

Shifting Frontiers across Cinema and Literature

Nathalie Léger's *Suite for Barbara Loden*

Judit Karácsonyi

**Abstract:** Reflections on the relationship between film and literature seem to focus on film adaptations, while the transformation of a film into a novel remains a less known practice. In my paper, I propose to address some of the questions raised by Nathalie Léger's contemporary literary novelisation, *Suite for Barbara Loden*. While examining how this type of adaptation establishes an intermedial dialogue between cinema and literature, I intend to explore how the operation of modulation allows the filmic narrative to become more than a simple "mould for the novelistic hypotext", to become the pre/text for the literature it inspires and within which the film "takes form and finds its reflection".

**Keywords:** contemporary literary novelisation, Nathalie Léger, *Suite for Barbara Loden*, *Wanda*, white wall/black hole system, faciality

Judit Karácsonyi is senior assistant professor at the Department of French Studies, University of Szeged, Hungary. Her research focuses on the relationship between cinema and literature in French and American/English cultures, with a special interest in the phenomenon of contemporary French novelisation.

Email: [karacsonyi.judit.krisztina@szte.hu](mailto:karacsonyi.judit.krisztina@szte.hu)

AMERICANA – E-Journal of American Studies in Hungary, Vol. XX., No. 1., 2024  
ISSN 1787-4637

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.14232/americana.2024.1.17-25>

## Shifting Frontiers across Cinema and Literature

### Nathalie Léger's *Suite for Barbara Loden*

Judit Karácsonyi

“Seen from a distance, a woman, etched against the darkness.  
Whether it is a woman, in fact, is hard to tell, we're so far away.  
Framed by mountains of rubble, a tiny white figure,  
barely more than a dot against the dark expanse,  
slowly and steadily picks its way through this huge mass of debris:  
a vast, towering slagheap, intersected with great mounds of excavated rock,  
stony depressions, muddy tracks waiting to be ploughed up by the lorries.” (Léger 2015, 3)

We enter Nathalie Léger's text through the door of the cinema but without knowing it. Unaware, we believe being fully involved in literature but it is only later that the narrator reveals that she is recounting the story of a film in the following way: “The American actress and director Barbara Loden told this woman's story in the 1970 film *Wanda*, the only film she has ever directed and in which she also played the leading role” (Léger 2015, 5). At this point, the status of the literary text changes, as we discover that we are actually reading the literary adaptation of a cinematographic work.

Adaptation is a cultural practice that performs transmedialisation, and implies a change of medium; in other words, we move from one medium to another, generally from novels to films. Although novelisation is a practice that has existed in the arts in one form or another, especially since the advent of cinema, theoretical reflections on the relationship between film and literary text focused mainly on the aspect on film adaptations from novel to film, but adaptation is a phenomenon that can also go in the other direction, that is, from film to a literary work. And in this context, the two contemporary trends of film rewriting, commercial and literary novelisation, differ in several respects. While the first trend is mainly associated with Hollywood blockbusters, the latter is characterised by the work of French writers, who draw their inspiration from cinema, inserting a filmic story or a part of it into the diegesis of a new, literary narrative. This is the case in Tanguy Viel's *Cinéma* (Minuit, 1999), Patrick Deville's *La Tentation des armes à feu* (Seuil, 2006), Alice Ferney's *Paradis Conjugal* (Albin Michel, 2008), Olivia Rosenthal's *Ils ne sont pour rien dans mes larmes* (Gallimard, 2012) or Nathalie Léger's *Suite for Barbara Loden* (Les Fugitives 2015), just to mention some examples.

While there are many ways in which these works differ considerably from commercial novelisations, as thoroughly analysed by Belgian specialist Jan Baetens (Baetens 2018), it is essential to emphasise the intermediary transposition that these works carry out in case of those from film to text – unlike commercial productions, where the source is never the film itself, but the script and which, as a result, involves only one medium, that of the text towards another text. In other words, the adaptation of a cinematographic work (not a script!) into a novel, forms a bridge between the cinematographic image and the literary text, establishing a special type of dialogue between the film ‘being told’ and the literary work that ‘retells the story.’ Moreover, the practice of contemporary novelisation – according to French academics, and especially that according to Jean-Max Colard – duly reflects the ‘post-cinema’ (Colard 2015, 17) situation of contemporary literature. Even if literature is often seen as a source of inspiration for other art forms, here it comes second to cinema. However, in the case of literary novelisation, coming after and being based on cinema does not imply that the filmic narrative serves as a “mould for the



novelistic hypotext” (Baetens 2018, 126); it becomes a pre/text for literature, which – imbued with issues and techniques associated with cinema – recycles some of them.

One of the great challenges this literary practice is supposed to overcome is to take hold of the film, but in order to make something else out of it. The challenge actually is to become something other than the film, while remaining based on and closely attached to it. Unlike in the case of commercial novelisation, which tries to conceal the original form, contemporary literary novelisation exhibits more or less explicitly the borrowings it makes, but also the operation it undergoes, whereby the literary text becomes the film’s double, within which the film “takes form and finds its reflection” (Ropars 2007).

