



TRANS-

Revue de littérature générale et comparée

6 | 2008

Écriture et chaos

Allegory as imaginary past: transcendence and acting subject in Proust's *Recherche*

Alexandra Schamel



Electronic version

URL: <http://journals.openedition.org/trans/285>

DOI: 10.4000/trans.285

ISSN: 1778-3887

Publisher

Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle

Electronic reference

Alexandra Schamel, « Allegory as imaginary past: transcendence and acting subject in Proust's *Recherche* », *TRANS-* [Online], 6 | 2008, Online since 07 July 2008, connection on 13 May 2019. URL : <http://journals.openedition.org/trans/285> ; DOI : 10.4000/trans.285

This text was automatically generated on 13 May 2019.

Tous droits réservés

Allegory as imaginary past: transcendence and acting subject in Proust's *Recherche*

Alexandra Schamel

- 1 Great authors used to be the playground for all sorts of methodic turns which claim to find “new” aspects in someone's work. Proust is not an exception of this implicit rule of philological practice. For instance, lots of thoughts have been put in the question of his postmodern status favoring concepts of surface and permanent change, especially in the *roman d'Albertine*¹. These critics have developed a dominant narrative, whereas contrary aspects of essentiality and substance, however visible in Proust's writing, were often denied lock, stock and barrel; or were historicized as a mere episode of the textual genesis of the *Recherche*².
- 2 This study wants to contribute to a more balanced attitude which does justice to the immense universe of Proust's writing. With this aim, the reflection is dedicated to a quite humble rhetorical figure, the allegory. Allegory in Proust was analysed first and foremost by Jauss, Stierle and De Man, in fact as an element of art or painting³, whereas the discussion of essentiality was held apart. But there may well be some relations between the discourses of allegory and *essence*. This study supposes that allegory and its functionality are apt to reveal transcendental patterns in Proust. To understand these patterns, Proust's allegorical practice must be identified in connection with the transcendental paradigm, an analytical process which postulates a specific understanding of this very old anthropological device. Furthermore, the conception of the subject implied in the transcendental function of allegory shall be illustrated. So we will approach the problem of the different conceptions of subject produced by metaphysical thought. But let's first look at the history which illustrates allegory as an indicator of the relation of man to the transcendental sphere.

Allegory and the transcendental connection

- 3 Allegory and allegorical figures as a mode of representing the transcendental sphere and as central element in the symbolic universe of medieval mind lost its range with the rise of the subject in Renaissance philosophy: As a result of the reception of neoplatonism, the symbolic universe of the Middle Ages declined. In contrast to the Christians' assumption of a personal God, neoplatonists assumed God to be the indescribable One who does not retain himself in a divine sphere, but emanates over different grades downwards to the human soul and physical nature⁴. By adopting this model in main aspects, the romantic period developed a pantheism of all-love which propagated the union between nature, God, and the feeling subject⁵. This union operated as a refuge for the individual corresponding with "God nature", and in this way advancing to a quasi-divine genius. Before this background, romantic philosophers refused allegory not only for its "unnatural" structure, but first and foremost as a vehicle of objectivity which prevents intuitive subjective expression⁶.
- 4 This short historical survey illustrates allegory as an indicator of the relation of man to a transcendental or objective sphere. The study will now analyze the rediscovery of this functional framework in modern French literature, namely in Proust's *Recherche*. The question is: How does allegory work in Proust's *Œuvre* as a vehicle of transcendental patterns, especially in the resurrections of the past which claim an "essence" of time? And furthermore, as models of transcendence are always a medium of a certain model of the subject: Which concepts of subjectivity are implied in this allegorical practices? And what are the consequences for interpretation?
- 5 In order to understand the sort of allegorical practice which the *Recherche* actualizes within the described functional frame, we must go back to the decisively positive new dealing with allegory at the end of the romantic period and in early modernism in France, namely in the work of Charles Baudelaire.

