

Salammbô Under Mâtho's Tent : A Genetic Study

The issue of autotextuality has been seldom studied, especially from a genetic standpoint, although it seems to match particularly well the goals of genetics; a comparative examination of drafts could reveal how phenomena of recurrence operate from one work to another; it could also help to define stylistic or thematic schemes and the way they reappear or disappear according to diverse contexts; finally, it could help to determine if this process relies on auto-rewriting or on arbitrary recurrence, stemming from the actualization of idiosyncratic stereotypes or privileged themes depending on the writer's imagination and reappearing, somewhat naturally, during the writing process. Indeed, when similar contexts imply, from one text to another, narrative situations which are noticeably similar (despite obvious textual differences), one wonders to what extent the formation of the writing is not *informed* (or inspired) by previous texts written by the author.

In Flaubert's work I will take the example of the scenes in which Emma Bovary surrenders to Rodolphe, Salammbô to Mâtho and Madame Dambreuse to Frédéric, three scenes where the sex act, carefully implicit, is perceptible only allusively. It is not worth stressing their differences; they are not surprising in the case of Flaubert, who considers that « each work contains its own poetics that must be found ». However, the scenes also display curious similarities (all references and manuscript transcriptions are located in the Dossier placed at the end of this file). Recurrence of narrative strategies: in the three cases, the feminine character surrenders to the seducing speech of the masculine character (Emma, « weakening », « abandoned herself » ; Salammbô, « weakening », felt forced to « abandon herself » ; Mme Dambreuse « closed her eyes », which marks Frédéric's « victory »); the

masculine character shows, after the event, his boorishness (Rodolphe), his sincere love (Mâtho) or his hypocrit love (Frédéric); focuses of perception are identical in *Madame Bovary* and *Salammbô* (focalization on Emma and on Salammbô, but focalization on Frédéric in *Sentimental Education*); the representation of the event is replaced with a metonymical landscape description in *Madame Bovary* and *Sentimental Education*, whereas *Salammbô* lacks any spatial dimension; here the broken chainlet, by synecdoche, signifies the loss of virginity. Also, recurrence of details, for certain motifs reappear, even if their function varies: silence in *Madame Bovary* and *Sentimental Education*, cloud in *Salammbô* and *Sentimental Education*. In the same way, in *Madame Bovary* and *Salammbô*, the sex act is linked with a *cataclysmic* thematics, as for Emma, « something had happened of greater importance than if the mountains had moved » (166), and *Salammbô*, as if « swept upward by a hurricane », feels later that « an abyss had opened » (311); these motifs appear in flash-backs where the narrative retraces *afterwards* the hidden event. In *Sentimental Education*, variation is noticeable: the flash-back is also present, but in the scene itself, where it signifies Frédéric's loss of memory and negates the importance of that moment; as for the act itself, it has little effect on Madame Dambreuse, who obviously is not a novice; indeed, « it was out of boredom that Madame Dambreuse had abandoned herself » (375).

As usual with Flaubert, the study of manuscripts necessitates preliminary distinction between *scenarios*, where he sketches the narrative as well as certain scenes from the very origin of the novel (with several layers of rewriting), and then the *rough drafts*, where he reaches the *writing* stage itself, amplifies the initial text and focuses mostly on stylistic microstructures (also with several layers). Autotextuality is visible in the genesis of the three scenes, in two ways: first, their importance in the narrative, for they germinate in the scenarios and are preserved during all the writing stages; second, the terms that summarize them abruptly stress the similarity of the narratives to be written:

Madame Bovary : « she gets off the horse and has to lean against the trunk of an oak – fuck »;
Salammbô : « Hanna at the camp. – fuck under the veil »;
Sentimental Education: « he fucks M^e Dambreuse, with no effort, on her coach ».

The action is associated with space, which differs from one scenario to the other, but which, according to a similar process, allows the writer to *imagine* and better *visualize* the event (which remains vague): exterior for Emma, interior for Madame Dambreuse, with a psychological precision (she is easy to obtain), interior (implicitly) for Salammbô under the zaï mph. Flaubert spontaneously gives the scenes the same mold, which designates them in a similar or identical way. Another general sign of autotextuality is the fact that in each case the genesis follows a path that goes from explicit to implicit. The event (« fuck ») will be merely allusive; therefore, the genesis reveals a system of production by obliteration and transformation.

