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Guilhem Farrugia, ed., *Influences de Baudelaire*. Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2025. 392 pp. Index. €26.00. (pb). ISBN 9-78-2753596863.

Review by Joseph Acquisto, University of Vermont.

The essays in this volume are a mixture of those that treat authors who had an impact on Baudelaire and those whose work he influenced. This focus on the dual purpose of "influences" in the title is carefully explained by Guilhem Farrugia in the introduction.
He specifies that he does not understand influence in a Bloomian sense, and he takes his distance from the idea of intertextuality as well, which he indicates is too narrow an approach to do justice to the range of meanings he hopes to elucidate in the collection.[1] The essays are grouped in four sections: Inspiration, Magnétisme, Rayonnement, and Emprise. The vast majority of contributors are noted scholars from France, with two contributions by scholars from Japan. The chapters are of unequal length and scope, ranging from ten to thirty-five pages. Most feature summary of the authors they are considering rather than argument-driven analyses that would cover substantially new ground, and the influences considered in the volume are nearly exclusively French. While the volume does not claim to be exhaustive, the absence of chapters on Edgar Allen Poe and the Romantic poets is striking.

In addition to clarifying the way the editor understands the notion of influence for the purposes of this volume, the introduction provides an intriguing reading of Baudelaire's self-portrait drawing "under the influence" of hashish. This serves as the cover image for the volume and as a vehicle for reflecting on auto-idolatry, which Farrugia extends to a consideration of the complex question of Baudelaire's ambivalence toward the work of Victor Hugo. The introduction also prepares the way for the many essays in the volume that take as their main consideration the way in which Baudelaire does not just influence future poetry; rather, he "exerce…une action sur la poésie ultérieure qu'il tend à modifier à distance," a feature that Farrugia refers to as "l'*influx baudelairien*, pouvoir étendu d'agir et de se diffuser dans la poésie à venir" (p. 24). The introduction provides brief summaries of each of the contributions, which are also summarized in a set of abstracts in both French and English at the end of the volume.

The first section offers essays on predecessors who influenced Baudelaire. Arguably, some of the authors have a harder task than others when it comes to making a convincing case. Jean Lecointe explores the importance of the *concetto*, mentioned a handful of times in Baudelaire, and by extension Baroque poetry, for Baudelaire, via Théophile Gautier's engagement with it. In the absence of an abundance of direct textual references in Baudelaire, the essay is often speculative in the way it posits influence. Jean Dubray's essay on Pascal presents a condensed version of the argument he makes in a

book-length treatment of the subject.[2] Dubray acknowledges that there are relatively few direct references to Pascal in Baudelaire, and what he traces may be better characterized as a study of affinities as opposed to influence *per se*. Dubray himself speaks of affinity as well as analogy and resonance to establish what is often a thematic study in comparison and contrast, where a shared "pessimisme anthropologique" (p. 57) between the authors manifests itself differently when it comes to questions of the possibility of salvation and the role of prayer. Dubray's analysis often floats uncomfortably between Baudelaire the writer and the lyric subject of the poems as it tends to blur the lines between them.

Farrugia's essay, the longest in the collection, focuses on Jean-Jacques Rousseau and claims that understanding his presence, which Farrugia sees in fully half of the fifty prose poems, is the key to understanding *Le Spleen de Paris* since, for Farrugia, Rousseau's *Rêveries du promeneur solitaire* are "l'hypotexte exogène fondamental" of the prose poems (p. 81). Since Baudelaire "a pris soin de dissimuler toute inspiration voire toute imitation" of Rousseau (p. 82), it is the critic's task to trace the network of Rousseau's influences on the text of the prose poems, where he is present either by analogy, by implicit references, or by contrast. The case is a bit too overstated to be completely plausible, but there are valuable readings in the chapter of some important thematic elements such as the role of *le Démon* in the prose poems. To round out the first section, Nathalie Vincent-Munnia presents a survey of early examples of the prose poem, notably those of Aloysius Bertrand, in the context of Baudelaire's "élargissement du poétique" (p. 125) and his "recomposition socioesthétique" of poetry (p. 128).