Baudelaire and allegory as *genre spirituel*

- 6 Baudelaire introduces allegory in the *Paradis artificiels* as one of the most original and natural forms of poetry. It is the reign of imagination which gives back to allegory its legitimate status, that of a *genre spirituel*⁷. This re-valorisation in the context of imaginative forces and a spiritual quality is integrated in the functional frame of allegory and the paradigm of objectivity. In fact, late romanticism and early modernism reveal a fundamental change in the metaphysical situation, namely in the relation of man to nature once adored as inhabited by God. After industrialization had gone forward in the first half of the 19th century, machines were invading nature and corrupting its quasi-religious integrity. The romantic dreamer who felt connected with "God nature" could no longer be satisfied with reflecting his very soul in the "face" of nature, its landscape-formations and meteorological movements. This transcendental function is lost undeniably, man is alienated and even antagonized to nature and isolated from the previous spiritual sphere. The response is a retirement to his inner world, a process which activates the imaginative forces. In this sense of imaginative internalization, the outside world is turned into a mere symbol or allegory of the inner sphere⁸. In fact, Baudelaire can be regarded as one of the first exponents of this fundamental shift which

signifies the very beginning of modern European literature. The poem *Le coucher du soleil romantique* associates the sun-set of the real natural sun with the beginning night after with God vanished or hid forever⁹, whereas *Paysage* – illustrating the implied contrary movement – articulates the emergence or discovery of an inside sphere containing its own quasi-natural anatomy: “Et quand viendra l'hiver aux neiges monotones, / Je fermerai partout portières et volets Pour bâtir dans la nuit mes féeriques palais. / [...] je serai plongé dans cette volupté / D'évoquer le Printemps avec ma volonté, / de tirer un soleil de mon coeur, et de faire / De mes pensers brûlants une tiède atmosphère.¹⁰”. The henceforth hidden sun of extensive nature is re-generated as an icy inner sun¹¹. In this context, allegory works as a scheme of imagination which recreates the lost outside as an artificial inside-world manifesting a merely aesthetic reality. Like an artificial ideal¹² this inner reality provides restitution for the lost real transcendence by valorising the divine capacity of imagination, that is the “imagination créatrice¹³”. So allegory seems to be a vehicle of however regained, merely aesthetic objectivity and functions in a “genre spirituel¹⁴”. This process of de-personalization intended by Baudelaire is also firmly influenced by rigid gnostical and catholic attitudes of the “fallen nature” and of the body as prison of the soul¹⁵.

Proust's allegories of the past

- 7 To introduce the term of allegory in the context of transcendental patterns in Proust's *Recherche*, let's first have a look at the early outlines of the famous episode of the Madeleine in *Contre Sainte-Beuve*¹⁶: The draft of the Madeleine-experience is conceived in contrast to a transcendently fulfilling experience with nature in Stendhal's *Le Rouge et le Noir* which borrows the romantic intimacy between the great individual and idyllic nature: The forests of Vergy, Verrières and the impressive rocks near Lake Como are observed and still work as the mirror or counter-part to the human soul feeling itself confirmed in this euphoric transcendental union between God, nature and the self¹⁷. The self is part of the great universe and transcendently satisfied. The experience of resurrection of the past, however, illustrates a different transcendental dynamic: By dipping a piece of cake in tea and tasting it, the individual undergoes a vision of inner gardens and alleys which grow out of the cup of tea like japanese paperflowers. In this setting, exteriority has lost its privileged position and only releases the impulse for the imaginative creation of a completely internal world which is that of the own past transfigured, unfolded in a curious ontological material. The exterior object operates as a generative symbol of this “new-old” remembered world. In this sense, the imaginative transformation seems to afford a restitution of personal past, which is re-born and transfigured. Can we then speak of an allegorical practice similar to Baudelaire's allegory, restored as a vehicle of gaining a transcendental sphere, but this time not as paradise lost, but as the lost paradise of childhood? Supposing this functional connection, allegory and time will have entered a new relation. The question would be: How can allegory be understood as a literary device of regaining the past?
- 8 In order to legitimate the “mémoire créatrice” in Proust as an allegorical practice, Walter Benjamin proposes a highly reflected solution. Benjamin understands allegory as a scheme of organising the relation between death, past, forgotten worlds and the living afterwards (*Nachleben*), remembrance and memory. Allegory recreates the past as an imaginative, figural pattern which in this way gains a second, magic presence that never

existed before, yet is interspersed with death¹⁸. The described mnemonic function of allegory is illustrated by the figure of the collector (*Sammler*, *Sammler-Allegoriker*) in the *Passagen-Werk* : Assuming the ontological gap between meaning and material, the collector in the process of allegorizing lends some meaning to the object : “Und für den wahren Sammler wird in diesem Systeme jedwedes einzelne Ding zu einer Enzyklopädie aller Wissenschaft von dem Zeitalter, der Landschaft, der Industrie, dem Besitzer von dem es herkommt. ¹⁹”. So the vision of the collector unfolds the object to a whole world, a space made from text²⁰. A whole historical period is hidden in the single object and must be unfolded like a papyrus. Finally, Benjamin refers to the ontological material of unfolded, remembered time. This is compared to a surreal region where different temporal levels are combined, fragments of once-upon-a-time and actual presence are interwoven to form a curious “new” appearance. Benjamin indicates this appearance as a dream of time (*Traumleben*), which has an obvious non-representative, performative character²¹.

