

Band 12: Stadtdispositive der französischen Literatur

1. Faszination, Gesellschaftskritik, Utopie und Zeichenüberschuss: Die Stadt als Dispositiv der literarischen Moderne (1859–1932)

André Weber

Die Stadt und der Nebel. Zur ästhetischen Funktion eines Bildgefüges in *Les sept vieillards* von Charles Baudelaire

Summary:

Using the example of Charles Baudelaire's *Les sept vieillards*, the contribution analyses the function of the recurrent aesthetical unity of city and fog, which belongs to the context of perception, representation and simulation. Baudelaire conceives the city as a crystallisation point of modern life whose infrastructural intensity he intends to understand. Inasmuch as this intensity that oscillates between the two opposing poles of *Spleen* and *Idéal* is comparable to electric impulses, it cannot be represented, but has to be simulated to become apparent. For this, Baudelaire uses the ambivalent phenomenon of the concealing and revealing fog which is integrated in Baudelaire's aesthetic principle of the "magie suggestive". In this way, the agonizing attitude of *Ennui* as an 'eternal' element of modern consciousness is simulated by the phantasmagorical procession of the demonic seven old men which appear in the fog.

Inga Baumann

Ce sont des villes! Die symbolistische Stadtwahrnehmung zwischen Schock und Utopie. (Baudelaire, Verlaine, Verhaeren, Rimbaud)

Summary:

This contribution analyses the *mise-en-scène* of the urban landscape in the symbolist poetry from Baudelaire to Rimbaud. While other critics stress the non-mimetic and imaginary status of the Baudelairean city sceneries, this study tries to demonstrate that it is not Baudelaire, but only Rimbaud who first evokes genuine imaginary cities. As long as the symbolist poet still concentrates on the real cities of the 19th century, the characteristic city experience is a shock (first described by Walter Benjamin in his famous study on Baudelaire) – a shock the *flâneur* experiences due to sensory overload, but also because he is confronted with the social problems of the city. Whereas the other symbolists try to translate their subjective perception of the city into poetic language and images, Rimbaud overcomes the problematic reality by inventing possible cities of the future.

Judith Stein

Die Stadt als Mörderin. *Germinie Lacerteux* (1865) von Edmond und Jules de Goncourt

Summary:

Germinie Lacerteux (1865), the best-known of all novels of the Brothers Goncourt, creates a picture of the city, in her modern version as metropolis, and points out the particularly problematic aspects of the big town, so that one's interest is especially attracted to the dimension of space. In fact, in this novel, space is used to express inanity. The big city of 19th century's Paris helps to arrange a substantial and quite consistent background that has to carry the story as well as the characters. Beyond that it becomes obvious that spatial aspects assume an important role when it comes to convince the reader. Aside from some impressive rhetoric parts – like the personification of the city at the end – there is also a more subtle strategy to be found. „The city as a murderer“ is a title to express this idea: to show the system of spatial relations and how full they are of potential and meaning in order to support the story's message.

Thomas Edeling

Der Städter als Treibgut. Urbane Passivität in Julien Greens *Épaves*

Summary

This paper intends to show how Julien Green, rather than describing urban landscape and dwelling in Paris, discloses forms of behavioural passivity by the phenomenon of flotsam. The citydweller does not only invent a role for his daily life, but also conceives the text that he performs. In doing so, reality and fiction cannot be separated any more.

The novel illustrates how textual production links the self-discovery of the main character Philippe to his self-invention. The text flow conducts the characters so that they can be considered flotsam in fiction. There is no distinction between modes of acting and inventing actions and characters. The three main characters construct their lives in a fictional way and become part of the text itself.

2. Die Stadt als Dispositiv des Affekts, des *cafard* und der philosophischen Geste

Sven Thorsten Kilian

Montaigne in der Stadt. Imagination zwischen *otium* und *migratio* in „De la vanité“ (III, 9)

Summary:

Montaigne's essay "De la vanité" (III, 9) has to be considered as an apology for writing in the face of the accusation of its being mere vanity. It deals in particular with the two states – that of being and that of consciousness –, which are equally crucial to the author's textual production: idleness (*otium*) and journey (*migratio*). The paper establishes the argument that Montaigne's sceptical concept of imagination mediates between these originally opposing terms of stoic moral philosophy and hereby achieves a synthesis in a historical and autobiographical perspective. The topical variation and the circularity of the essay's argument can be described and illustrated by the metaphor of travelling. It thereby becomes evident that the above-mentioned accusation is indeed neither morally nor theologically justifiable. However, the evasive terms *désir* and *plaisir* point to the esthetic strategies used by Montaigne to circumnavigate the ethical dilemma of his writing.