It takes on the form of a landscape description at «sunset» in the last scenarios of *Madame Bovary*, where Flaubert still gives himself the injunction of a precise representation (although the term *fuck* has disappeared) :

clearly show Rodolphe's gesture who takes her ass with one hand, her waist with the other – and she abandoned herself.
 – nature – buzzing in Emma's temples.

The description, after the character abandons herself, will be substituted to action, nature becoming then a « big red sky » which will not be retained. In the same way, the last scenario of *Sentimental Education* sets a description of atmosphere, this time mixed with an obscure flash-back. The verb that was already used in *Madame Bovary* reappears:

On her coach, she abandons herself, and he was surprized by the ease of his victory.
 Silence and meditation. dusk. sunset. this reminds him of another evening. The one when he went out holding M^e Arnoux's arm. this memory passes in his mind like a cloud.

The description of the landscape appears on the first draft (17608 f^o 143), thanks to a transposition, the comparison (« like a cloud ») suddenly implying the elaboration of a vision of the trees (« rustling gently ») and clouds in the sky (« pink lines were stretching in the sky »), where we find the sunset that had been deleted in *Madame Bovary*.

In *Salammbô*'s scenarios, processes are different, for the scene marks the momentary fusion of two contrary principles, Moloch and Tanit, respectively associated with Mâtho and Salammbô. I quote the first draft of the last scenario:

fuck under the veil. – an accident makes it fall. Moloch and Astarté. Mâtho's expansion. (23662 f° 201)

The exterior space is absent; here nature takes on a cosmo-mythological dimension (Moloch / Astarté) that will abound in the scene. The obliteration of the sex act is produced by an effect of *veiling* which explains *afterwards* the initial localization (« under the veil »): the sacred veil must fall and hide the sex act. When Flaubert amplifies this scenario in the space between the lines, he inserts the detail of the chain, which is first reflexive (« the golden chain breaks ») but it is not certain that he thinks of an association with the fall of the zaï mph (cause and effect of the « accident » are not syntactically linked). On the contrary, Salammbô's direct speech is already found and will never change, whereas her gestures and feelings recall those of Emma in the scenarios: she «is scared » by Rodolphe or feels a « vague fear » while she tries to push him away.

Even if recurrences of similar or identical motifs and narrative strategies are signs of autotextuality, it is clear Flaubert is not rewriting himself, nor referring to the previous novel when he writes. It is also quite likely that he does not remember precisely the previous text, and even more so its manuscripts. Genetic critics must therefore be very cautious when trying to compare passages that have been written several years apart. In other words, the scenaric stage allows to perceive recurring patterns of invention which, once the initial mold has been elaborated, prove to be (paradoxically) similar *and* different according to the specifications of each context.

In the scenarios, the scene of *Sentimental Education* resembles more the scene of *Madame Bovary* than that of *Salammbô*; however it is quite different in the rough drafts. Obviously, in the two cases the presence of the description is a sign of autotextuality (moreover, in *Sentimental Education* there is a «silence and universal meditation », and in the drafts of

Madame Bovary « there was a universal silence »), and Frédéric feels a weakness (« he felt a sort of weakness with the multiple ideas that were assailing him » and he hears « the beating of his heart »), but it has a different cause and function from Emma's (whose heart « was beating rapidly ») and Salammbô's; for Frédéric, weakness implies a confusion that slowly brings a loss of memory, for Emma and Salammbô, weakness implies a loss of consciousness that permits the sex act. The characters' impressions are much more developed in the drafts than in the final versions; from the first draft of the scene in *Salammbô* (folio 250) Flaubert distinguishes two movements: Salammbô's sensations under the implicit influence of the goddess, leading to her yielding, then Mâtho's gestures and kisses, perceived in an abstract way by Salammbô. Globally, this is the pattern that Flaubert uses to represent Emma's yielding, with an identical system of focalization; and indeed, the initial elements of the text of *Salammbô* are similar to those of *Madame Bovary*, in multiple ways.

First of all in the representation of the *zai mph* on the first draft (folio 250) : « the *zai mph* fell. – and enveloped in its transparency, she sees through Mâtho bending over her chest »; this sequence is immediately deleted since at that time Salammbô feels « like an arrow in her mouth » (if she is « enveloped », Mâtho cannot kiss her); this recalls the image of Emma veiled before the love scene, in a symmetrical way (for Emma is seen through the veil). But curiously it resembles more the text of the draft than that of the final version: « one could see her face through a blueish transparency ».