- 9 Benjamin's approach to allegory and allegorical practice offers analytical traces for Proust's experience of the resurrection of the past: like Benjamin's allegory, the dynamic of the *mémoire involontaire* is metonymical: The whole of Combray emerges from the cup of tea, unfolded, paper-born, and here we find the second connection concerning the ontological integrity of text : The past is exclusively regained on paper, that is to say in or as scripture. This second connection provides the decisive methodical link to the concept of subjectivity implied in Proust's allegorical restitution of the past (see below). Finally, Benjamin's allegory consists in a creative intermingling of different temporal spheres in the *Zeit(t)raum*, and thus offers a surreal or performative index of the resurrected world in Proust.

The aesthetic threshold – concepts of the subject

- 10 Which concept of the subject does the allegorical restitution of time imply in Proust? To answer this question, we must clarify the conditions of the restitutive mechanism : In order for the program of the allegorical resurrection of the past to work, there must be an ontological exclusivity of the aesthetic inner being *in no way connected* with the inferior exteriority. This ontological difference presupposes a frontier, a threshold (*Schwelle*) on which the inferior outside sphere is transformed into a transcendental inner reality, an imaginary pattern of the individual past. The notion of exteriority and internal vision already suggests one possible reflection of the nature of this frontier, namely that of an inside- and outside-space. A philosophical trace can serve us here to find the relevant literary structure which reflects the nature of the frontier in topographical terms : Cornélius Castoriadis is interested in analysing the being (*Sein*) especially of imaginative products.²² Imagination is part of the vivid (*das Lebendige*). The vivid as a given “dynamic” being can only be a “being-for-itself” (*Für-sich*) constituting its own world. This world can only exist in separation from its surroundings. With respect to these topographical categories, Castoriadis associates the ontological integrity of the vivid with the seclusiveness (*Abgeschlossenheit*) of a ball. The ontological difference, respectively the ontological exclusivity to which allegory attests, can be visualized during this ball²³. In fact, Proust in succession to Baudelaire seems to reflect the ontological frontier as a topographical phenomenon which approaches the ball, namely the ball as a sort of monad. This instance of aesthetic threshold fixes the notion of the subject in a

topographical system of exclusive interiority and inferior exteriority. So the self is constructed as a closed or hermetically sealed space governed by imagery and its transcendental animations, the allegories.

