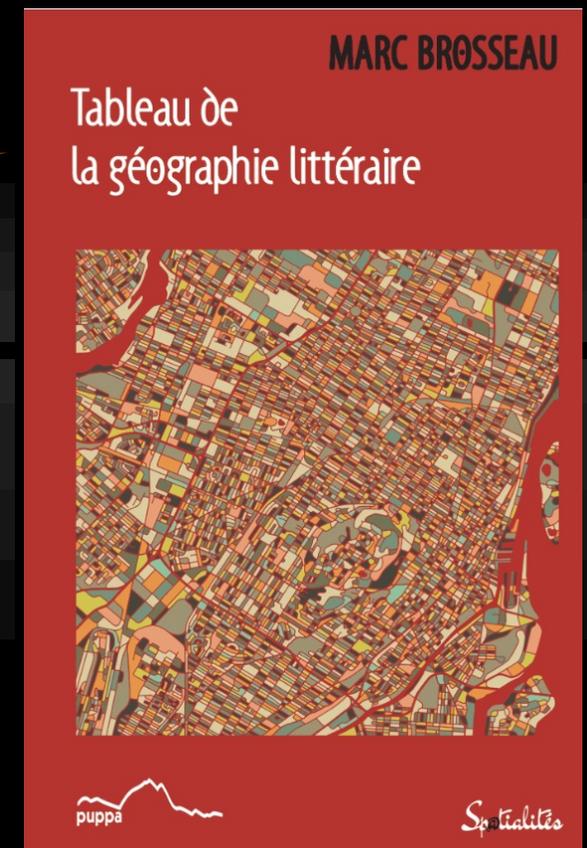


Tableau de la géographie littéraire

Café Virtuel - APHG

Prix du Livre de Géographie pour les lycéens et les étudiants

Marc Brosseau, Professeur titulaire
Département de géographie
Université d'Ottawa





Introduction

Origine de mon intérêt pour les
rapports entre géographie et littérature



Le roman comme *document* géographique

- ✓ Lecture littérale des lieux et des paysages dans la littérature
- ✓ Séparer les faits de la fiction
- ✓ Complément à une géographie régionale ou à une géographie des paysages culturels

Le roman comme *document* géographique

Thomas Hardy géographe régionaliste

H.C. Darby compare la description du Wessex (fictif) par Hardy (1840-1928) aux comtés « réels » du Dorset:

THE REGIONAL GEOGRAPHY OF THOMAS HARDY'S WESSEX
H. C. DARBY

ONE of the main features in the development of modern geographic thought has been the increasing importance attached to the idea of the region. But the regional approach has not been the monopoly of academic geographers. On the contrary, it seems to have been an element of the mental climate of the years since the middle of the nineteenth century which has manifested itself in a variety of ways—political, economic, cultural.¹ One expression has been the rise of the regional novel as a literary form. In France, for instance, where there is an immense literature dealing with the political and philosophical aspects of regionalism, there has been great outpouring of regional novels; and from France, too, have come some of the most outstanding studies in regional geography.

In England, it is possible to go back beyond the middle nineteenth century in the search for the origins of this literary form. Sir Walter Scott's historical novels are full of local color and feeling for country. Many of them can perhaps be described as historical novels with a topographic basis. But it is not until the time of Thomas Hardy that the topographic novel can be said to have become the regional novel in England. Hardy's first Wessex novel appeared in 1871, and since then the novel of locality has become a feature of the literature of England. The regional novels differ greatly in scope and in treatment, but all, or almost all, have one thing in common. The theme underlying the delineation of their characters is man and his work on the land; and the story unfolds through the medium of the everyday life of a locality. To this extent they cannot fail to be of interest to the geographer, who is inevitably reminded of the dictum of Jean Brunhes: "Man comes into relations with the natural environments through facts of labor, through the house he builds, the road he travels, the field he cultivates, the quarry he works, etc."