The text of *Salammbô* lacks any auditive sensation, and the character's weakness is spontaneously granted a metaphorical appearance, as the manuscript displays a double metaphoric system: metaphor of the birth (« hatchings ») and spatial metaphor (« ground », « suspended »). In the following draft (folio 280 v^o), another metaphor is associated with the first system. Flaubert now insists on Salammbô's « loss of consciousness », and it takes on the form of a liquid metaphor: « no marrow in the bones » is first transformed into « as if the bones of her members had liquefied », which is then replaced with « she was taken by a

languor, a weakness which was circulating softer than oil in the marrow of her bones », whereas the birth becomes more like a *flower* : « mild hatchings were blooming in her heart ». It is on this draft that the expression *abandon herself* is inserted: « a command from the Gods told her that she had to abandon herself ». In parallel, the spatial metaphor evolves and becomes more precise: « she felt that drafts of air were lifting her. the ground oscillated. her head was tossing... and weakening... she found herself half swooning on the bed ».

All of these sequences recall the manuscripts of *Madame Bovary*, in which the character's loss of control also takes on the form of a metaphorical loss of balance. Before she surrenders to Rodolphe, Emma feels that « the ground was oscillating under her feet like the deck of a ship » and that « something smooth like a cloud of incense enveloped her, penetrated her mind and ran through her flesh. She was weakening ». In the same way, Salammbô will soon be *enveloped* (« an infinite charm enveloped her », folio 238 v°), and even *penetrated* (« an infinite charm penetrated her », third draft, folio 240). The similarities are surprising, even if the motifs are textualized in different ways; but the most striking is that all of these recurrences are found only in the drafts, for they all disappear (sometimes leaving some traces behind); therefore, one cannot think that when Flaubert corrects the drafts of *Salammbô*, he tries to avoid repeating the text of *Madame Bovary*.

The movement of the ground is deleted in *Madame Bovary*, whereas in *Salammbô* it is modified. The circulation in Emma's flesh (previously situated in « her heart », as for *Salammbô*), which allows her weakness before the sex act, in fact marks the appearance of another liquid metaphor (rather maternal this time), that of the *milk*, which will be moved and re-introduced *after* the landscape description (and maintained in the final text, but here I quote the draft) : « she could feel her heart starting to beat again and the blood circulating in her flesh like a river of milk ». As for the thematics of space (linked with loss of balance), the thematics of circulation is the same in the manuscripts of the two novels, although the terms that describe them are different (« oil » on the one hand, « milk » on the other). However, the

milk is also found in *Salammbô*: in the manuscripts, just after the event, Mâtho « to refresh her poured some milk on her hands », a sequence that is deleted but that will leave a trace in the definitive text: Mâtho's speech mentions some curious snakes « color of milk » (310).

Moreover, Emma at first feels like fainting because of a *cloud* that envelops her; it is the same motif which allows the transformation of the space metaphor in *Salammbô* (and we should not forget also that in *Sentimental Education* there are clouds in the sky). It appears on the fourth and final draft, where it is suddenly substituted to the « gusts of a warm vapour »: « a command from the gods forced her to abandon herself. Clouds were lifting her. the ground was oscillating. and feeling a weakness she swooned on the bed » (folio 246 v^o). This sudden and unforeseeable reappearance of the motif that had been deleted in *Madame Bovary* is most striking, even if the cloud indeed belongs to the cosmo-mythological system of *Salammbô* (and Mâtho tells Salammbô, in the drafts: « I wish I could make you walk on the clouds! », which is deleted on the folio 240). The final text still contains an allusion on the next page: « the moon was gliding between two clouds ».

Obviously, rough drafts imply methodological (and theoretical) problems which are more difficult to solve than I have said here, for the intertwining of synchronic phenomena (that is, on *one* folio) and of diachronic phenomena (on a group of folios) makes the comparative examination far more complex; the three love scenes clearly show that the systems of transformations are, in fact, autonomous, so that in this case autotextuality and rewriting cannot be confused.

The manuscripts reveal a system of motifs and stylistic devices that recur in the genesis of the three works, constructing pre-textual thematics and stylistics (as if Flaubert had to repeat, initially and spontaneously, a creative path that he has already followed). However such networks and patterns are erased or transformed little by little, according to the contextual

constraints, both stylistic and diegetic, of each forming text. Therefore, the autotext is, I should say, *mastered* by the intratext: it is more a contingent product than a dynamic process.