Interiority and exteriority

- 11 With a slight modification of Benjamin's allegorical remembrance of historical periods, we can assert that the resurrection of the past in Proust presupposes an already existing pattern, that is a saved individual experience in former time and space which alone can set in motion the metonymical machinery of the *mémoire involontaire*. A concrete notion of this pattern is given in *Du côté de chez Swann* in the part *Combray*: 'Marcel' refers to the first everyday-impressions of his childhood and youth in Combray: the features of the landscape with its characteristic odour of whitethorn, the sound of steps on the gravel lasted over the years, carved into his very soul as the "gisements profonds de [s]on sol mental" on which he is still going forward: "comme aux terrains résistants sur lesquels je m'appuie encore"²⁴. The following text indicates that these first impressions of everyday-life of once-upon-a-time form the patterns that dominate his perception of world and nature afterwards: "soit que la réalité ne se forme que dans la mémoire [...] Le côté de Méséglise avec ses lilas, ses aubépines, [...] le côté de Guermantes avec ses rivières à têtards, [...] ont constitué à tout jamais pour moi la figure des pays où j'aimerais vivre [...]". His actual reality as well as human beings are all integrated into the imaginative scheme of remembrance of the time in Combray: "Car souvent j'ai voulu revoir une personne sans discerner que c'était simplement parce qu'elle me rappelait une haie d'aubépines [...]". These patterns deepened in his very soul are also characterised as transcending reality: "Mais par là même aussi, et en restant présents en celles de mes impressions d'aujourd'hui auxquelles ils peuvent se relier, ils leur donnent des assises, de la profondeur, une dimension de plus qu'aux autres. Ils leur ajoutent aussi un charme, une signification qui n'est que pour moi."²⁵
- 12 The described patterns are the basis for the allegorical-imaginative transformation and transfigured restitution of personal past. They work over the years, they last forever, as is clearly mentioned in the text ("traverser tant d'années successives", "survivre", "constitué à tout jamais"²⁶). This idea of being saved in deepness bears notions of vessels, inter alia in *Le Temps retrouvé*: "[...] le geste, l'acte le plus simple reste enfermé comme dans mille vases clos dont chacun serait rempli de choses d'une couleur, d'une odeur, d'une température absolument différentes."²⁷ The topological model as a literary pattern derived from the aesthetic threshold also regulates the notion of the subject: In *Contre Sainte-Beuve*, we find the poetological reflection of this topological model in the notion of the *moi profond*²⁸ of the poet or writer closing himself off into a little room with no relation to the outside sphere: "Mais il [Sainte-Beuve] continuera à ne pas comprendre ce monde unique, fermé, sans communication avec le dehors qu'est l'âme du poète."²⁹ This monadological notion of the subject being for itself in its own world of imagination and aesthetic productivity also motivates the conceptions of selfness in the *Recherche*: 'Marcel' compares his inner world with spatial halls³⁰, with a laboratory producing imaginative pictures of beloved Albertine³¹. But we may also discover the topological model in a wider range of varieties organising the fictive world: it models interiority as a hiding-place of secret and ideality, of dense aesthetic atmosphere, and finally of fascinating otherness which always advances to an object of desire: Gilberte and her

home, the culture and life-style of her family, are all included in her house. Its precious and enchanting atmosphere fascinates young Marcel and appears like a treasure³². In a similar way, the topological model dominates the erotic dynamic between Swann and Odette: the more secretive Odette's life appears to be, with unknown actions and lovers, the more interest she receives from Swann. He knocks on her door in the Rue Lapérouse³³ – a scene which crystallizes this fascinating interior otherness which contains a secret and higher, at last quasi-transcendental reality, that of Time³⁴.

- 13 On the one hand, we assert that the aesthetic threshold implied in the allegorical practice to save eternity or transcendence is reflected as a topological phenomenon in Proust: fascinating rooms of otherness, the *moi profond* working in its aesthetic world. On the other hand, Proust's *Recherche* illustrates in main passages the failure of the closure model. In *La Prisonnière*, Albertine lives in 'Marcel 's house in Paris, respecting his desire to know all about her life. But his attempt to fix her enigmatic self and to ban it in an inner world fails: Does not his beloved lose all her charm and beauty and decay in this artificial atmosphere of a prison, a victim of the allegorical-imaginative assimilation of her master?³⁵ And the closed sphere of the Guermantes, once a place of privilege and the historical ideal of nobility for young ' Marcel ', turns into a plane region which the protagonist is able to invade without further efforts, as he is accepted as one of the best friends of the family³⁶. So we may ask: Is the topological model of the subject the only concept connected to the program of saving transcendence by allegory, or are there others?

The transcendental character of writing and the inner book

- 14 To answer this question, let's look again at the scene of the Madeleine. In fact, the reborn Combray growing out of the cup of tea is compared to Japanese paperflowers which unfold themselves in water. This comparison is decisive and links the passage to the end of the whole novel in *Le Temps retrouvé* : After the sequence of resurrections in the courtyard of the prince of Guermantes and in his library, ' Marcel ' is asking for the means to save the essence of time which he experienced during these extraordinary moments.³⁷ After dozens of pages, he finds the answer: "Or, ce moyen qui me paraissait le seul, qu'était-ce autre chose que faire une œuvre d'art?"³⁸ Proust establishes an exclusive connection between writing and saving transcendence. The act of writing seems to be the only possibility of fixing the essence. So transcendence presupposes the acting subject, in the broader sense as the acting body. This conditional frame underlies the following fearful reflections about a sudden accident, a weakening disease which would destroy him and finish his life, before its essence could be saved in art³⁹. The aesthetic threshold, which Baudelaire already fortified into a monadic wall containing and keeping the ideal safe, receives in Proust a corporeal signature and recurs as the very limit set by the finite body. So we reach the subject implied in the allegorical restitution of the past as an acting one which exists apart from the topological model.
- 15 The relevance of the subject in its pragmatic dimension, having a body, living and acting in time and space as the condition of transcendence is implicitly asserted in the concept of the inner book which appears at the end of *Le Temps retrouvé*. As we have already seen above, the inner book works as the very script for the allegorical transformations of