THE WESSEX COUNTRY

Hardy has himself told us how his country of Wessex came into being. He first used the name "Wessex" in "Far from the Madding Crowd":

¹ Some aspects of this general regional consciousness have already been dealt with in a paper by F. W. Morgan (Three Aspects of Regional Consciousness, *Sociological Rev.*, Vol. 31, 1936, pp. 68-9)

— H. C. DARBY, professor of geography in the University of Liverpool and author of studies on the Fenland, is now working on the Domesday geography of England.

DORSET

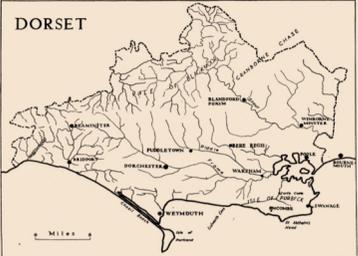


FIG. 1.—Location and drainage map of Dorset. The contrast between the drainage of the claylands and the chalk area is clearly shown.

SIMPLIFIED GEOLOGICAL MAP

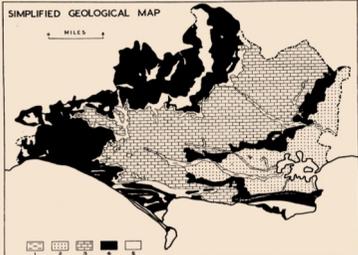


FIG. 2.—Simplified geological map of Dorset. Key: 1, alluvium; 2, Bignor Sands (Tertiary); 3, Chalk; 4, mainly clays (London Clay, Reading Beds, Gault, Wolds, Kimmeridge Clay, Oxford Clay, Great Oolite, Inferior Oolite, Lias Clays); 5, other formations.

THE RELIEF OF DORSET

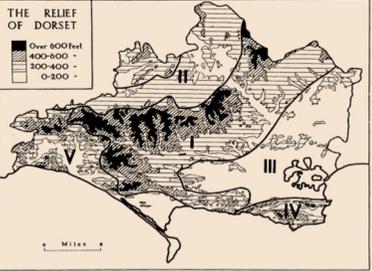


FIG. 3.—Relief and main regions of Dorset.

I. *The Chalk Upland.* The undulating upland is bordered on the north by an escarpment rising to more than 800 feet that overlooks the Vale of Blackmoor. The dip slope descends south-eastward until it is covered by the Tertiary deposits of the heathlands. The farming of the light soils in the mid-nineteenth century was characterized by James Caird as "the breeding of sheep, and the folding of them to enrich the ground for the production of corn." Turnips and swedes are important in the rotation system.

II. *The Vale of Blackmoor.* This is damp, well-watered clayland, marshy in places. Louis H. Ruegg summarized its economy in 1855: "The vale is mainly confined to the rearing and grazing of beasts, and to dairy husbandry." At one time the heavy clays supported dense wood, but this has almost entirely disappeared.

III. *The Heathlands and Heathland Valleys.* Tertiary sands, gravels, and clays constitute an area of poor soils and little agriculture. Despite afforestation and some expansion of the cultivated areas, large tracts still remain in heather and gorse.

The valleys of the Frome, the Piddle, and the Stour relieve the barren heathlands. The artificially irrigated water meadows support a distinctive economy based on dairying, at its maximum utilization in the eighteenth century, still important in the middle of the nineteenth, and not altogether gone today.

IV. *The Isle of Purbeck.* This region, consisting of a chalk ridge in the north separated by a clay vale from a southern ridge of Portland and Purbeck beds (mainly limestones), is given unity by its semi-insular character, and the regional name, "isle of Purbeck," is ancient. Today it is a mixture of arable and grassland.

V. *Western Dorset.* This is mainly hilly clayland, but the relief is varied, and the soil ranges from heavy clay to light sand. Arable and pasture predominate in different localities, but William Marshall in 1796 described it as being from "time immemorial a Dairy District."

Darby, H.C., 1948, « The regional geography of Thomas Hardy's Wessex », *The geographical Review*, n° 38, p. 426-443.