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Dossier : references and transcriptions

Salammbô:

[...] he sighed caressingly, and murmured vague words, lighter than a breeze and sweet as a kiss. Salammbô was assailed by a weakness in which she lost all consciousness of herself. Some power within and at the same time above her, a command from the gods, forced her to abandon herself to it; clouds were lifting her; and she fell back swooning on the bed, in the lion hair. Mitho caught her heels, her golden chainlet broke, and the two ends flying apart hit the canvas like two vipers striking. The zaimph fell and enveloped her; she could see Mitho's face bending over her breast. "Moloch, your fire is burning me". And the soldier's kisses coursed over her, hungrier than flames; she was swept upward by a hurricane, caught in the might of the sun. He kissed each of her fingers, her arms, her feet, and the long tresses of her hair from end to end.

Madame Bovary:

She threw back her head, her white throat swelled in a sigh, and weakening, tears streaming, with a long shudder and hiding her face, she abandoned herself. Evening shadows were falling; the horizontal sun, passing through the branches, was blinding her eyes. All around her, in the leaves and on the ground, were luminous shimmering patches, as if hummingbirds had shed their feathers in flight. Silence was everywhere; gentleness seemed to emanate from the trees; she could feel her heart beating again, and the blood circulating in her flesh like a river of milk. Then she heard, off in the distance beyond the woods, over the other hills, a vague, prolonged cry, a drawn-out voice to which she listened in silence as it mingled like music with the waning vibrations of her throbbing nerves. Rodolphe, a cigar in his mouth, was fixing one of the two broken beides with his knife.

Sentimental Education:

She gazed at him with half-closed eyes. He lowered his voice and bent over her face. "Yes! You frighten me! But perhaps I am offending you?... Forgive me... I didn't mean to say all that. It isn't my fault. You're so beautiful!" Madame Dambreuse closed her eyes and he was surprised by the ease of his victory. The tall trees in the garden, which had been rustling gently, stood still. Motionless clouds streaked the sky with long red lines, and the whole universe seemed to have come to a standstill. Then a vague memory occurred to him of other evenings like this one, with similar silences. Where was it?... He went down on his knees, took her hand, and swore eternal love to her.

Salammbô:

[...] il soupirait d'une façon caressante, et murmurait de vagues paroles, plus légères qu'une brise et suaves comme un baiser. Salammbô était envahie par une mollesse où elle perdait toute conscience d'elle-même. Quelque chose à la fois d'intime et de supérieur, un ordre des Dieux la forçait à s'y abandonner; des nuages la soulevaient, et, en défilant, elle se renversa sur le lit dans les poils du lion. Mitho lui saisit les talons, la chaînette d'or éclata, et les deux bouts, en s'envolant, frappèrent la toile comme deux vipères rebondissantes. Le zaimph tomba, l'enveloppait; elle aperçut la figure de Mitho se courbant sur sa poitrine. - « Moloch, tu me brûles ! » et les baisers du soldat, plus dévorateurs que des flammes, la parcouraient; elle était comme enlevée dans un ouragan, prise dans la force du soleil. Il baisa tous les doigts de ses mains, ses bras, ses pieds, et d'un bout à l'autre les longues tresses de ses cheveux.

Madame Bovary:

Elle renversa son cou blanc, qui se gonflait d'un soupir; et, défaillante, tout en pleurs, avec un long frémissement et se cachant la figure, elle s'abandonna. Les ombres du soir descendaient; le soleil horizontal, passant entre les branches, lui éblouissait les yeux. Ça et là, tout autour d'elle, dans les feuilles ou par terre, des taches lumineuses tremblaient, comme si des colibris, en volant, eussent éparpillé leurs plumes. Le silence était partout; quelque chose de doux semblait sortir des arbres; elle sentait son cœur, dont les battements recommençaient, et le sang circuler dans sa chair comme un fleuve de lait. Alors, elle entendit tout au loin, au-delà du bois, sur les autres collines, un cri vague et prolongé, une voix qui se traînait, et elle l'écoutait silencieusement, se mêlant comme une musique aux dernières vibrations de ses nerfs émus. Rodolphe, le cigare aux dents, raccommoiait avec son canif une des deux brides cassée.