outside reality by the *rapport unique*⁴⁰. The last-one means the highly individual combination of outside impressions graven in the soul at former times. Reality has left or impressed its inimitable traces upon each human being. But the fact of the inner book, that is of the “transcendental material”, obviously presupposes the pragmatic subject. For it's exactly the former pragmatic data in their complex combinations which will be unfolded in the resurrection by the metonymical dynamic of allegory : For example, the morning in Combray was once enjoyed with the sound of St. Hilaire, voilà the *rapport unique* impressed in the inner book. And when ' Marcel ' hears another sound of a spire, the *rapport unique* is mobilized and initiates the metonymical unfolding of the whole of Combray reappearing in a dream-like surreal figure which deforms the real surroundings and assimilates them in the allegorical scheme of the early impression. And it's also the fact of the uniqueness of the body, (of someone's very own life, of his unique soul) which leads to the asserted exclusiveness of the act of writing: “J'étais la seule personne capable de le faire. Pour deux raisons: avec ma mort eût disparu non seulement le seul ouvrier mineur capable d'extraire ces minerais, mais encore le gisement lui-même⁴¹”.

Reading and performance of the *atmosphère* of once-upon-a-time

- 16 According to the narrator, the transcendence of time (' Marcel 's past) is interwoven in the written text. So scripture constitutes a transcendental reality, and by this can be qualified as performative in the sense of Austin and Searle⁴².
- 17 Starting from this notion of performativity, we can approach another aspect of performance. The fact of transcendental writing at last focuses the reception of the text. If essence is interwoven in the text by writing, this essence is only accessible by reading. In fact, Proust ingeniously managed to vivify time, by connecting it to the actual process of reading. So interpretation has to focus on the process of reception as a decisive analytical category. Respecting the crucial character of the inner book as the whole of the unique combinations of former outside impressions, the written text as the decoded and exteriorized inner book is transcendental precisely in these curious relations or allegorical transformations which the reader has to find or to re-decode. Regained time features an enigmatic dream-like physiognomy in constituting new, uncommon relations. It is especially with respect to *style* as a metaphor that implements the *rapport unique* of the resurrections in the text that there exist some allegorical-metaphorical relations in the *Recherche* which invite the reader to an adventure of endless semantic decoding, putting into effect or staging the form of time as an eternal presence, a great experience of resurrection of the past in the presence, glimmering over thousands of pages.
- 18 To illustrate this transcendental process in reading, let's have a look at the resurrection of Balbec in *Le Temps retrouvé* : The very moment stages Balbec in a new, curious, even dream-like anatomy which realizes the *rapport unique* in a bizarre allegorical transformation of life (thus performing some pages of the inner book of ' Marcel ') : The vision released by the stiff napkin brings back the salted air of Balbec, but in the form of a female bosom; furthermore, the servant of the prince arrives in this scenery and opens a window to the beach, where the friends of that time re-appear and invite ' Marcel ' to a walk. And the napkin unfolds the whole sea dazzling like the feathers of a peacock⁴³.

These allegorical transformations that invade actual and past time challenge the knowing reader to decode them: Balbec was the place where 'Marcel' meets Albertine, and so receives an erotic form, and the peacock indicates the fascination for the Guermites often associated with birds. The transcendental character of reading presupposes the process of reading and also recognizing these different elements woven together in the resurrection. So Time is inserted in the time of reading, and gains a medium in the reading-process.

- 19 The bizarre regions of regained time can be connected with Proust's term of *atmosphère* introduced in the essay about Gérard de Nerval in *Contre Sainte-Beuve*⁴⁴. A text transporting the *au-delà* stages an *atmosphère* of dream and remembrance approaching the unutterable quality of the *au-delà*. *Atmosphère* focuses the reader perceiving this *atmosphère*. The atmosphere of regained time is perceived as distinctive because it puts together different textual details that the reader has collected in special atmospheric regions of his reading, and which are now combined with atmospheric details known from other contexts. So the curious impression of time grows outwards in a surreal atmospheric pattern.