Section two features essays with a narrower focus than the broad panoramas offered by some of the essays in the first section. It opens with an essay by Patrick Labarthe on the "hantise de la conspiration…au carrefour du poétique et de la philosophie politique" in Baudelaire (p. 142), featuring insightful readings of Baudelaire's notes for an unwritten novella, the prose poem "Une mort héroïque," and notes for an unwritten prose poem entitled "La conspiration." Julien Zanetta's contribution examines art criticism in the 1840s, focusing on Baudelaire's early work in the genre in light of writers such as Philippe-Auguste Jeanron and Philippe de Chennevières. The essay traces the evolution of the salon pamphlet in terms of an inherent problem of balance: "voudrait-on donner un tour poétique au texte, une inflexion évocatrice à l'écriture, voici qu'elle abdique la précision au profit de la suggestion" (p. 165). Steve Murphy's erudite chapter focuses on the *sonnet renversé*; it offers a technical history of it before and after Baudelaire, whose contributions to the subgenre consist of the poems "Bien loin d'ici" and "L'Avertisseur." Murphy considers Verlaine's contributions to the subgenre (and the anachronistic use of "inversion" to refer to homosexuality) as well as those of Henri Cantel and Tristan Corbière. Arnaud Bernadet offers a chapter on the *Parnasse contemporain* in light of Baudelaire's contributions to it and his influence on other *Parnassiens*, noting that "le double regard porté par Baudelaire sur le Parnasse, par le Parnasse sur Baudelaire, est révélateur d'une tension qui traverse les poètes et leurs manières singulières entre la *reproduction* et la *continuation*" (p. 213).

Section three shows Baudelaire's influence on three nineteenth-century poets. Kazuya Tsukiyama considers, after a brief detour through Hégésippe Moreau and the distinction between *poètes malheureux* and *poètes maudits*, Lautréamont as reader of Baudelaire. The chapter, rather general in its analysis, advances the idea that, in Lautréamont, "par-delà le lyrisme, exaltation des sentiments et des passions, se dessine…une nouvelle possibilité de la poésie plutôt morale qu'esthétique" (p. 237). Bertrand Marchal's insightful chapter on Mallarmé provides the essentials about Baudelaire's well-

known influence on the later poet, via considerations of Mallarmé's crisis of 1866 and the importance of Baudelaire's prose poems and translations of Poe, while also nuancing those essentials by way of an examination of unpublished notebooks that Mallarmé kept in the 1860s where he copied out but also made alterations to some of Baudelaire's poems. Marchal quotes extensively from these notebooks as he advances the argument that, for Mallarmé, to separate himself from Baudelaire is to "repenser sa poésie à la lumière de la révélation du néant et du glorieux mensonge idéaliste de Dieu, de l'âme, de la poésie même comme langage divin" (p. 248). Yoshikazu Nakaji provides a chapter on Arthur Rimbaud, proposing that he may be a case less of influence than of an "inspiration plus indécise" (p. 259), given that Rimbaud's only mention of Baudelaire is in the "Lettre du voyant." The essay compares and contrasts texts by the two poets, including "Correspondances" and "Voyelles" and "Le poème du haschisch" and "Matinée d'ivresse."

