

Agrégation 2020

George Eliot, *Middlemarch*

(A selective bibliography by Georges Letissier – Nantes)

Recommended Edition

ELIOT, George. *Middlemarch* [1871-72]. Edited by David Carroll and David Russell. Third edition. Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 2019.

Other useful edition:

ELIOT, George. *Middlemarch* (1977). Edited by Bert G. Hornback. New York & London: A Norton Critical Edition, 2000.

→ Interesting background sources, letters from George Eliot to Sara Sophia Hennell, 9 October 1843, Barbara Bodichon, 26 December, 1860 and 15 February 1862. Extract from “**The Natural History of German Life**” (*Westminster Review* 66 – July 1856)**. Selected passages from “Amos Barton”, *Scenes of Clerical Life* (1857) and *Adam Bede* (1859), affording parallel, contrastive readings with *Middlemarch*. *Quarry* for *Middlemarch* – George Eliot called *Quarry* a small notebook that she used throughout her planning and writing of the novel. It contains precious background sources: the research the novelist conducted (on medicine, cell theory, historical events contemporary with the novel's story, directions for plotlines and characterisation etc.)** Among the contemporary reviews, two are especially worthy of interest: Henry James's “George Eliot's *Middlemarch*”, reprinted from *Galaxy* (March 1873) and Leslie Stephen's “On *Middlemarch*”, from *George Eliot*, London : Macmillan, 1902. Also of interest, Bert G. Hornback's “The Moral Imagination of George Eliot”, pp. 606-618.

Many other editions of *Middlemarch* have of course been published in the anglophone world since the novel first came out in eight five-shilling parts, at two monthly intervals (Blackwood, London and Edinburgh, 1871-1872), followed by a four-volume edition selling for two guineas, or forty-two shillings (December 1872). A third revised and amended edition came out in a single volume (one-volume Cheap edition) at 7s. 6d. in May 1874. The 1874 Cheap edition was chosen as the basis for the text of the Clarendon edition (1986). See Joanne Shattock “Publishers and publication” and “Editions of George Eliot's work”, in *George Eliot in Context*. Margaret Harris (ed.), Cambridge: C.U.P., 2013. **

Translations and French Reception

ELIOT, George. *Middlemarch* Paris: Gallimard – Folio Classique, 2005.

Texte traduit et annoté par Sylvère Monod. L'édition Folio Classique reproduit en préambule la traduction de l'essai célèbre de Virginia Woolf, “George Eliot” (publié dans le *Times Literary Supplement* – 20 November 1919). La formule, bien connue désormais, selon laquelle le pouvoir d'Eliot “is at its highest in the mature *Middlemarch*, the magnificent book which with all its imperfections is one of the few English novels written for grown-up people” a été citée d'innombrables fois ! La notice de Sylvère Monod qui suit la traduction est un modèle du genre, pp.1099-1110.

Three previous translations existed :

Middlemarch, étude de la vie de la vie de province. Trad. M.-J.M. [this is the only signature], Paris : Calman-Lévy, 2 vols. 1890.

Middlemarch. Trad. Albine Loisy, Paris: Plon, 1951.

Middlemarch. Trad. Lucienne Molitor, Verviers, Gérard et Cie, coll. « Marabout Géant », 1953.

For those interested in translation studies, Savoyane Henri-Lepage « Roman, digressions et traduction. *Middlemarch* en français », *Érudit* 20, Oct 26, 2007. <<https://www.erudit.org/en/journals/ttr/2006-v19-n1-ttr1809/016659ar/abstract/>>

COUCH, John Phillip. *George Eliot in France. A French Appraisal of George Eliot's Writings: 1858-1960*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967.

Primary texts of direct interest for the study of *Middlemarch*

Apart from *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), which is usually well-known, and bears some distant resemblance with *Middlemarch* (sibling relationship, the life of a tightly-knit community and the contrasted destinies of two strong-willed female characters: Maggie Tulliver and Dorothea Brooke), the following works could be of some use:

ELIOT, George. *Scenes of Clerical Life* (1858). New York and Oxford: O.U.P., 1988.

It consists of three tales set in the Midlands featuring members of the clergy who probably already announce the likes of Humphrey Cadwallader, the Reverend Edward Casaubon or Camden Farebrother in *Middlemarch*.

ELIOT, George. *Adam Bede* (1859). New York and Oxford: O.U.P., 1998.

The topic of love renunciation is common to Camden Farebrother and Seth Bede, Adam's brother.

ELIOT, George. *Felix Holt, The Radical* (1866). New York and Oxford: O.U.P., 1998.

In many respects the novel served as a preliminary exercise for the writing of *Middlemarch*, both are set in the time of the first Reform Bill and the themes of public opinion and chance discovery are also common to both, though they are played out more blatantly in *Middlemarch*.

Translations by George Eliot (they are crucial to understand the ethic, and more widely, philosophical discourse underpinning *Middlemarch*).

ELIOT, George. *The Life of Jesus Critically Examined* (1846). Translation of David Friedrich Strauss's *Das Leben Jesu*. Reprint, Mifflintown, PA : Sigler Press, 1994.

Eliot became deeply involved with the “higher critics”, like Strauss, who believed that the Bible should be read as a historical document that is essentially a collection of myths. For Eliot the “grand fiction of belief” should not stifle the “intimate experience” of the spiritual and psychological life, which is unique to each individual. This deep-rooted conviction inflects her treatment of characters in *Middlemarch*.

ELIOT, George. *The Essence of Christianity* (1854). Translation of Ludwig Feuerbach's *Das Wesen des Christentums*. Reprint, Amherst, NY: Prometheus, 1989.

