

Nineteenth-Century French Studies

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Rey, Pierre Louis and Gisèle Séginger, eds. *Madame Bovary et les savoirs*. Paris: Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2009. Pp. 332. ISBN: 978-2-87854-446-6

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The nearly thirty essays of Rey and Séginger's *Madame Bovary et les savoirs* showcase the tremendous potential of the Atelier Bovary for Flaubert studies. With their rich and nuanced use of digital humanities tools, many of the essays in this volume engage *Madame Bovary* in ways previously impractical, if not outright impossible without the work of the Centre Flaubert in Rouen. At the same time, this implementation takes place without fanfare; the tools of the trade are simply put to excellent use, without advertisement or apology.

The plural of “savoirs” in the title of the collection encompasses a relatively broad range of topics, while yet retaining a common focus of epistemological inquiry into the creation, structure, and consumption (by Emma, by Flaubert, by readers) of Flaubert's novel. Small surprise then that this collection is both international in its authors and intensely cross-disciplinary in its content, bringing together examples of genetic criticism, ethnocriticism, and sociocriticism, liberally blended with scientific (in particular numerous essays on aspects of medical discourse) and historical elements. However, where the tight focus of some of the essays included might isolate them in the context of a journal article, this collection places them in fruitful dialogue. The collection is anchored around solid work by established voices in the field, while bringing in several new names and perspectives.

Yvan Leclerc opens up the first section, entitled “Modalités du transfert des savoirs,” with an essay cross-referencing modes of knowledge with modes of narrative, a system which he then applies to an analysis of Flaubert's writing process as reflected in the marginalia. Éric Le Calvez follows Flaubert's research in writing about the *piéd-botte*, demonstrating how Flaubert masters and then intentionally distorts scientific primary source material; this essay has interesting echoes in Juliette Azoulai's work on the “abricots” scene in the third section. Jean-Marie Privat uses the databases to follow the substitution of “voisin” for “ami” in later versions of the novel; neighbors impose a social contract that Emma refuses. Guillaume Drouet's “ethno-critique de Berthe” is likewise one of several excellent examples of the use of databases to support ethnocritical and sociological approaches to the text. Both Kazuhiro Matsuzawa and Séginger argue that major shifts in the collective consciousness are represented in *Madame Bovary*, but where Séginger finds a constant, progressive degradation of society, even in the absence of specific historical events, Matsuzawa brings in Tocqueville, finding a call for reform in Flaubert's scathing representation of injustice.

In the second section, “Le savoir des personnages et les savoirs du texte,” Emma becomes an active participant in the aesthetic transformation of the novel form. Marshall Olds opens the section with an essay on *Madame Bovary* as “un roman de mœurs contemporaines qui expose l'illusion esthétique du roman de mœurs” (112). Christèle Couleau argues that Emma uses projection to reinhabit a past from which she does not learn, calling into question period assumptions about the transmission of experiential knowledge through fiction. Rey investigates Emma's and Charles's misuse of codes of conduct. Stéphanie Dord-Crousle has not one but two thought-provoking essays in the collection, working first with the tension between thinking and knowing in Emma's character, followed by a genetic reading of the double function of religious texts as content and object.

Many of the essays in the third section highlight paradox; the organization of the collection thus follows an arc of ever-greater ambiguity. Göran Blix examines how Emma simultaneously exemplifies and rebels against her context, calling into question the sociological determinism of the Realist novel. Boris Lyon-Caen develops the idea of zones of indiscernability where the reader is suspended between knowing and not knowing with the result that “*Madame Bovary* tend à faire du réel un véritable *point aveugle*” (270).

Readers seeking to increase their understanding of nineteenth-century historical and intellectual contexts for *Madame Bovary* will find useful material in every section, including Anne Green on the Exposition of 1855, three essays in which Norioki Sugaya, Mitsumasa Wada, and Kayoko Kashiwagi examine *Madame Bovary* in relation to nineteenth-century ideas about vitalism, magnetism and phrenology, and organicism, and Florence Vatan’s excellent article on Flaubert’s and Baudelaire’s appropriation of hysteria as an allegory of poetic marginalization (220). *Boward et Pecuchet* is a constant shadow to this collection, more than any of Flaubert’s other works, to the degree that a reader unfamiliar with the later work may occasionally find it difficult to follow the frequent allusions.

In the fourth and shortest section “Épistémologie et esthétique de la réception,” Bertrand Marquer’s essay “Emma à la Salpêtrière...” develops an interesting angle on reception studies, examining how the fictional Emma Bovary was used as a “real life” case study for fin-de-siècle medical treatment for hysteria. The emphasis on reading as an authorial role (one that constantly alters as well as adds to previous attempts) found in Kevin Newmark’s essay “L’horizon du savoir: Emma Bovary comme modèle esthétique de la réception chez H. R. Jaus” is a nice conclusion to the collection, insofar as this position validates the efforts of the preceding three hundred pages.

Rey’s conclusion appropriately offers, rather than a definitive summary, a new question in the form of the paradox of Flaubert himself, who in letters to Mlle Leroyer de Chantepie naïvely idealized the scientific life as one of peaceful inquiry into knowable knowledge, while devoting the entire project of *Madame Bovary* to (and Rey cites Séginger here) “le divorce entre les mots et les choses, l’inadaptation des discours aux situations qui démentent la maîtrise discursive” (315). The selected bibliography at the end is concise but authoritative, and, as Rey suggests in the conclusion speaking of the collection’s retracing of Flaubert’s own research paths, diabolically invites further investigation.