Certain aspects of this operation and these borrowings are present in the work of Nathalie Léger, who drew inspiration from a film when writing *Suite for Barbara Loden*. The film in question is Barbara Loden’s only feature film, *Wanda*, which was released in 1970. Hardly ever mentioned in the official histories of American cinema, Loden’s film is now considered, on both sides of the Atlantic to be an emblematic film of American independent cinema. I do not intend to go into details about the film itself, as *Americana* gave me the opportunity some years ago, to publish a paper on Loden’s film (Karácsonyi 2014). However, it is important to recapitulate some aspects that will constitute the present paper’s point of departure.

Inspired by *cinéma vérité*, the French New Wave and the American avant-garde, *Wanda* is part of the counterculture of its time, with characteristics that associate the film with New American Cinema: microscopic budget, documentary style, and small creative crew. The film shows “characters who exist in nothingness, survive only in the void, defy logic and psychology” (Deleuze 1998, 81); they are marginalised characters of an America rarely evoked on screen. Barbara Loden drew her inspiration for the screenplay of her film, in which she plays the title role, from a true story, the story of a real woman, Alma Malone. Wanda, who leaves her husband and children after her divorce, departs with curlers in her hair and with a small white handbag. She has no place to stay and no means of living. Like *Bartleby*, she is “without references, without possessions, without properties, without qualities, without peculiarities [...]. Without past or future” (Deleuze 1998, 74). She is just hanging around with no particular aim when she meets a small-time crook, Mr. Dennis. She becomes his lover and accomplice in a bank robbery. The movie shows their travel towards a dead end: death for the man and prison for the woman. These two characters are no more than two petty criminals, two outsiders travelling across industrial America displaying desolate coal fields, seedy bars and run-down motels, empty agricultural fields and ravaged parking lots – a setting that is seldom emphasized in classical Hollywood narratives. Showing the different stages of this odd couple’s journey, *Wanda* is a genuine road movie in an anti-Bonnie-and-Clyde style.

Léger’s project to rewrite the filmic narrative is part of the aim to explore Loden’s, that is, the director’s life. Léger is quite familiar with this type of adventure and the range of possible methods to adopt as she is not only a writer (essayist, biographer and novelist), but also an editor and curator of several exhibitions, devoted to literature and theatre. Born in 1960, she is now the Director of the Institut mémoires de l’édition contemporaine (IMEC), an institution created in 1988 to gather archives and studies related to the main French publishing houses, based at the Ardenne Abbey near Caen, in Normandy. Léger has curated a number of exhibitions: *Le Jeu et la Raison*, dedicated to Antoine Vitez (Festival d’Avignon, 1994); *L’Auteur et son éditeur: à travers les collections de l’Institut Mémoires de l’édition contemporaine* (IMEC, 1998), an exhibition devoted to Roland Barthes, organised in 2002, and another one on Samuel Beckett in 2007, both held at the Georges Pompidou Centre. She edited the five-volume edition of Antoine Vitez’s *Écrits sur le théâtre* (P.O.L. 1994–1998) and compiled, annotated and presented the edition of Roland Barthes’s last two lectures at the Collège de France, *La Préparation du roman* (Seuil–IMEC, 2002). She is the author of an essay entitled *Les Vies silencieuses* de Samuel Beckett, published in 2006 by Allia. Her first novel, *L’Exposition*, published in 2008 at the P.O.L. publishing house, retraces the life of the Countess Virginia Oldoini Castiglione, on the basis of a

collection of photographs found in her library. The English translation, *Exposition*, by Amanda deMarco is published by Les Fugitives in 2019. *L'Exposition* is followed in 2012 by *Supplément à la vie de Barbara Loden*. Awarded the Prix du Livre Inter the same year, the novel about the American actress and filmmaker Barbara Loden garnered important critical and popular acclaim. Translated into English by Natasha Lehrer and Cécile Menon, *Suite for Barbara Loden* is published in 2015 by Les Fugitives. In 2018, P.O.L. publishes Léger's *La Robe blanche*, awarded the French booksellers' award Prix Wepler. It recounts the tragic story of Italian performance artist Pippa Bacca, who was raped and murdered in Turkey in April 2008, while on a journey from Milan to Jerusalem, promoting the cause of peace, hitchhiking and wearing a white wedding dress. *The White Dress*, translated by Natasha Lehrer, is published by Les Fugitives in 2020. *Suivant l'azur*, published in 2020 (P.O.L.) is a book of grief, a short text written after the death of Léger's husband.