What Eliot kept from Feuerbach is the idea that individuals should not be turned into abstractions. The essence of christianity is in benevolence, sympathy and love, qualities which are commonly held as Godly, but which in fact are innate qualities natural to man. Hence Feuerbach's insistence on "sympathy". Eliot is convinced that morality grows from our ability to imagine and understand another's state of mind, this is why art and fiction count so much. The novelist may be seen as an "ethical naturalist", i.e. one who believes it is possible to work out empirical means to derive ethical truths. The novel may be seen as a laboratory to achieve this aim collectively.

ELIOT, George. *Ethics*. Translation of Baruch Spinoza. Ed. Thomas Deegan. Salzburg Studies in English Literature 102. Salzburg, 1981.

Eliot translated from the Latin two books by Spinoza *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1643), a critique of biblical miracles. Spinoza argues in particular that interpreters of the Bible have made the Scriptures conform to assumptions and biases they have brought to them, rather than approaching them with impartiality. This hermeneutic stance hugely influences Eliot always wary of the risk of biased readings. Subsequently she translated *Ethics* – unpublished in her lifetime – an essay in which Spinoza attempts to ground morality in a non-religious, or at least non-theological, context. A rationalist, Spinoza believes in the importance of the intuitive apprehension of truth, in contradistinction with the endorsement of previously established, overarching doctrines. The Dutch philosopher asserts that there are three kinds of knowledge, the top-ranking ones being reason and above it intuition. The lowest form includes perception, imagination and opinion, which Spinoza refers to as "hearsay, or knowledge from mere signs." For her part, Eliot adopts this grid of analysis when for example in *Middlemarch* she dismisses gossip as inadequate, unfounded knowledge. The Middlemarchers condemn Lydgate on empty assumptions, Eliot points out that the newly arrived doctor "is known merely as a cluster of signs for his neighbours' false suppositions" (Chap. XV). Like Spinoza, she values intuition as the method of making moral judgments, she pleads for ethical intuitionism. This is clearly stated in *The Mill on the Floss*: "All people of broad, strong sense have an instinctive repugnance to the man of maxims; because such people early discern that the mysterious complexity of our life is not to be embraced by maxims, and that to lace ourselves up in formulas of that sort is to repress all the divine promptings and inspirations that spring from growing insight and sympathy." (Book VII, ch. 2, Oxford's World Classic, 1998, p. 498).

Essays, Journals, and Letters

BYATT, A.S. and Nicholas WARREN, eds. *George Eliot: Selected Essays, Poems and Other Writings*. Harmondsworth : Penguin, 1990. **

HAIGHT, Gordon S., ed. *The George Eliot Letters*. 9 vols. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1954-78.**

HARRIS, Margaret and Judith JOHNSON, eds. *The Journals of George Eliot*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 1998.

KITCHEL, Anna, ed. *Quarry for Middlemarch*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: U. of California P., 1950. (Also in Bert G. Hornback, A Norton Critical Edition 2000, see above).**

LEWES, Charles Lee, ed. *Essays and Leaves from a Notebook*. London: William Blackwood, 1884.

PINNEY, Thomas. ed. *Essays of George Eliot*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963/New York: Columbia University Press, 1963.

———. “More Leaves from George Eliot’s Notebook.” *Huntington Library Quarterly* 29 (1966): 352-76.

PRATT, John Clark and Victor A. NEUFELDT, eds. *George Eliot’s Middlemarch Notebooks : A Transcription*, Berkeley : U of California P., 1979.

Biographies (selection)

ASHTON, Rosemary. *George Eliot: A Life*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1997(thorough and balanced, regarded by some critics as the best). *

CROSS, John W. *George Eliot’s Life as Related in her Letters and Journals*, 3 vols. Edinburgh and London: Blackwood, 1885. Cambridge: C.U.P., 1990 (by Eliot’s husband after her long companionship with George Henry Lewes, chiefly hagiographical, a purification of Eliot’s life).

DAVIS, Philip. *The Transferred Life of George Eliot*. Oxford: O.U.P., 2017 (Eliot’s life is approached through her letters, novels and the intellectual context). **

HAIGHT, Gordon S. *George Eliot: A Biography*. Oxford and New York: O.U.P., 1968. (factual and extremely detailed, based on Eliot’s letters and journals)**

HARDY, Barbara. *George Eliot: A Critic’s Biography*. London: Continuum, 2006.

HUGHES, Kathryn. *George Eliot: The Last Victorian*. New York: Farrar, Strauss & Giroux, 1999.

MEAD, Rebecca. *The Road to Middlemarch: My Life with George Eliot*. London: Granta, 2014.

REDINGER, Ruby. *George Eliot. The Emergent Self*. New York: Random House, 1975.

UGLOW, Jennifer. *George Eliot*. London: Virago Press, 1987.

→ *To get familiarised with the context in which the novel is set:*

HILTON, Boyd. *A Mad, Bad and Dangerous People? England 1783-1846*. Oxford: O.U.P., 2008

Critical Fortunes and Companions

ANDERSON, Amanda and Harry E. SHAW, eds, *A Companion to George Eliot*. Chichester, Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2013.**

ATKINSON, Juliette, ed. *Bloom’s Classic Critical Views: George Eliot*. New York: Infobase, 2009.

CARROLL, David, ed. *George Eliot: The Critical Heritage*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971.**

HAIGHT, Gordon S., ed. *A Century of George Eliot Criticism*. London: Methuen, 1965.