Le roman et l'expérience des lieux

Le roman est conçu comme

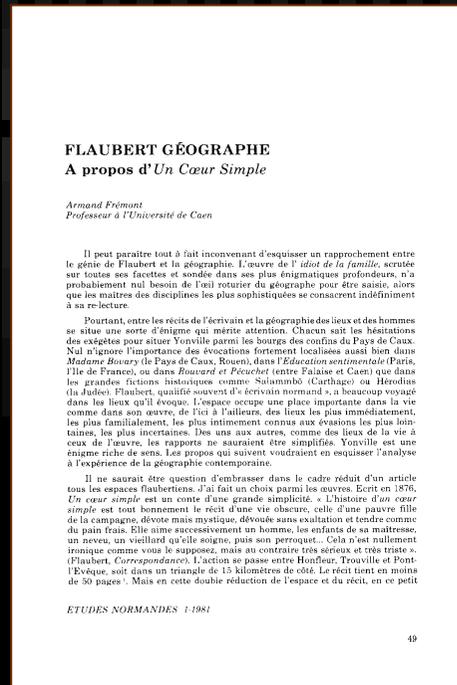
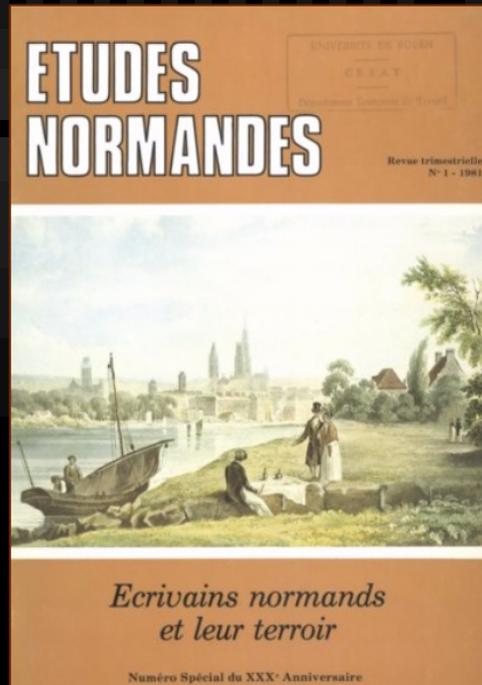
- ✓ une *transcription* de l'expérience des lieux
- ✓ une interprétation du sens des lieux ou de l'espace vécu

C'est le rapport subjectif à l'espace et aux lieux qui importe.

Le roman et l'expérience des lieux

Gustave Flaubert : géographe de l'espace vécu

Armand Frémont analyse l'espace vécu dans un conte de Flaubert (1821-1880),
Un cœur simple



Frémont, A., 1981, « Flaubert géographe. À propos d'*Un cœur simple* », *Études Normandes*, n°1, p. 49-64.



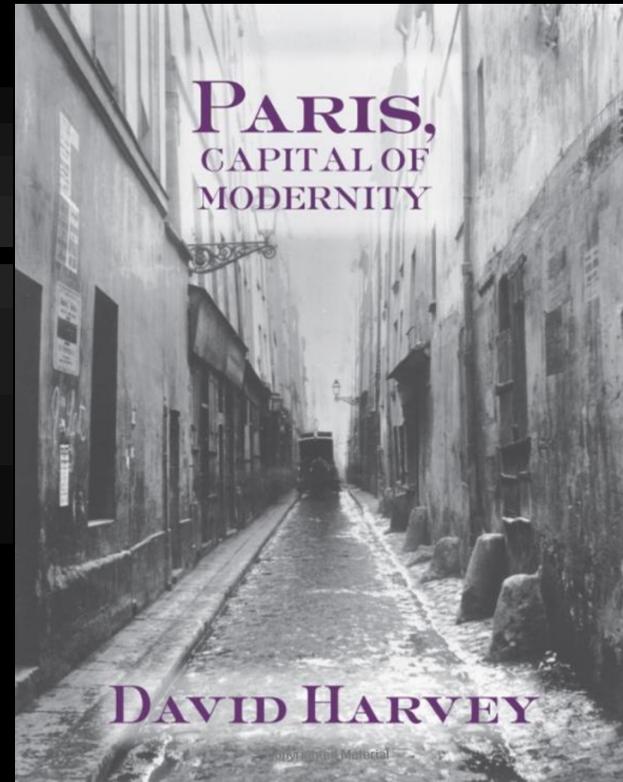
Reflet des conditions de production

- ✓ La littérature est conçue comme un discours idéologique qui thématise les rapports de pouvoir entre les groupes
- ✓ Justice sociale et spatiale dans le roman
- ✓ Lecture plus sociologique ou politique

