Hence, in his opinion, the process of mourning was the pivotal moment that would firstly allow his patients to process former traumas, to “work through it” and, later on, to successfully leave the past behind and start a new life.

However, contemporary Trauma Studies not only derive from Freud's psychoanalysis, but are also the consequence of the communal experience of the Holocaust. The collective trauma resulting from WWII determined the existence of a new kind of suffering which could not be resolved through Freud's process of mourning. As Gabriele Schwab has argued, just through the public act of retelling of one's own experiences, people could start the difficult process of healing. Yet, if on one hand the historical accounts dealing with the testimonies of Holocaust trauma were regarded positively, the corresponding artistic representations were at first described in negative terms, since they appeared to be recreating a skewed and trivialising image of the Holocaust itself. However, by the turn of the century, scholars started to realise the power that the act of verbalisation of past pains held: these narratives were able to voice both victims and direct and indirect bystanders' repressed feelings. As Ionescu and Margaroni underscore, "the transformation of traumatic memory into narrative memory was not only necessary but part of the gift of psychoanalysis, known under the name of the 'talking cure'" (xvi). In that sense, traumatic memory turns into narrative memory and, in so doing, the "dismembered self" can start the process of healing through the piecing together of a coherent narrative of one's own past.

Taking its cue from where classical trauma theory stopped, this volume aims to find "a resolution to the endurance of trauma" (xvii). As the title indicates, the main focus of this book is on the cultural narratives surrounding different practices of healing, both literary and non-literary, which are interpreted and studied through the lens of critical and cultural theory, psychoanalysis, philosophy, literature, visual arts, film studies, gender and queer studies. Even though some contributors are more reluctant to admit the possibility of total recovery from the experience of a traumatic event, special emphasis is placed overall on the capacity humans have to process and heal from trauma through the creation of art – be it filmmaking, as in the case of Marguerite Duras' *Hiroshima Mon Amour* (1959) or Roberto Benigni's *Life is Beautiful* (1997); be it writing, as in the case of Chloé Delaume's memoirs and novels or Alison Bechdel's graphic novel *Fun Home* (2006); or even art installations, such as those by Marjan Teeuwen and Doris Solacedo. Even when complete healing is not contemplated, the artistic product – resulting from the memory of a past traumatic experience – is

considered to be therapeutic. As a matter of fact, the artistic creation and the act of remembering go hand in hand, since they both aim “at the creation of new worlds out of older resources material” (xxv). In so doing, art opens up “the vicious cycle of trauma into the temporal work of memory” (xxiv): the interweaving of multiple temporal planes – past and present ones – has indeed “the potential to free us to think further about multiple temporalities in the present” (198), hence to start the mending process of the inflicted wound.

Arts of Healing is thematically divided into three parts. The first, titled “Holocaust Trauma and the Ambivalence of Healing”, deals with the importance of the Holocaust experience in the development of Trauma Studies, whilst also attempting to distance itself from its strict “disciplinary imaginary”. The second, “Mass Trauma, Art and Healing Politics of Place”, analyses communal practices of memorialisation, whilst insisting on the transcultural trend that characterises current Trauma Studies, for they engage with political discourses regarding contemporary scenes of violence, war and tragedy. Lastly, the third part, “Intimate Healing”, although adopting a psychoanalytic approach, considers private responses both to collective traumas and to personal traumatic experiences. In the words of Ionescu and Margaroni, “the collection opens up the aporetic narratives that have dominated trauma studies to alternative possibilities and conceptions of the future, fostering a broad interrogative and interdisciplinary dialogue in order to develop unfamiliar approaches to the psychic crisis produced by trauma” (xxx).

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Éric DAYRE et Florence GODEAU (dir.), *D'après Flaubert*. Paris : Éditions Kimé, 2021, 309 p. ISBN : 978 2380720037

Ce recueil d'essais, qui aborde la réception internationale de Flaubert, constitue une exploration de l'espace dans lequel « la littérature *après lui* et *d'après lui* » (8) peut s'inscrire. Divers concepts concernant la réception y sont présents – l'actualisation, l'adaptation, le déplacement, le pastiche thématique, la réécriture, la réplique, etc. –, mais Éric Dayre et Florence Godeau ont opté pour un panorama d'interprétations multiples, créatrices à différents degrés, issues de lectures, directes et indirectes, de l'œuvre de Flaubert. Les dix-neuf articles réunis en quatre chapitres examinent le rayonnement de l'auteur à travers le monde (Angleterre, Brésil, États-Unis, Grèce, Pays-Bas, Pologne, Portugal, Roumanie, Russie, Slovaquie, Suède et Tunisie), dans le roman, la nouvelle, le théâtre, la bande-dessinée, le cinéma et la musique.

Certains articles abordent l'*après Flaubert* sur la base de la réception critique ou stylistique de certains auteurs, comme Vladimir Nabokov ou l'auteur néerlandais Willem Brakman. D'autres articles entendent *d'après Flaubert* de façon assez large. Une admiration plutôt impressionniste peut donner naissance à une ou plusieurs œuvres chez des auteurs et artistes s'inspirant de leur perception d'un ouvrage en particulier ou de l'auteur en général. Ainsi les réécritures roumaines de *Madame Bovary* de Mihail Sadoveanu sont-elles nées d'une reconnaissance d'un milieu provincial et d'une empathie envers les personnages féminins. Entre 1868 et 1918, en Russie, Flaubert s'avère une icône née d'un fantasme érotique collectif. La femme lisant Flaubert y devient « une figure récurrente de la femme tentatrice, mais aussi tentée » (233) comme, par exemple, dans le récit d'Alekseï Boudichtchev, *La Conscience réveillée*. Les attentes d'un lectorat, pas obligatoirement lecteur de Flaubert mais familier des stéréotypes qui se rattachent à son œuvre, peuvent donner naissance à une production littéraire mimétique.