HARDY, Barbara. *Critical Essays on George Eliot*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970.

HARRIS, Margaret, ed. *George Eliot in Context*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 2013. *

HOLMSTROM, John and Lawrence LERNER, eds. *George Eliot and her Readers: A Selection of Contemporary Reviews*. New York: Barnes and Noble, 1966.

HUTCHINSON, Stuart. *George Eliot: Critical Assessments*, 4 vols. Mountfield: Helm, 1996.

LEVINE, George, ed. *The Cambridge Companion to George Eliot*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 2001.**

MARSHALL, Gail, ed. *Eliot, Dickens and Tennyson by their Contemporaries, Volume 1: George Eliot*. London: Pickering and Chatto, 2003.

PERKIN, J. Russell. *A Reception-History of George Eliot's Fiction*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press, 1990.

RIGNALL, John, ed. *Oxford Reader's Companion to George Eliot*. Oxford: O.U.P., 2000. Published online 2011.*

This extensive Companion contains information on individuals, topics, critics, and critical approaches, Eliot's reading, and full accounts of the publication and initial critical reception of each of Eliot's works. It also contains useful maps, a George Eliot family tree, timecharts, list of characters, and bibliography.

WILKES, Joanne. *Women Reviewing Women in Nineteenth-Century Britain: The Critical Reception of Jane Austen, Charlotte Brontë and George Eliot*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010.

The Victorian Novel

"I speak therefore of good novels only; and our modern literature is particularly rich in types of such." John Ruskin (1864)

GARRETT, Peter K. *The Victorian Multiplot Novel: Studies in Dialogical Form*. New Haven, Connecticut: Yale U.P., 1980.

GILMOUR, Robin. *The Novel in the Victorian Age: A Modern Introduction*. London: Arnold, 1986.

JENKINS, Alice and Juliet JOHN, eds. *Rereading Victorian Fiction*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 2000. (includes a chapter on *Middlemarch* "Having the Whip-Hand in *Middlemarch*", Daniel Karlin, pp. 29-43.)

MILLER, J. Hillis. *The Form of Victorian Fiction*. Notre Dame, Ind. University of N.D. Press, 1969. **

O'GORMAN, Francis, ed. *The Victorian Novel*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers Ltd, 2002. *

WHEELER, Michael, *English Fiction of the Victorian Period 1830-1890* (1995). London and New York: Routledge, 2013 (includes a subchapter on George Eliot “Incarnate history and unhistoric acts,” pp. 132-153). **

Book-Length Studies on George Eliot or Books Including Chapters on George Eliot

ANDERSON, Amanda and Harry, SHAW, eds. *A Companion to George Eliot*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013. **

BLOOM, Harold, ed. *George Eliot's Middlemarch*, New York: Chelsea House, 1957.*

BEER, Gillian. *George Eliot*. Brighton: Harvester Press, 1986.

———*Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot, and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 1983. ** Absolutely indispensable.

CARROLL, David. *George Eliot and the Conflict of Interpretations : A Reading of the Novels*. Cambridge : C.U.P., 1992.**

Carroll makes extended reference to the German hermeneutic tradition in philosophy – Strauss and Feuerbach.

———, *George Eliot: The Critical Heritage*. Abingdon: Routledge, 1971.

COHN, Dorrit. *Transparent Minds. Narrative Modes for Presenting Consciousness in Fiction*. Princeton: P.U.P, 1984.

Could be useful to analyse psychonarration in *Middlemarch*.

COTTOM, Daniel. *Social Figures: George Eliot, Social History, and Literary Representation*. Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P., 1987.

DAVIS, Michael. *George Eliot and Nineteenth Century Psychology: Exploring the Unwrapped Country*, Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006.

DENTITH, Simon. *George Eliot*. Brighton: Harvester, 1986.

DODD, Valerie A., *George Eliot: An Intellectual Life*. New York : St Martin's, 1990.

DOLIN, Tim. *Authors in Context: George Eliot*. Oxford: O.U.P., 2005.

FLEISHMAN, Avrom. *George Eliot's Intellectual Life*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 2010.*

See especially chapter 8 “The Encyclopedist: transcending the past in *Middlemarch*,” pp. 161-189.

GILBERT, Sandra M. and Susan GUBAR. *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth Century Literary Imagination*. New Haven: Yale U.P., 1979.

Gilbert and Gubar took issue with Eliot's “feminine antifeminism”, (p. 466), in other words, the beauty and heroism of renunciation.

GRAVER, Suzanne. *George Eliot and Community: A Study in Social Theory and Fictional Form*. Berkeley, Los Angeles and London, 1984.

GRAY, Beryl. *George Eliot and Music*. New York: Saint Martin's, 1989.

HARDY, Barbara. *Critical Essays on George Eliot*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Books, 1970. **

———, *The Appropriate Form. An Essay on the Novel* (1964), Bloomsbury Academic, 2013. An insightful chapter on *Middlemarch*. "Implication and Incompleteness: George Eliot's *Middlemarch*"*

———*The Novels of George Eliot: A Study in Form*. London: Althone Press, 1959.

HARRIS, Margaret. *George Eliot in Context*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 2013. * (See above)

HARVEY, W.J. *The Art of George Eliot*. London: Chatto & Windus, 1961.

This study draws attention to Eliot's novelistic techniques, especially her use of the omniscient narrator, which is more complex than had previously been thought.*

HERTZ, Neil. *George Eliot's Pulse*. Stanford, CA: S.U.P., 2003.