L'Éducation sentimentale:

Elle le considérait, les cils entre-clos. Il baissait la voix, en se penchant sur son visage. - « Oui ! vous me faites peur ! Je vous offense, peut-être ?... Pardon !... Je ne voulais pas dire tout cela ! Ce n'est pas ma faute ! Vous êtes si belle ! » Mme Dambreuse ferma les yeux, et il fut surpris par la facilité de sa victoire. Les grands arbres du jardin qui frissonnaient mollement s'arrêtèrent. Des nuages immobiles rayaient le ciel de longues bandes rouges, et il y eut comme une suspension universelle des choses. Alors, des soirs semblables, avec des silences pareils, revinrent dans son esprit, confusément. Où était-ce ?... Il se mit à genoux, prit sa main, et lui jura un amour éternel.

23660 f° 250
(first draft)

α il se fait tendre, suppliant, exquis, sa tête
dents blanches dans
 renversée en arrière souriant - ses gds anneaux d'or. "baise moi"
Caligène sa barbe noir je l'aime -
 Elle s'affaiblit, α prend plaisir à cela.
je l'aime

ne voit d'ailleurs
 lui repétait
 Je t'aime! Je t'aime

lui murmure
 une *de l'œil* intérieure, qqe chose à la fois d'intime α de profond
 α de supérieur lui dit qu'elle fait bien. - c'est comme une
- eclosions subites -
 pente où elle se sent glisser... elle ne tient plus à la terre
 α
 ... comme suspendue ... dans un ravissement ... dans
 un trouble. Elle s'évanouit à demi. *et s'affaissa*)

et-elle-ne-trouva-renversée-sur-le-lit

Mátho lui *saipit* à deux mains, les deux talons -

La chaînette d'or se rompit. α les deux bouts la en-s'envolent
promena de rebondissantes
 frappèrent la toile comme deux vipères qui rebondissent.

dans la recouvre
 de zalmph tomba. - α *la courut* enveloppa dans la transparence, elle
à elle aperçu q
 voit à travers Mátho se courber/ait sur sa poitrine. Elle sentit dans sa
qui elle
 dans sa bouche sa poir.

Comme une flèche sur ses dents...

- Moloch tu me brûles
les du soldat plus brûlants la parcour
 α baisers comme des flammes qui sonnent sur elle.

empourée dans ses organes
 comme si elle était prise dans le soleil prise dans la fureur
de soleil

Se vaudrait dessus - l'écrasait ... ses deux faibles bras

raillés qui le repoussaient.

Mátho lui baisa les doigts des Mains - les bras, les pieds
 la Couvre d'amour ... Il riait α pleurait à la fois ...

23660 f° 280 v°
(second draft; first part)

Elle n'avait plus peur maintenant! - au contraire les charmes indignes la tentait.
 et une *recho* voix intérieure lui repétait: "Je t'aime! - je t'aime!"
 Elle se sentait comme *un charme* de tiédes qui s'agrippaient
 elle n'avait plus peur - c'était des *passer* eclosions subites dans
 et en même temps dans
 son cœur ... *la conscience d'elle-même lui échappait*
 plus de moelle dans les os. - une faiblesse
 elle était prise d'une langueur d'une
 délicieuse *perte de connaissance* comme au commencement
 toute conscience d'elle-même lui échappait - *une voix secrète*
 d'un sommeil. - qqe chose de supérieur α d'intime *pu* comme
 un conseil des Dieux lui disait qu'elle faisait bien de s'y abandonner.
ordre
 il lui semblait *d'un criant* les courants d'air la soulevaient
 elle était comme suspendue. ne tenait plus à la terre
 dans le ravissement ... toute défaillante ... elle se
 trouva à demi renversée sur le lit, dans les poils du
 lion.

23660 f° 238 v°
(rewriting of second draft)

Salmphé Elle n'avait plus peur. *maintenant* αu contraire un charme infini
 l'enveloppait. Elle sentait comme *des florissances* de tiédes eclosions qui s'épanouissaient/r
 dans son âme α en même temps elle était plus prise
 d'une faiblesse qui coulait plus douce que l'huile *passer* dans
 le moelle des os. toute conscience d'elle-même lui
 échappait - *comme au commencement d'un sommeil*
 Quelque chose à la fois de supérieur α d'intime
 une voix secrète *à la fois d'intime* un ordre des dieux lui disait qu'il
 fallait s'y abandonner. Il lui semblait que les courants
 d'un air céleste la soulevaient. la terre oscillait sa tête
 tournait et en défaillant elle se trouva à demi renversée/a
 sur le lit dans les poils du lion.