Il peut aussi s'agir d'une réaction, comme chez l'autrice suédoise, Victoria Benedictsson, qui se positionne en partie contre Flaubert à cause du déterminisme qu'elle perçoit concernant le rôle de la femme, proposant une alternative au bovarysme en permettant à son héroïne de se libérer à l'intérieur du mariage. Comme d'autres auteurs, elle se sert

de l'art « pour véhiculer un message important concernant la situation socio-économique contemporaine » (55) et ne semble pas saisir le projet de Flaubert qui est de sublimer le réel par le biais de l'art. Julian Barnes, lui, le saisit pleinement et explore avec érudition les choix esthétiques du « maître » dans son *Perroquet de Flaubert*, déconstruisant le texte flaubertien, parfois avec humour, pour parvenir à s'en émanciper et « laisser entendre une voix singulière » (142).

Les bandes dessinées reflètent la notion de co-auctorialité qui surgit dans la recontextualisation d'un classique. Ici, *Salammbô*, de Philippe Druillet (trois volumes parus dès 1980), album de science-fiction devenu jeu vidéo, puis spectacle multimédia, entre autres manifestations, et *Gemma Boverly* de Posy Simmonds, album paru en anglais en 1999 puis traduit à l'écran par Anne Fontaine. Ces ouvertures assez radicales constitueraient un « dialogue » (100) avec Flaubert. Il arrive que ces adaptations s'adressent à un jeune lectorat, ce qui implique un travail de modulation important, qui s'amplifie en fonction de l'espace culturel, comme dans le cas de jeunes lecteurs arabes qu'on initie ainsi à Flaubert.

Se présentent aussi des « procédures méta-discursives » (101), comme dans *Val Abraham* (1993), film de Manoel de Oliveira qui n'a pas lu *Madame Bovary* mais en commande une adaptation romanesque (qu'il lit en diagonale) afin d'en tirer une version contemporaine filmée au Portugal, dans laquelle il introduit des bovarèmes, motifs thématiques et narratifs du mythe littéraire d'Emma, tout en en subvertissant d'autres. Parmi les autres versions cinématographiques, celle de Vincente Minelli (*Madame Bovary*, 1949) appartient au genre hollywoodien, le « Woman's Film », représentant des femmes tourmentées, basculant constamment de la réalité au fantasme. Comme chez Oliveira, la voix off, masculine, s'y approprie l'expression du vécu de l'héroïne, mais ici un sophisme pathétique apparaît à travers les miroirs révélant la duperie de la subjectivité. L'illusion peut aussi naître de la perspective d'autres cadres, comme les fenêtres dans *La Fille de Ryan* de David Lean (1970) qui confirment l'aspect donquichottesque du personnage dans un contexte culturel différent (l'occupation britannique de l'Irlande durant la Première Guerre mondiale).

En ce qui concerne les adaptations musicales, elles semblent s'éloigner encore davantage de l'original et la référence peut même s'avérer « contre-productive, douteuse, contingente, voire inutile » (161). Ainsi,

d'Emma Bovary en chansons ne demeure que l'icône. Cependant, il n'en va pas nécessairement de même pour l'opéra, comme dans *l'Hérodiade* de Massenet (1881) qui respecte sa référence sur de nombreux points essentiels. L'espace temporel entre les œuvres de même que les contraintes de genre expliquent ces variations de « fidélité », comme lorsque le théâtre s'empare de l'œuvre romanesque. Bruno Lara Resende propose une *Madame Bovary* (Rio de Janeiro, 2015) en seize scènes basées sur des morceaux choisis, dans un décor dépouillé où le texte domine, mais où l'ordre des événements est renversé et les personnages se partagent la narration transposée en dialogues. Certains récepteurs, à la fois critiques et romanciers, rassemblent tous ces aspects dans leur propre écriture, comme l'auteur polonais Antoni Sygietyński qui, dans *Sur les rochers du Calvados* (1884), d'après *Madame Bovary*, applique les principes narratifs flaubertiens (impersonnalité, contrepoint...) qu'il a commentés en tant que critique littéraire.

À la lecture de ce recueil, on observe les variations selon les pays et les périodes où Flaubert exerce une influence. En Slovaquie, comme en Grèce, sa réception apparaît plus tardivement que dans d'autres pays européens, parmi des générations qui s'attachent à produire un roman de type nouveau inspiré de *L'Éducation sentimentale* (Pavel Vilikovsky, par exemple) ou de *Madame Bovary* (Alexis Stamatis, par exemple) – dans lequel les nouvelles Emma manifestent les prémices de leur indépendance.

Pour de nombreux auteurs, Flaubert a servi de tremplin sur lequel rebondir au gré de souvenirs admiratifs, perceptions approximatives, désirs d'émulation et recherche de signature originale. Cette hypertextualité permet, en facilitant son passage dans de nouveaux circuits de sens, à perpétuer l'héritage de Flaubert. En cette année du bicentenaire de la naissance de Flaubert, ce recueil offre un panorama remarquablement original de sa réception artistique et de son héritage européen en perpétuelle évolution.

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