HODGSON, Peter C. *Theology in the Fiction of George Eliot: The Mystery Behind the Real*. London: SCM Press, 2001.

HOLLOWAY, John. *The Victorian Sage: Studies in Argument*. London: Macmillan, 1953.*

Includes an excellent chapter on George Eliot.

KUCICH, John. *Repression in Victorian Fiction: Charlotte Brontë, George Eliot, and Charles Dickens*. Berkeley: U. of California P., 1987.

LEVINE, George, and Nancy HENRY, eds, *The Cambridge Companion to George Eliot*, Second Edition, Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 2019.**

LEVINE, George, *The Realistic Imagination: English Fiction from Frankenstein to Lady Chatterley*. Chicago: U. of Chicago P., 1981. **

The Victorian realistic novel is still on a quest to confirm the reality of an external world, but "it self-consciously examines its own fictionality," p. 21.

———*Darwin and the Novelists: Patterns of Science in Victorian Fiction*. Chicago: U. of Chicago P., 1981.** Alongside with Gillian Beer, absolutely indispensable.

LOVESEY, Oliver. *The Clerical Character in George Eliot's Fiction*. Victoria: BC: ELS Editions, 1990.

MARTIN Carol. *George Eliot's Serial Fiction*. Columbus: Ohio State U. P., 1994.

MILNER, Ian. *The Structure of Values in George Eliot*. Prague. Universita Karlova, 1968.

Stimulating Marxist-socialist analysis of GE's works.

OZOUF, Mona. *L'autre George. À la rencontre de George Eliot*. Paris: Gallimard, 2018. *

PARIS, Bernard J. *Experiments in Life: George Eliot's Quest for Values*. Detroit: Wayne State U.P., 1994.

This book discusses Eliot's religious and philosophical ideas – Spinoza; Ludwig Feuerbach; Auguste Comte; David Friedrich Strauss.

PAXTON, Nancy L., *George Eliot and Herbert Spencer: Feminism, Evolutionism and the Reconstruction of Gender*. Princeton: Princeton U.P., 1991.

SEMMELE, Bernard. *George Eliot and the Politics of National Inheritance*. Oxford and New York: O.U.P., 1994.

SHUTTLEWORTH Sally. *George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Science. The Make-Believe of a Beginning*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984.** Groundbreaking.

STEPHEN, Leslie. *George Eliot*. London: Macmillan, 1902.

STUMP, Reva. *Movement and Vision in George Eliot's Novels*. Seattle: University of Washington Press. 1959.

A study of imagery.

THALE, Jerome. *The Novels of George Eliot*. New York: Columbia U.P., 1959.

WELSH, Alexander. *George Eliot and Blackmail*. Cambridge Mass.: Harvard U.P., 1985.

WIESENFARTH, Joseph. *George Eliot's Mythmaking*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter UniversitätsVerlag, 1977.

WILLIAMS, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. Oxford and New York: O.U.P., 1973.

—, *The English Novel from Dickens to Lawrence*. Oxford and New York: O.U.P., 1970 (The emphasis is laid on class, in a Marxist perspective).

WITEMEYER, Hugh. *George Eliot and the Visual Arts*. New Haven: Yale U.P., 1979.

The Midland landscape is not simply Wordsworthian, there are elements of the eighteenth century picturesque in the manner of William Gilpin and of the detailed naturalistic precision advocated by John Ruskin.

Book-Length Studies on *Middlemarch*

ADAM, Ian, ed. *This Particular Web: Essays on Middlemarch*. Toronto: T.U.P., 1975.*

BEATY, Jerome. *Middlemarch from Notebook to Novel: A Study of George Eliot's Creative Method*. Urbana: U. of Illinois P., 1961.**

BLAKE, Kathleen, ed. *Approaches to Teaching Eliot's Middlemarch*. New York: MLA, 1990.

BLOOM, Harold, ed. *George Eliot's Middlemarch*. New York: Chelsea House, 1987. *

CHASE, Karen, ed. *Middlemarch in the Twenty-First Century*. Oxford: O.U.P., 2006. **

COCKSHUT, A.O.J. *Middlemarch*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1966.*

DAICHES, David. *George Eliot: Middlemarch*. London: Edward Arnold, 1963.

HARDY, Barbara ed. *Middlemarch: Critical Approaches to the Novel*. London: The Athlone Press, 1967. *

HARVEY, W.J., ed. *Middlemarch*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1965.

HORNBACK, Bert G. *Middlemarch: A Novel of Reform*. Boston: G.K. Hall, 1988.

SWINDEN, Patrick ed. *George Eliot: Middlemarch* (1972). Basingstoke: A Casebook, Macmillan, 1991.

THOMAS, Jeanie. *Reading Middlemarch: Reclaiming the Middle Distance*. Michigan: UMI Research Press, 1987.*

Articles and Chapters on *Middlemarch*, or Relevant to *Middlemarch*

There are two George Eliot journals:

1. The George Eliot fellowship releases *George Eliot Review Online* once a year. <<https://www.georgeeliot.org/george-eliot-review/george-eliot-review-online.aspx>>

Digital archive of nearly 50 years's worth of the George Eliot Fellowship's George Eliot Review.

2. *George Eliot – George Henry Lewes Studies*. Pennsylvania State University Press, University Park, PA. Four issues yearly.

ADAM, Ian. 'George Eliot's Footnote to *Middlemarch*,' *Newsletter of the Victorian Studies Association of Western Canada*, Vol. 3 No 1 (Fall, 1976), pp. 6-7.