Section four moves to the twentieth century, beginning with François Lallier's essay on Pierre-Jean Jouve's texts on Baudelaire. He provides a helpful survey of Baudelaire criticism circa 1953, tracing the development of views of Baudelaire as a *névrosé* to Valéry's influential view of his classicism. Lallier provides helpful summaries of Jouve's arguments about death and the unconscious in Baudelaire, via a consideration of the role of satanic and esthetic masks in the poet's works and their function as hermeneutic tools in relation to Eros and Thanatos. Jouve constructs a Baudelaire for whom "il s'agit de réaliser une sorte d'idéal du moi par le fantasme d'un écrivain qui, ayant une connaissance parfaite de tous les moyens de la langue, serait capable de les mettre en œuvre à volonté--idéal tout à fait contraire à la représentation du poète que proposent *Les Fleurs du Mal* et plus encore *Le Spleen de Paris*" (p. 294). Patrick Née's chapter on Yves Bonnefoy summarizes the poet's extensive writing on Baudelaire, spanning from 1954 to 2011, where he reformulates Baudelaire's *double postulation* as two conceptions of the poetic, esthetic and ethical. From this is derived an opposition, according to Bonnefoy, not so much between spleen and ideal as between "réalisme *existentiel* et *idéalisme* artistique" (p. 309). Née considers the role of anamnesis in Baudelaire's writings via the network of Baudelaire's childhood servant, la Mariette, his mother, and his partner Jeanne Duval, as well as Bonnefoy's criticism of those who focus on irony in Baudelaire at the expense of Bonnefoy's preferred axis of presence. Dominique Combe's contribution considers the question of Baudelaire as a European or cosmopolitan poet; it surveys the history of his reception in Paul Valéry, Marcel Proust, and Walter Benjamin as well as the stakes of the cosmopolitanism versus nationalism debate in the historiography of national literatures in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In the last chapter, François-Jean Authier examines what he calls "l'invention de Charles Baudelaire" (p. 358) in twentieth-century novels by writers such as Pierre-Adrien Marciset, Jean Teulé, Bob Van Laerhoven, and Raphaël Confiant. This invention, which plays intriguingly with biographical facts and invented details, "fonctionne…comme une petite machine fictionnelle à produire du vrai sans avoir besoin de le montrer, sans se priver d'exhiber du faux, mais sans être contraint de prouver qu'il n'est pas vrai. Du faux-vrai-faux en quelque sorte" (p. 358).

The volume provides a multifaceted set of essays. To this reader it seems stronger in the later chapters which analyze more recent manifestations of Baudelaire's influence and cover ground that is both more solid than some of the more tentative influences explored in the first section and less traveled than that of some of the middle chapters. It is a welcome contribution to the wealth of studies of the long-lasting and far-ranging impact of the poet of the *frisson nouveau*.

LIST OF ESSAYS

Guilhem Farrugia, “Introduction”

Inspiration

Jean Lecointe, “‘Le concetto est un chef-d’oeuvre’. Baudelaire et la poétique de l’âge baroque”

Jean Dubray, “Pascal et Baudelaire”

Guilhem Farrugia, “Le démon de Rousseau dans *Le Spleen de Paris*”

Nathalie Vincent-Munnia, “Des fameux modèles à l’auréole sulfureuse: influences et postérité du poème en prose baudelairien”

Magnétisme

Patrick Labarthe, “Baudelaire et l’imaginaire de la conspiration”

Julien Zanetta, “Les mots de la tribu : Baudelaire et la critique d’art des années 1840”

Steve Murphy, “Baudelaire passeur du sonnet renversé : extension de l’empire de la suggestion”

Arnaud Bernadet, “Baudelaire continué: relectures parnassiennes”

Rayonnement

Kazuya Tsukiyama, “De l’impertinence à la certitude morale: Baudelaire et Lautréamont”

Bertrand Marchal, “Mallarmé ascendant Baudelaire(?)”

Yoshikazu Nakaji, “Rimbaud disciple rebelle de Baudelaire”

Emprise

François Lallier, “Le modèle baudelairien de Pierre Jean Jouve”

Patrick Née, “Baudelaire selon Yves Bonnefoy”

Dominique Combe, “Baudelaire, poète européen?”

François-Jean Authier, “Le roman du biographique: invention de Charles Baudelaire”

NOTES

[1] See Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1973).

[2] See Jean Dubray, *Pascal et Baudelaire* (Paris: Classiques Garnier, 2011).

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