Conclusion

- 20 Starting from a short historical survey which proved the transcendental functionality of allegory since the Middle Ages, we found the rediscovery of this ancient functionality in (early) modern literature in France: In contrast to the aesthetic postulate of the romantics to express the very self in idyllic nature, Baudelaire restored allegory as part of his program of *surnaturalisme* to regain objective and transcendental regions lost in outside reality and antagonized nature. Allegory as *genre spirituel* restituted imaginatively the lost God. This functional frame continued in Proust. With the help of Benjamin, we could identify the metonymical dynamic of the resurrections as allegorical. So also in Proust, allegory brings back the paradise lost, but that of childhood and youth which is (re)generated in imaginative, surreal patterns of an individual past. This allegorical reconstitution by the imagining subject postulates an aesthetic threshold as a condition of allegorical restitution. The threshold is reflected in Proust on the one hand as a topographical phenomenon. So we can find the monadological model of interiority and exteriority which motivates the topology of the *Recherche* and develops the subject as *moi profond*. On the other hand, the threshold is marked as a corporeal one and so the topographical model is completed by a concept of transcendental acting. Before his death, 'Marcel' has to write his highly individual inner book, fixing the essence of time in scripture. The concept of transcendental writing marks the text as performative and focuses the process of reception and reading as performative as well. This process of reading creates a performative situation awakening the time incorporated in the text. In this situation of actualized reading, endless allegorical relations can be decoded by the reader in an experience similar to that of the resurrection of 'Marcel.'

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Baudelaire, Charles, *Les Fleurs du Mal*, Paris, Flammarion, 1991, p. 189.
- _____, "Le Gouvernement de l'imagination", *Les Curiosités esthétiques*, p. 324-330.
- _____, "L'Homme-Dieu", *Les paradis artificiels, Œuvres complètes*, Paris, Gallimard, 1961, p. 372-383.
- Benjamin, Walter: *Der Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*, Frankfurt, Suhrkamp, 1978, p. 155-160.
- _____, "Der Sammler", *Das Passagen-Werk*, I, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann, Frankfurt / Main, Suhrkamp, 1982, p. 269-280.
- Castoriadis, Cornélius, *Die Institution des Imaginären*, ed. by Alice Pechriggl, Karl Reitter, Wien, Turia & Kant, 1991.
- De Man, Paul, "Reading (Proust)", *Allegories of Reading, Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke and Proust*, London, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1988, p. 57-78.
- Doetsch, Hermann, *Flüchtigkeit, Archäologie einer modernen Ästhetik bei Baudelaire und Proust*, Tübingen, Narr, 2004.
- Eco, Umberto, *Kunst und Schönheit im Mittelalter*, München, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1991.
- Hegel, Johann, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, Erster und zweiter Teil, ed. by Rüdiger Bubner, Reclam, Stuttgart, 1971.
- Hess, Gerhard, "Landschaften des Ennui", *Die Landschaft in Baudelaires Fleurs du Mal*, Heidelberg, Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1953, p. 61-86.
- Jauss, Hans Robert, "Die Welt als galerie de figures symboliques und die Figurationen der unsichtbaren Zeit", *Zeit und Erinnerung in Marcel Proust's "A la Recherche du temps perdu"*, Heidelberg, Universitätsverlag, 1955, p. 152-166.
- Menke, Bettine, "Das Nach-Leben im Zitat – Benjamins Gedächtnis der Texte", *Gedächtniskunst: Raum – Bild – Schrift. Studien zur Mnemotechnik*, ed. by Anselm Haverkamp, Renate Lachmann, Frankfurt / Main, Suhrkamp, 1991, p. 74-110.
- Pauen, Michael: "Charles Baudelaire", *Dithyrambiker des Untergangs. Gnostizismus in Ästhetik und Philosophie der Moderne*, Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 1994, p. 95-100.
- Proust, Marcel, *Contre Sainte-Beuve, précédé de Pastiches et mélanges et suivi de Essais et articles*, Paris, Gallimard, 1971.
- _____, *Du côté de chez Swann*, Paris, Gallimard, 1987, p. 182.
- _____, *À l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*, Paris, Gallimard, 1987.
- _____, *La Prisonnière*, Paris, Gallimard, 1988.
- _____, *Le Temps retrouvé*, Paris, Gallimard, 1989.
- Stierle, Karl-Heinz: "Proust, Giotto und das Imaginäre", Boehm, Gottfried, *Modernität und Tradition*, München, Fink, 1985, p. 219-249.
- Warning, Rainer, *Proust-Studien*, München, Fink, 2000, p. 77-107.