ARMSTRONG, Isobel. 'George Eliot, Spinoza and the Emotions,' in Amanda Anderson and Harry Shaw, eds. *A Companion to George Eliot*. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2013.**

——, 'Middlemarch: A Note on George Eliot's Wisdom,' *Critical Essays on George Eliot*. Barbara Hardy, ed., London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970, pp. 116-132.

ANDERSON, Quentin. 'George Eliot in *Middlemarch*,' in *Discussions of George Eliot*, ed. Richard Stang. London: Heath, 1960.

ANDRES, Sophia. 'The Germ and the Picture in *Middlemarch*,' *ELH*, Vol. 55, No 4 (Winter, 1988), pp. 853-868.

AUSTEN, Zelda. 'Why Feminist Critics Are Angry with George Eliot,' *College English*, Vol. 37, No 6 (Feb., 1976), pp. 549-561.

BEATY, Jerome. 'History of Indirection: The Era of Reform in *Middlemarch*,' *Victorian Studies* 1 (1957-1958), pp. 173-179.*

BEER, Gillian. *Middlemarch and "the Woman Question,"* *George Eliot*. Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press, 1986, pp. 147-199. **

——, 'George Eliot: *Middlemarch*,' in *Darwin's Plots: Evolutionary Narrative in Darwin, George Eliot and Nineteenth-Century Fiction*. Cambridge: C.U.P., 1983.**

BELLRINGER, Alan W. 'The Study of Provincial Life in *Middlemarch*,' *English* 28(1978), pp. 219-247.

- BOLTON, Françoise. « George Eliot hier et aujourd'hui », *Études anglaises*, vol. XXXIII, n° 3, pp. 257-267, 1980.
- BONAPARTE, Felicia. 'Middlemarch: The Genesis of Myth in the English Novel: The Relationship between Literary Form and the Modern Predicament,' *Notre Dame English Journal*, 8. (1981).**
- BRILMYER, S. Pearl. 'Plasticity, Form, and the Matter of Character in *Middlemarch*,' *Representations*, Vol. 130, No 1 (Spring 2015), pp. 60-83.
- BRODY, Selma B. 'Physics in *Middlemarch*: Gas Molecules and Ethereal Atoms,' *Modern Philology*, Vol. 85, No 1 (Aug. 1987), pp.42-53.
- BUZARD, James. 'How George Eliot Works,' *Ruritan*, 36/3, 2017.*
- CAPUANO, Peter J. 'An Objective Aural-Relative in *Middlemarch*,' *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. 47, No 4, The Nineteenth Century (Autumn 2007), pp. 921-941.
- CARLYLE, Janice. 'Reading *Middlemarch* Then and Now,' *Approaches to Teaching Eliot's Middlemarch*. Kathleen Blake, ed. New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1990, pp. 98-108.
- CARROLL, D.R., 'Unity Through Analogy: An Interpretation of *Middlemarch*', *Victorian Studies* 2 (1959), pp. 305-316. **
- CLARK-BEATTIE, Rosemary. '*Middlemarch*'s Dialogic Style,' *The Journal of Narrative Technique*, Vol. 15, No 3 (Fall, 1985), pp. 199-218.
- COIT, Emily. ' "This Immense Expense of Art": George Eliot and John Ruskin on Consumption and the Limits of Sympathy,' *Nineteenth Century Literature*, Vol. 65, No 2 (September 2010), pp. 214-245.
- COOVADIA, Imraan. 'George Eliot's Realism and Adam Smith,' *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, Vol. 42, No 4, The Nineteenth Century (Autumn 2002), pp. 819-835.
- DAMN, Robert F. 'Sainthood and Dorothea Brooke,' *Victorian Newsletter* 35 (1969), pp. 18-22.
- DENANCE, Pascale. « Figures archétypales de rebelle dans trois romans du XIXe siècle : *Pride and Prejudice*, *Jane Eyre* et *Middlemarch* », in Thierry Goater et Elise Ouvrard (dir), *L'engagement dans les romans féminins de la Grande-Bretagne des XVIIIe et XIXe siècles*. Rennes : coll. Interférences P.U.R., 2019, pp. 177-190.
- DING, Chinnie. "Myriad-Headed, Myriad-Handed": Labor in *Middlemarch*', *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 2, No 54, The Nineteenth Century (AUTUMN 2012), pp. 917-936.
- DROUET-RICHET, Stéphanie. « George Eliot, écrivain engagé ? Quelques pistes pour une réflexion » in Thierry Goater et Elise Ouvrard (dir), *L'engagement dans les romans féminins de la Grande-Bretagne des XVIIIe et XIXe siècles*. Rennes : coll. Interférences P.U.R., 2019, pp. 153-162.

