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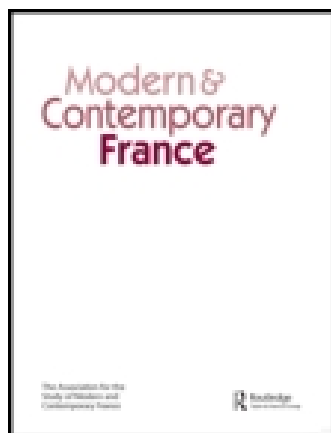
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L'Intertexte fin-de-siècle dans À la recherche du temps perdu de Marcel Proust. Les Carafes dans la Vivonne

ELENA LOZINSKY

Paris, Honoré Champion, 2013

200 pp., €40.00, pbk, ISBN: 978 2-74-532555-6

This is another volume of outstanding quality published by Honoré Champion, from the series 'Recherches Proustiennes' directed by Annick Bouillaguet. The author, Elena Lozinsky, who translated *Du côté de chez Swann* from French to Russian, appropriates Proust's imagery, 'les carafes dans la Vivonne' (the book's subtitle), as a metaphor of intertextuality: the intertextual relation in literature is compared to that between water and glass which repeats elements of transparency, freshness and reflection, like 'une allitération perpétuelle' (7).

Sufficiently informed by recent scholarship on the intricate relations between fin-de-siècle aesthetics (notably Decadence and Symbolism) and the evolution of Proustian aesthetics, Lozinsky extensively explores Proust's fin-de-siècle references and convincingly demonstrates how the fin-de-siècle spirit in contemporaneous art and literature is first assimilated and then overcome in Proust's work. The author's analysis frequently takes recourse to many avant-texts and paratexts of the *Recherche*, and extends to Proust's other writings including his correspondences, notebooks and translations of Ruskin. Some of Lozinsky's observations are developed precisely from Proust's decisions to cross out, conceal, replace and add his 'fin-de-siècle intertexts'.

The preliminary chapter contextualises Proust's fin-de-siècle intertexts and relates them to representative figures

from both the Symbolist and the Decadentist movements. The next five chapters then attempt to approach these intertexts *generically*: the author divides the multitude of Proust's fin-de-siècle references according to the cited works' original genres, and more importantly, Proust's attitude(s) towards them. Lozinsky carefully identifies a number of generic features characteristic of fin-de-siècle writings present in the *Recherche*. Chapter 1 surveys a few fin-de-siècle literary genres consciously developed from the existing traditions: novel within novel; lyricism; convergence between autobiography and private diary; and translation practice (symbolist versus academic). Chapter 2 examines Proust's insertions of the *drame symboliste*. One of the most original and audaciously speculative contributions is found in the last section of this chapter, where the author sets up several parallels between Proust's *Recherche* and Chekhov's play *La Mouette* on the theme of theatre. Both *La Mouette* and the theatrical scenario involving Rachel and Saint-Loup may have been inspired by Maeterlinck's *Sept Princesses*. Chapter 3 deals with Proust's poems in prose, a fin-de-siècle aesthetic *par excellence*. Lozinsky in this chapter is particularly interested in the process of Proust's integration of his previous pieces of poetic prose into the *Recherche*. The chapter also provides two case studies respectively entitled 'Trois clochers' and 'Églises, fleurs, arbres'. Chapter 4 focuses narrowly on the myth of Hesperides as popularly reinvented by fin-de-siècle writers and artists, which finds its articulation through such key characters as Bergotte. In Chapter 5, the author considers Proust's narrator's *critical* approach to

different artistic genres and intertexts itself to be a signature of fin-de-siècle aesthetics, as literature from this period has become increasingly autoreferential.

The author's fundamental approach—informed by Michael Riffaterre's *Production du texte*—revolves around the multi-layered 'functions' of individual references and allusions. The broader theoretical framework is established with references to Genette's *Palimpsestes* and to Bouillaguet's *Marcel Proust: Le Jeu intertextuel*. There is a good balance between accurate empirical findings and bold speculative materials. It is to be thoroughly recommended to scholars interested in not only Proust and European fin-de-siècle literature, but also intertextuality and comparative literature in general.

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Narratives of the French Empire: Fiction, Nostalgia, and Imperial Rivalries, 1784 to the Present

KATE MARSH

Plymouth, Lexington Books, 2013

150 pp., £49.95, hbk, ISBN: 978 0-73-917656-6

In this meticulously researched book Kate Marsh provides a fascinating exploration of French colonialism at three different historical moments. This study, which combines astute close readings of imperial narratives with detailed historical contextualisation, offers erudite insights into the examination of French colonial discourses. This concise

analysis focuses on Tahiti, Martinique and the French *comptoirs* of India, that is, on so-called 'vieilles colonies' whose control was secured well before the French Revolution. This return to the *Ancien Régime* is interesting: it adds historical depth to the investigation but, more crucially, perhaps, it also demonstrates that the colonies—their sometimes dubious memorialisation and management (Martinique and Tahiti being, after all, still under French rule)—are part of the Hexagon's here and now. Indeed, this last point is convincingly made in Chapter V, where it is argued that some of the obsessions that had fuelled the imperial imaginary—the nostalgia for lost grandeur (and the distinctively French rhetoric of 'smallness') and national rivalries—still inform the way in which France remembers its colonies and compares itself to other former imperial powers (and specifically the UK). Chapter I provides a useful reminder of the theoretical debates surrounding the examination of France's colonial past against the development of Francophone Postcolonial Studies in the Anglo-American academia and the controversies around the 'fracture coloniale' in France. Marsh rightly argues that this critical field is submitted to geographical priorities and that some territories are favoured over others: if Algeria and the French Caribbean (and therefore Martinique) usually get the most scholarly attention, Tahiti and the former French trading posts in India are often neglected in comparison. The next three chapters examine the way in which these three 'confettis d'empire' (a phrase coined by Jean-Claude Guillebaud to lampoon the colonial anachronism of the