Luca Viglialoro

Die Erfahrung des *cafard*. Versuch über das dekadente Schreiben bei Cioran

Summary:

The connection between philosophical reflexion and literary writing in Cioran's work is characterized by a particular idea of the alexandrian style, which is influenced by the culturphilosophical instances of the decadence. Cioran recognizes in the alexandrian search for a rhetorically effective expression one of the most important features of the Parisian *cafard* and of the french culture.

Helena Reschucha

Die Stadt als Bedingung der Philosophie. Alain Badiou's Philosophie und ihr Bezug zur Stadt

Summary:

Alain Badiou's philosophy is essentially determined by the fact that truths exist. These truths do not lie within philosophy itself, rather in their four conditions exterior to philosophy: science/mathematics, politics, love and art. By insisting on the fact that truths exist and by insisting on the fact of their conditions, Badiou functions as an interpreter of the philosophy of Plato. He thereby dissociates himself from the main movements of contemporary philosophy (hermeneutics, analytical philosophy and postmodern philosophy). The link between Badiou's philosophy and the city lies in the fact that the Platonic conditions of philosophy emerge from urban thinking insofar as only the city offered a culture in which the required mental values of transparency, discursiveness and equality could prosper.

3. Wahrnehmung, Darstellung und Fiktion der Stadt (1939–2011)

Anne Kraume

Von Oran nach Marseille. Stadt und Wüste bei Albert Camus und Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio

Summary:

Albert Camus in his essay *Le Minotaure ou la halte d'Oran* (1939) as well as Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio in his novel *Désert* (1980) map their (post-)modern cities by starting out with the desert. While Camus integrates the desert into the city of Oran and describes it as a maze whose Minotaur, tedium, should not only be seen negatively, Le Clézio sketches the urban space of Marseilles also as a maze although his is in a much more radical sense solely negative. In contrast to Camus whose image of the desert within the city underlines the desert's necessity for man, the decentralising logic of the city by Le Clézio can only be subverted by that of the desert. Its openness and freedom are

juxtaposed to urban alienation. However, both concepts of a Mediterranean urban thinking space share the idea of city and desert as indissolubly and dynamically interlinked with each other.

Antonella Ippolito

„Millions de trajectoires, une étincelle“. Paris als fiktionaler Raum im Erzählwerk von Delphine de Vigan

Summary:

In this paper we discuss the role and significance of urban space in Delphine de Vigan's writing, with special respect to the novels *No et moi* (2007) and *Les heures souterraines* (2009). Both texts are strongly characterized by their focus on Paris as a background of the narrative. The different aspects of Vigan's fictional perception of urban reality form the focus of our contribution. This amounts to a discussion of the spatial representation of the city – with special attention to the crucial role of underground areas – in relation to several key ideas from discourses like urban sociology and poststructuralist critical approach. The author is mainly concerned with fashioning urban representations that reflect the image of the postmodern metropolis and seem oriented toward a critical reflection on human experience and social values in this cultural territory. A closer look on Vigan's city imaginary may also elicit a kind of reading that foregrounds both some mythic-realistic connotations of Paris and an auto-reflexive relationship of spatial constructions to language and narrative.

Valérie Michelet Jacquod

Penser l'« après » : Le roman berlinois contemporain dans les littératures française et francophone (1989–2011)

Summary:

Imagining the “after”: the contemporary Berlin novel in French and Francophone Literature (1989–2011)

Our reflection stems from a hypothesis: in Berlin, the fall of the wall prompts a historicist re-experiencing of time, an experience which is being characterised in the Berlin narratives of French and Francophone literature. Through the notion of “présentisme”, borrowed from François Hartog, and following on from the work of Lionel Ruffel on “dénouement”, we would like to demonstrate how the consciousness of an “after”, engendered by the idea of an ending, places the Berlin works of fiction within a philosophical discourse of history and prompts them to come up with original ways of recording their connection to history.