- , « Les syncopes de la mémoire : l'oubli et le reniement dans quelques œuvres de George Eliot », in *Mémoires perdues, mémoires vives*. Marie-Christine Lemardeley, Carle Bonafous-Murat, André Topia (dirs.). Paris : Presses Sorbonne Nouvelle, 2016. pp. 13-28.
- DUNCAN, Ian. 'George Eliot's Science Fiction,' *Representations*, Vol. 125, No 1 (Winter 2014), pp. 15-39.
- EDWARD, Lee R. 'Women, Energy and *Middlemarch*,' *Massachusetts Review*, 13, 1972, pp. 223-238.**
- ERMATH, Elizabeth Deeds. 'George Eliot's Conception of Sympathy,' *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, 40 No 1 (1985), pp. 23-42. **
- FELTES. N.N. 'George Eliot's 'Pier-Glass': The Development of a Metaphor,' *Modern Philology*, Vol. 67, No 1 (Aug., 1969), pp. 69-71.
- FRASER, Hilary. 'St. Theresa, St. Dorothea, and Miss Brooke in *Middlemarch*,' *Nineteenth Century Fiction*, Vol. 40, No 4 (Mar., 1986), pp. 400-411.*
- FURST, Lilian R. 'Struggling for Medical Reform in *Middlemarch*,' *Nineteenth-Century Literature*, Vol. 48, No 3 (Dec. 1993), pp. 341-361.
- GALLAGHER, Catherine. 'George Eliot: Immanent Victorian,' *Representations*, Vol. 90, No 1(Spring 2005), pp. 61-74.**
- GIVNER, Jessie. 'Industrial History, Preindustrial Literature: George Eliot's *Middlemarch*,' *EHL*, vol. 69, No 1 (Spring 2002), pp. 223-243.
- GREINER, Rae. 'Sympathy Time : Adam Smith, George Eliot and the Realist Novel,' *Narrative*, 17 No 3, 2009. *
- GRIFFITHS, Devin. 'Falsifying George Eliot,' in *The Age of Analogy: Science and Literature between the Darwins*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2016.**
- HAGAN, John. '*Middlemarch*: Narrative Unity in the Story of Dorothea Brooke,' *Nineteenth Century Fiction* 16 (1961), pp. 17-31.
- HALE, Elizabeth. 'Sickly Scholars and Healthy Novels: The Classical Scholar in Victorian Fiction,' *International Journal of the Classical Tradition*, Vol. 17, No 2 (JUNE 2010), pp. 219-243.
- HARDY, Barbara. '*Middlemarch* and the Passions,' in Ian Adam, ed. *This Particular Web : Essays on Middlemarch*. Toronto: T.U.P., 1975. **
- HARDY, Barbara, MILLER, Hillis J., POIRIER, Richard. '*Middlemarch*, Chapter 85: Three Commentaries,' *Nineteenth-Century Fiction*, Vol. 35, No 3, Special Issue: George Eliot, 1880-1980 (Dec. 1980) pp. 432-453.
- HEILMAN, Robert B. "'Stealthy Convergence" in *Middlemarch*' A Centenary Tribute to *George Eliot*. Gordon S. Haight ed., London: Macmillan, 1982. pp. 47-54.
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George Eliot 2019

2019 marks the Bicentenary of the birth of Mary Ann Evans, known as George Eliot, in Nuneaton on 22nd November 1819.

To keep posted on all the events: <<https://georgeeliot2019.com>>

A major international conference will be held at College Court, University of Leicester. 17-19 July 2019.

'George Eliot 2019. An International Bi-Centenary Conference'

Plenary speakers: Professor Rosemary Ashton (UCL), Professor Nancy Henry (University of Tennessee, Knoxville), plenary panel featuring Professor George Levine (Rutgers), Professor Dame Gillian Beer (Cambridge), in conversation with Professor Sally Shuttleworth (University of Oxford).

A sizeable number of papers will be delivered on *Middlemarch*, which could be interesting to spot new trends in Eliottian criticism.

La Société Française d'Études Victoriennes et Édouardiennes organise en janvier 2020 une journée d'études consacrée à *Middlemarch* avec (sous réserve) la présence de Mona Ozouf

Publications 2019-20

Michael Hollington, *George Eliot. Middlemarch*. Atlande.

Georges Letissier, *'The Higher Inward Life' in Middlemarch*. Collection Intercalaires: agrégation d'anglais. Presses Universitaires de Paris Ouest, Février 2020.

Jean-Charles Perquin, ed. *George Eliot, Middlemarch (1871-72)*, Paris : Editions Ellipses, 240p.

Un ouvrage chez Belin Éducation avec le concours du CNED.

Quelques thèses soutenues en France du George Eliot

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Addendum : Bibliographie de George ELIOT, *Middlemarch* (suggestions d'Alain JUMEAU)

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• Traduction révisée :

Celle de Sylvère Monod, dans le volume :

George ELIOT, *Le Moulin sur la Floss et Middlemarch*, ed. Alain Jumeau, Bibliothèque de La Pléiade, Paris, Gallimard, 2020 (prévu pour Mars 2020)

• A paraître :

- le numéro spécial Agrégation d'*Etudes Anglaises* (fin 2019), avec un article d'Isabelle Gadoin sur *Middlemarch*.
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- le numéro 1 d'*Etudes Anglaises* (début 2020) sur George Eliot (ed. Alain Jumeau), avec un article de Michael Hollington sur *Middlemarch*.

Éléments de cadrage du cours proposés par Georges Letissier

(Modestes propositions qui n'ont aucune valeur de modèle).

L'étude de *Middlemarch* est une chance et un défi. Une chance parce qu'on a pu tenir ce roman pour l'exemple emblématique du roman victorien, sans qu'il n'ait pour autant pris aucune ride. Un défi parce que c'est un texte d'une infinie richesse qui nécessite une lecture immersive dans la durée. C'est aussi un roman qui se livre à une narration détaillée du quotidien, sur le mode de la chronique – il annonce d'une certaine façon toutes les séries télévisées qui relatent la vie des habitants d'une rue, d'un quartier¹ – tout en poursuivant une réflexion d'une haute exigence intellectuelle sur des questions d'une grande profondeur : le temps, l'historiographie, l'herméneutique, l'épistémologie, la religion, le genre (genre et gender), la passion, l'art, la création etc. Le phénomène de la réception de George Eliot dans son ensemble, et de *Middlemarch* en particulier, est tout à fait passionnant. En effet, Eliot a traversé des périodes d'oubli avant que la modernité de son écriture et les subtiles nuances de sa pensée ne soient enfin reconnues. Il est encore intéressant de noter que Eliot, à la différence de Jane Austen, des Brontë (principalement Charlotte et Emily) ou encore de Charles Dickens, échappe dans une large mesure au phénomène néo-Victorien².