Wirth, Uwe, "Der Performanzbegriff im Spannungsfeld von Illokution, Iteration und Indexikalität", *Performanz, Zwischen Sprachwissenschaft und Kulturwissenschaften*, ed. by Uwe Wirth, Frankfurt / Main, Suhrkamp, 2002, p. 9-60.

NOTES

1. Hermann Doetsch, *Flüchtigkeit, Archäologie einer modernen Ästhetik bei Baudelaire und Proust*, Tübingen, Narr, 2004.
2. Postmodern critics like Doetsch refuse essence or substance to be more than out-dated concepts of the oldest manuscripts of the Recherche. In this line of argument, the decisive conditional frame of the narrative dynamic of remembrance is regarded as the concept of open identity and permanent change, not as essentialities (yet integrated in this frame, too, for example the body.).
3. Hans Robert Jauss, "Die Welt als galleries de figures symboliques und die Figurationen der unsichtbaren Zeit", *Zeit und Erinnerung in Marcel Proust's "À la Recherche du temps perdu"*, Heidelberg, Universitätsverlag, 1955, p. 152-166.
- Karl-Heinz Stierle: "Proust, Giotto und das Imaginäre", Boehm, Gottfried, *Modernität und Tradition*, München, Fink, 1985, p. 219-249.
- Paul de Man, "Reading (Proust)", *Allegories of Reading, Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke and Proust*, London, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1988, p. 57-78.
4. Umberto Eco, *Kunst und Schönheit im Mittelalter*, München, Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, 1991, p. 192-193.
5. Rainer Warning, "Romantische Tiefenperspektivik und moderner Perspektivismus: Chateaubriand – Flaubert – Proust", *Proust-Studien*, München, Fink, 2000, p.11-33.
6. Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, *Vorlesungen über die Ästhetik*, Erster und zweiter Teil, ed. by Rüdiger Bubner, Reclam, Stuttgart, 1971, especially "Die Allegorie" in «Vergleichungen, welche in der Verbildlichung mit der Bedeutung den Anfang machen».
7. Charles Baudelaire, "L'Homme-Dieu", *Les paradis artificiels, Œuvres complètes*, Paris, Gallimard, 1961, p. 376.
8. Gerhard Hess, "Landschaften des Ennui", *Die Landschaft in Baudelaires Fleurs du Mal*, Heidelberg, Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1953, p.61-86.
9. Charles Baudelaire, "Le coucher du soleil romantique", *Les Fleurs du Mal*, Paris, Flammarion, 1991, p. 189.
10. Charles Baudelaire, "Paysage", *Les Fleurs du Mal*, Paris, Flammarion, 1991, p. 127.
11. Charles Baudelaire, "De profundis clamavi", *ibid.*, p. 81-82.
12. Charles Baudelaire, "Le poème du haschisch", *Les Paradis artificiels*, p. 349.
13. Charles Baudelaire, "Le Gouvernement de l'imagination", *Les Curiosités esthétiques*, p. 324-330.
14. Charles Baudelaire, "Le poème du haschisch", *Les paradis artificiels, Œuvres complètes*, Paris, Gallimard, 1961, p. 376.
15. Michael Pauen, "Charles Baudelaire", *Dithyrambiker des Untergangs. Gnostizismus in Ästhetik und Philosophie der Moderne*, Berlin, Akademie Verlag, 1994, p. 95-100.
16. Marcel Proust, "Projets de Préface", *Contre Sainte-Beuve, précédé de Pastiches et mélanges et suivi de Essais et articles*, Paris, Gallimard, 1971, p. 211-212.
17. Marcel Proust, "Notes sur Stendhal", *ibid.*, p. 655.
18. Walter Benjamin, *Der Ursprung des deutschen Trauerspiels*, Frankfurt / Main, Suhrkamp, 1978, p. 155-160.
19. Walter Benjamin, "Der Sammler", *Das Passagen-Werk*, I, ed. by Rolf Tiedemann, Frankfurt / Main, Suhrkamp, 1982, p. 271; see also: "an Bedeutung kommt ihm [dem Gegenstand] das zu, was

der Allegoriker ihm verleiht. [...] In seiner Hand wird das Ding zu etwas anderem [...] und es wird ihm Schlüssel zum Bereiche verborgenen Wissens [...]” s. Bettine Menke, “Das Nach-Leben im Zitat – Benjamins Gedächtnis der Texte”, *Gedächtniskunst: Raum – Bild – Schrift. Studien zur Mnemotechnik*, ed. by Anselm Haverkamp, Renate Lachmann, Frankfurt / Main, Suhrkamp, 1991, p. 76.