Reflet des conditions de production

— *Honoré de Balzac: cartographe de la modernité*

David Harvey analyse le Paris de Balzac (1799-1850) dans la *Comédie humaine*.



Harvey, D., (2003) *Paris, Capital of Modernity*. London, Routledge.
Harvey, D., (2012) *Paris, capitale de la modernité*, Paris, Les Prairies ordinaires.



Un contrepoint à l'histoire des idées géographiques

Histoire parallèle de la géographie et de la littérature

- ✓ Écrivains de la Renaissance et les grandes explorations
- ✓ Thème régional dans la littérature française
- ✓ Jules Verne et la géographie

Un contrepoint à l'histoire des idées géographiques

Jules Verne et la géographie

Lionel Dupuy: Jules Verne (1828- 1905) et la géographie française au XIX^e siècle

« J'ai toutes les œuvres d'Élisée Reclus – j'ai une grande admiration pour Élisée Reclus – et tout Arago » (Verne, en 1894, cité par Dupuy, 2011, p.230).

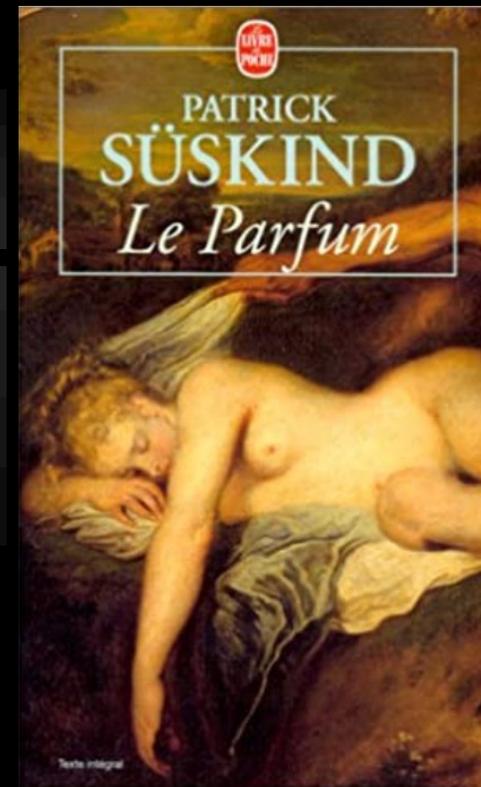
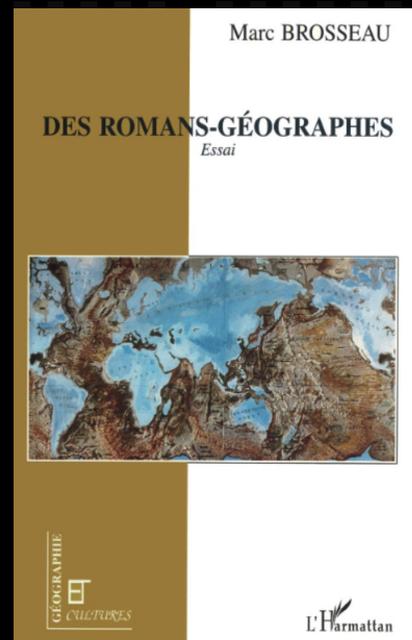
Références directes aux frères Arago dans les <i>Voyages extraordinaires</i>		
Titre du roman	Année	Nombre de références
<i>De la Terre à la Lune</i>	1865	2
<i>Voyages et aventures du capitaine Hatteras</i>	1866	2
<i>Les Enfants du capitaine Grant</i>	1867-1868	1
<i>Vingt mille lieues sous les mers</i>	1869-1870	3
<i>Autour de la Lune</i>	1870	1
<i>Aventures de trois Russes et de trois Anglais dans l'Afrique australe</i>	1872	7
<i>Le Pays des fourrures</i>	1873	2
<i>Hector Servadac</i>	1877	11
<i>Le Rayon vert</i>	1882	2
<i>Clovis Dardentor</i>	1896	5
Total		36
Références directes à Élisée Reclus dans les <i>Voyages extraordinaires</i>		
Titre du roman	Année	Nombre de références
<i>Mathias Sandorf</i>	1885	1
<i>Sans dessus dessous</i>	1889	1
<i>Le Château des Carpathes</i>	1892	4
<i>Claudius Bombarnac</i>	1892	1
<i>L'Île à hélice</i>	1895	3
<i>Le Sphinx des glaces</i>	1897	1
<i>Le Superbe Orénoque</i>	1898	8
<i>Le Testament d'un excentrique</i>	1899	6
<i>Bourses de voyage</i>	1903	4
Total		29