Une première étape pourrait consister à replacer *Middlemarch* dans la constellation des romans victoriens. Comme nombre d'entre eux, il se fonde sur l'écart temporel entre le temps de la narration (à partir de 1868) et celui de la diégèse, les Midlands (Middlemarch, Coventry ? mais le toponyme mérite d'être analysé dans sa polysémie) avant le Reform Act de 1832, voté le 4 juin. Selon Jerome Beaty la trame narrative se déploie du 30 septembre 1829 à la fin mai 1832. À l'instar de tant d'autres romans victoriens, *Middlemarch* poursuit des intrigues multiples (multiplot novel) ; au moins quatre, le destin de l'héroïne Dorothea Brooke qui épouse en premières noces Edward Casaubon puis Will Ladislaw après le décès de ce dernier ; la relation tumultueuse entre Tertius Lydgate et sa jeune et séduisante épouse Rosamond Vincy, l'histoire d'amour au dénouement heureux entre Fred Vincy et Mary Garth, enfin le récit autour du riche banquier Nicholas Bulstrode, pieux méthodiste, dont le passé se révèle être ténébreux. Comme de nombreux romans victoriens, *Middlemarch* rassemble différents modes narratifs : le mélodrame, peut-être sous forme parodique à travers le récit enchâssé du premier amour de Lydgate, Madame Laure, meurtrière impénitente et le roman réaliste social à la Balzac. Il inclut en outre des éléments de roman romanesque sur fond pastoral. C'est aussi un roman d'idées, dont les réflexions sont nourries de la pensée philosophique de Baruch Spinoza, David Friedrich Strauss, Ludwig Feuerbach et Auguste Comte. *Middlemarch* se lit encore comme une fiction scientifique, l'influence de Charles Darwin y est patente (voir Gillian Beer et George Levine) ; le personnage de Camden Farebrother est l'exemple typique de l'homme du XIXe siècle féru de biologie,

¹ On compte au moins deux adaptations télévisées de *Middlemarch*, la plus connue celle de la BBC en 1994 a connu un franc succès, Anthony Page était le réalisateur, le scénario était d'Andrew Davies et les principaux rôles étaient tenus par Juliet Aubrey, Rufus Sewell, Douglas Hodge et Patrick Malahide.

² Sur ce point, voir Margaret Harris, « Afterlife », in Margaret Harris, ed. *George Eliot in Context*, Cambridge : C.U.P., 2013, pp. 52-61. « George Eliot has never been assimilated into the heritage industry », p. 55. Une exception serait Patricia Duncker, lectrice passionnée et passionnante de George Eliot qui a publié en 2015 *Sophie and the Sibyl. A Victorian Romance*. London: Bloomsbury.

d'entomologie, et des sciences du vivant d'une manière générale. Le roman d'Eliot est encore une fiction médicale ; à travers le personnage de Lydgate se trouvent représentés les débats autour du renouveau apporté par l'anatomie et la physiologie cellulaires qui viennent s'opposer à une approche plus empirique fondée sur la prescription de remèdes en l'absence d'examens cliniques sérieux. Il convient encore de ne pas oublier que *Middlemarch* est aussi, d'une certaine façon un roman historique, (voir le hiatus temporel entre temps du récit et temps de l'histoire racontée, indiqué ci-dessus) qui s'interroge à l'occasion sur la manière dont s'écrit l'Histoire, conjoignant ainsi l'historique et l'historiographique. Ce qu'une première approche devrait pouvoir faire ressortir c'est la pluralité d'une œuvre qui procède néanmoins à une synthèse organique de cette diversité.

La structure du roman est un deuxième point d'entrée ; chacun des huit volumes se vit attribuer un titre qui fut conservé dans la version finale. La genèse de l'œuvre est déterminante pour aborder cette question ; *Middlemarch* résulte de la fusion (sans sutures ?) de deux projets initiaux : un récit se focalisant sur Dorothea Brooke et la petite aristocratie rurale d'un village des Midlands, le second correspondait à l'image qui est donnée dans la version finale du roman de la communauté urbaine de Middlemarch, avec notamment Lydgate et Rosamond Vincy. La longue gestation du roman est à la mesure de l'ambition qu'il porte : « She recognizes this novel would be her fullest statement. Its gestation period was the longest of any works, and it would have the furthest reach »³. Le roman est ouvragé jusque dans ses moindres détails, en cela il évoque la peinture préraphaélite. Eliot s'est vu reprocher ce sens du détail, Henry James parlant de *Middlemarch* évoquait : « a treasure-house of details [...] but an indifferent whole ». Comme preuve de cette minutie, l'insertion d'épigraphes allographes ou autographes mérite une analyse sur le rapport (illustratif, analeptique, proleptique, dialectique) entre ces éléments du paratexte et le « corps » du texte (Genette *Palimpsestes* et *Seuils*). La publication feuilletonesque est également déterminante ; le rythme, le temps, l'action, les personnages, les lieux sont autant d'éléments qui permettaient aux lecteurs de s'y retrouver d'une livraison à l'autre. Il n'est pas indifférent non plus de souligner que l'intérêt pour la forme et la technique qui ont été longtemps négligés au profit de la profondeur morale du propos s'affirme avec Barbara Hardy qui fit beaucoup pour promouvoir des lectures sensibles à l'architecture de l'œuvre et à l'agencement du texte : la transposition de la structure tragique dans le quotidien ordinaire, ou encore le recours à des chaînes métaphoriques (la toile ou encore le labyrinthe notamment dans *Middlemarch*). La figure de l'analogie est centrale dans l'économie de l'œuvre.