20. Bettine Menke, “Das Nach-Leben im Zitat – Benjamins Gedächtnis der Texte”, *Gedächtniskunst: Raum – Bild – Schrift. Studien zur Mnemotechnik*, ed. by Anselm Haverkamp, Renate Lachmann, Frankfurt / Main, Suhrkamp, 1991, p. 92.

21. Ibid., p. 91-92.

22. Cornélius Castoriadis, *Die Institution des Imaginären*, ed. by Alice Pechriggl, Karl Reitter, Wien, Turia & Kant, 1991, p. 7.

23. Ibid., p. 24.

24. Marcel Proust, *Du côté de chez Swann*, Paris, Gallimard, 1987, p. 182.

25. Ibid., p. 183.

26. Ibid., p. 182-183.

27. Marcel Proust, *Le Temps retrouvé*, Paris, Gallimard, 1989, p. 176.

28. Marcel Proust, *Contre Sainte-Beuve*, précédé de Pastiches et mélanges et suivi de Essais et articles, Paris, Gallimard, 1971, p. 224.

29. Ibid., p. 225.

30. Marcel Proust, *Du côté de chez Swann*, Paris, Gallimard, 1987, p. 45.

31. Marcel Proust, *À l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*, Paris, Gallimard, 1987, p. 421-422.

32. Ibid., p. 74-81.

33. Marcel Proust, *Du côté de chez Swann*, Paris, Gallimard, 1987, p. 269-272.

34. Marcel Proust, *À l'ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*, Paris, Gallimard, 1987, p. 130.

35. Marcel Proust, *La Prisonnière*, Paris, Gallimard, 1988, p. 162.

36. Marcel Proust, *Le Temps retrouvé*, Paris, Gallimard, 1989, p. 449-457.

37. Ibid., p. 182.

38. Ibid., p. 185.

39. Ibid., p. 341-351.

40. Ibid., p. 195-197.

41. Ibid., p. 342.

42. Uwe Wirth, “Der Performanzbegriff im Spannungsfeld von Illokution, Iteration und Indexikalität”, *Performanz, Zwischen Sprachwissenschaft und Kulturwissenschaften*, ed. by Uwe Wirth, Frankfurt / Main, Suhrkamp, 2002, p. 9-60.

43. Marcel Proust, *Le Temps retrouvé*, Paris, Gallimard, 1989, p. 173-174.

44. Marcel Proust, “Gérard de Nerval”, *Contre Sainte-Beuve*, précédé de Pastiches et mélanges et suivi de Essais et articles, Paris, Gallimard, 1971, p. 241-242.

ABSTRACTS

The article postulates allegory as a vehicle for « transcendental subjectivity » in Proust's *Recherche*. Similar to Baudelaire's *genre spirituel* this figure indicates an aesthetic threshold from which the lower outside sphere is transformed into a transcendental inner reality, an imaginary

pattern of the individual past. The focus of the present study is to define the nature of this threshold contextualizing it within philosophical conceptions of the subject.

AUTHOR

ALEXANDRA SCHAMEL

Born in Augsburg in 1973, studied comparative literature, French and history at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität (LMU) in Munich. She finished her studies in 2002 with a thesis about the picaresque novel in Spain and Great Britain, supervised by Werner von Koppenfels. The thesis was published by the *Martin Meidenbauer Verlagsbuchhandlung* in Munich in 2003. Alexandra Schamel worked as assistant teacher in Rennes and as freelance author in the publishing and cultural sector. Since 2007, she has been pursuing her doctoral thesis as a member of the *Promotionsstudiengang Literaturwissenschaft* at the LMU about « Subjective space and aesthetic threshold : the changing function of allegory from Baudelaire's spiritual figure to Proust's mnemonics ». Her advisor is Bernhard Teuber