Dupuy, Lionel (2011) « Jules Verne et la géographie française de la deuxième moitié du XIX^e siècle ». *Annales de géographie*, (679): 232

Des Romans-géographes:

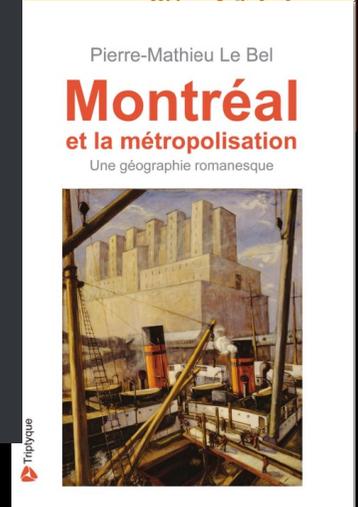
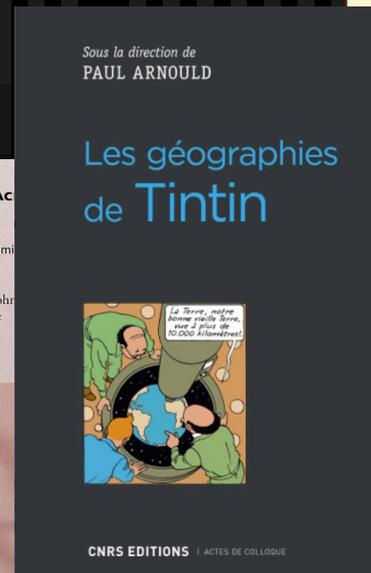
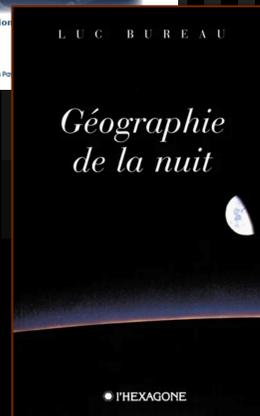
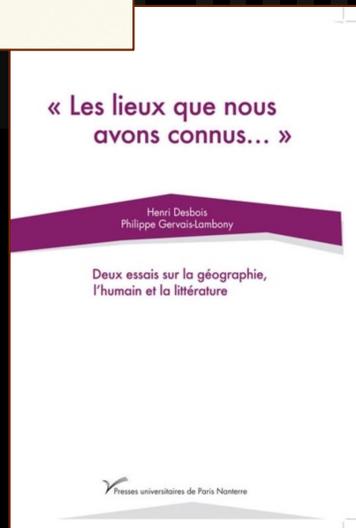
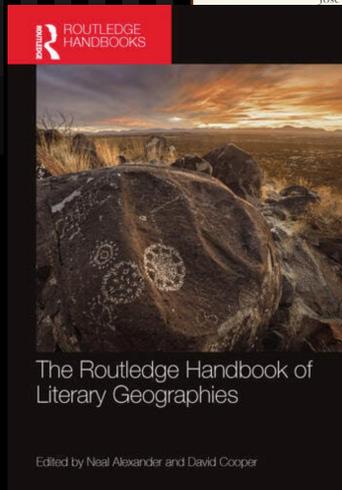
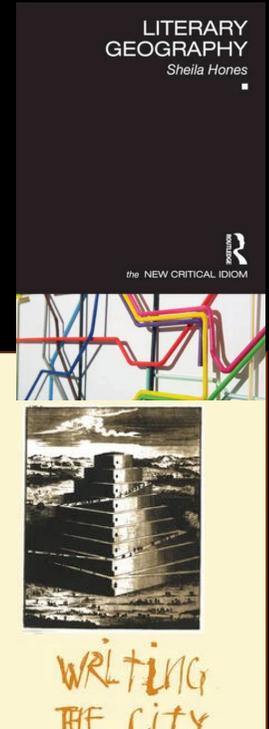
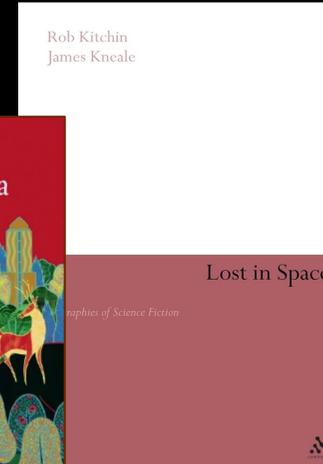
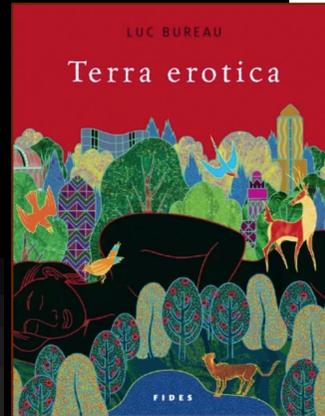
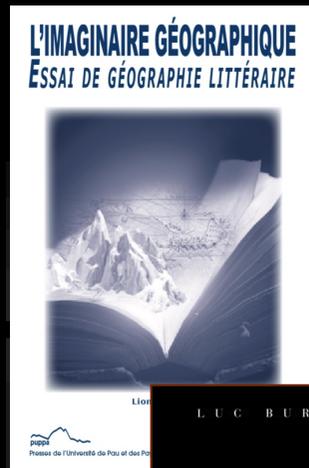
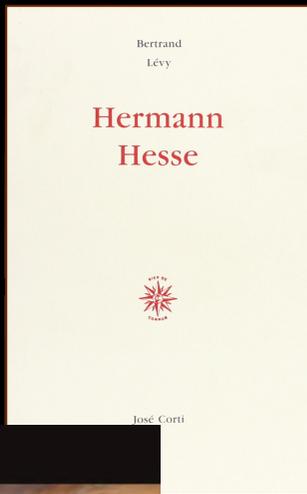
Explorer ce que « seul le roman peut explorer » (Kundera)

La géographie olfactive dans Le Parfum de Patrick Süskind



Littérature et géographies culturelles contemporaines

Un champ foisonnant...



Littérature et géographies culturelles contemporaines

Un champ foisonnant...

Un champ *normalisé*

- ✓ La géographie littéraire est désormais intégrée aux manuels de géographie culturelle.

Un champ pluriel

- ✓ *Types de littérature* : roman réaliste, littérature populaire, littérature juvénile, science-fiction, polar, récits de voyage, poésie, bande dessinée etc.
- ✓ *Nouveaux thèmes* : genre, identités, appartenances nationales, sexualité, criminalité, changements climatiques, impossibilité ou difficulté de la représentation etc.
- ✓ Intensification des échanges interdisciplinaires (critique littéraire, sociologie, *cultural studies*, histoire du livre etc.



Une première synthèse en français...

MARC BRASSEAU

Tableau de
la géographie littéraire



puppa

Spatialités