La poétique narrative appelle le plus grand soin pour préparer l'explication de texte en particulier. L'emploi sophistiqué d'une narratrice omnisciente complexe (W.J. Harvey *The Art of George Eliot*, 1961), mérite qu'on s'y attarde. J. Hillis Miller voit dans le narrateur omniscient une sorte de figure de substitution en lieu et place de la présence tutélaire divine qui se serait éclipsée, dans un monde où la foi est mise à mal par les avancées de la science. Le discours intériorisé, la psycho-narration (Dorrit Cohn), les transferts délicats du point de vue d'un personnage à l'autre, les voix et les registres sont encore des sujets d'étude qui requièrent une grande vigilance.

La construction du personnage, domaine de prédilection du roman victorien, est une étape obligée. Concernant Eliot, son appétence éclectique insatiable pour les savoirs se retrouve

³ Frederick R. Karl, *George Eliot. A Biography. Voice of a Century*. New & London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995. p.452.

dans cette façon bien à elle qu'elle a de camper ses personnages. Ainsi emprunte-elle tour à tour ou simultanément à la sociologie⁴ : « A Study of Provincial Life », à la psychologie, à la physiologie et à la physionomie au sens darwinien, sur ce dernier point voir notamment le personnage de Caleb Garth. La critique a parfois considéré Dorothea Brooke comme un personnage hautain et distant et vu en Will Ladislaw une idée plus qu'un personnage. En revanche James ne tarit pas d'éloges pour parler de la justesse de la représentation du couple Rosamond Vincy, Tertius Lydgate : « there is nothing more powerfully real...in all English fiction, and nothing certainly more *intelligent* » !

L'étude de nombreuses questions plus thématiques ou contextuelles s'impose : la religion (l'humanisme agnostique mais néanmoins empreint du sentiment religieux d'Eliot après son apostasie, son portrait tout en finesse de Farebrother confronté aux contradictions de sa foi) ; la politique (Eliot conservatrice et néanmoins soucieuse de progrès social) ; la circulation de l'argent (voir la très victorienne question de l'héritage de Peter Featherstone – ne jamais oublié l'onomastique – et la rapacité des prétendants au magot). Enfin la question du genre (la question de l'éducation des femmes, différente pour Dorothea et Rosamond, Mary Garth et son rapport au savoir)⁵ est elle aussi déterminante. La critique s'est partagée entre celles et ceux qui ont voulu ne retenir que l'intellectuelle affranchie qui choqua ses contemporains en décidant de vivre avec un homme marié, George Henry Lewes – dont l'épouse avait déjà eu des enfants de son meilleur ami, que Lewes devait reconnaître d'ailleurs – et des féministes plus résolu(e)s qui reprochèrent à la romancière une idéologie du compromis, complaisante *in fine* avec les codes de la société patriarcale victorienne. Les derniers mots du roman ont suscité de nombreux commentaires : « that things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been, is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs. » La/e lectrice/eur se fera son idée.

Middlemarch est un roman savant qui déploie une érudition impressionnante. Le texte présente la difficulté de paraître parfois digresser pour aborder au passage des sujets appartenant à quasiment tous les champs de la connaissance. En outre, la phrase éliottienne ne se livre pas toujours de prime abord et nécessite souvent une relecture pour bien fixer tous les éléments de sens qu'elle recèle. C'est cette dimension intellectuelle et cérébrale qui a permis la réhabilitation d'Eliot, en particulier grâce à F.R. Leavis dans *The Great Tradition*. En effet à la suite du naturalisme, du décadentisme et de l'esthétisme fin-de-siècle s'était imposée l'image d'une romancière bas-bleu, compassée, et volontiers pontifiante, notamment à travers les interventions d'un narrateur omniscient dont le traitement subtil et nuancé échappait encore largement à la critique. Il appartient donc au lecteur de prêter attention à la complexité de l'enchevêtrement des discours et à la technique maîtrisée du style indirect libre.

⁴ Ce champ d'étude pourrait paraître anachronique pour une romancière du XIXe siècle, il est toutefois communément appliqué à Eliot, preuve, s'il en fallait encore une, de son extrême modernité. Voir l'introduction de George Levine dans son *The Cambridge Companion to George Eliot*, pp. 1-19 ; Terry Eagleton, "Two Approaches in the Sociology of Literature," *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 14, No. 3, *The Sociology of Literature* (Spring, 1988), The U. Chicago P. pp 469-476 et James F. English, "Everywhere and Nowhere: The Sociology of Literature After 'The Sociology of Literature'", *New Literary History*, Vol. 41, No 2, *New Sociologies of Literature* (SPRING 2010), pp. V-XXIII, The Johns Hopkins University Press.

⁵ Pour une bonne synthèse sur la question, Kate Flint, "George Eliot and Gender," in George Levine ed., *The Cambridge Companion to George Eliot*, Cambridge: C.U.P., 2001. pp. 159-180.

Enfin on pourrait envisager le dialogue entre fiction et épistémologie, fiction et mythographie, fiction et arts (la peinture, bien sûr, avec notamment les nazaréens – voir le personnage de Naumann – mais aussi la musique).