*Suite for Barbara Loden* is the first book published in 2015 by Les Fugitives, a publishing house founded in 2014 with the objective of publishing books written by award-winning, francophone women writers, who have previously not been translated into English. The publication is credited as being instrumental to the re-release of Barbara Loden's *Wanda* in American film theatres, together with the efforts of French actress Isabelle Huppert. Huppert fell under the spell of the film, promoted by Marguerite Duras in French intellectual circles and succeeded in obtaining the distribution rights of the film and released a DVD of *Wanda* in 2004. Huppert even went to the United States to take *Wanda* back to New York for a screening in October 2005. Interestingly, Nathalie Léger 'discovered' the film thanks to the DVD distributed by Huppert and decided to create a narrator, who retraces Loden's life so that she can write a biography of the forgotten actress-director: "I [...] spent several months trying to piece together the life of Barbara Loden" (Léger 2015, 24), writes Léger. Hired by an editor to write a short entry for a film encyclopaedia, the narrator, who has the double objective of "presenting the author and his work, Barbara and *Wanda*" (Léger 2015, 13), lets herself to be caught up in her subject. This is how this process appeared: "I kept being carried away by the subject, and I was appalled, devastated, to discover that it had all started, in spite of and even without me" (Léger 2015, 24). The author becomes obsessed with her subject, so much so that she ends up writing a whole book in which the narrator as mediator of the cinematic universe, tells the story of *Wanda* and of Barbara as well. In doing so, she has to combine quite different narrative levels: the story of Alma Malone, the story of *Wanda*, and the life and work of Barbara Loden, which are obviously present in the final, novelised text but new narrative spaces also emerge with the appearance of certain episodes from the lives of the narrator and her mother.

The narrator watches the film with her mother, who tells her about the hours she spent wandering around Cap 3000, a shopping mall in the suburbs of Nice, after her divorce, associating herself with the aimless figure of the recently divorced *Wanda* in the film. The narrator of the novelisation also talks about the biographical and documentary research she is carrying out to retrace Loden's life. She even travels to the United States to revisit the locations where Loden shot her film, following her steps, literally retracing *Wanda's* journey, as well as certain key episodes of the American director's life.

The cinematographic space of *Wanda* and the biographical details about Loden that unfold reappear in the book, bringing back certain autobiographical elements from the narrator's life. This strategy echoes Loden's film, which tells the reconstructed story of Alma Malone through a fictional character, *Wanda*, played by the director herself, a strategy that helps create a novelistic space in which a game of dissolves, appearances and disappearances takes place. Biography gradually fades away to allow autobiography, or, more precisely autofiction to make its appearance. The paragraphs recounting Loden's life merge into those about the narrator, the scenes from the film with *Wanda* flow into the story of the mother and the other way round. This gradual shift from biography into autobiography and fiction, accordingly, becomes something of a necessity for the narrator, since she has embarked on a



course of action the outcome of which is, to say the least, dubious. For, as we read the text, it becomes clear that the narrator is unable to reconstruct Loden's life: "I wasn't able to gain access to any of the papers that might have allowed me, documents in hand, to retrace the life of Barbara Loden" (Léger 2015, 59). For the lack of documents, certainly; but also, as the narrator realises, because of the "inescapable gap between a past life and its narrative recounting" (Middeke 1999, 13), the intention to give an account of a life being, in itself, an act that fictionalises that same life. The narrator comes then to the conclusion that the interfering of the fictional within the factual is a necessity, if one wishes to approach what is supposed to be the truth of a life. She says that "[i]n the end it was a novel that allowed me to get closer – though still not very close – to what I was trying to find" (Léger 2015, 59). Truth, we read in the epigraph borrowed from Jean-Luc Godard's *Detective* (1985), is "between appearing and disappearing," it is "between wanting to know nothing and wanting to know everything" (Léger 2015, 26).

The evidence of the deficiency of language to grasp this truth, which nevertheless remains the ultimate goal of the whole enterprise, becomes more and more evident throughout the text. Words, "ordinary words are not enough" (Léger 2015, 100), while the right words are missing. So the narrator, who at first insists on trying to "name things, one by one, flatly" (Léger 2015, 10), comes to the decision "with no idea how to describe," (Léger 2015, 116) or how to name anything, to mute the *sound* and to rely solely on the *image* "of the infinite ribbon unspooling on the GPS screen," while "heading into this unknown country" (Léger 2015, 99). And finally, for the last few miles of her journey, the narrator turns the whole thing off in order to concentrate. In accordance with Ari J. Blatt's argument (Blatt 381–2), one can see that at the beginning the narrator seems convinced of the power of language to overcome the impossibility of ekphrasis, she also realizes the vanity of her efforts, because, as Foucault noted, "it is in vain that we say what we see; what we see never resides in what we say" (Foucault 1994, 9). Everything in this novelisation speaks of the inadequacy of language "to tell a simple story," of the failure of words to "name things, one by one" (Léger 2015, 8). Although narrator also tries to describe what remains off screen, what the camera misses, that is, the "backlit hole" and the "blind spot" of Barbara Loden's story, she will not be able to grasp the unspeakable of the image, nor the unfathomable of the unknown face, which is a deterritorialised zone, as she is nonetheless "tugging it from oblivion for a moment" (Léger 2015, 10–1).

Novelisation, thus, becomes in an original but also in a necessary way, a space where biographical, autobiographical and fictional elements connect and become intertwined. It also becomes the space of modulation resulting in a space where disparate lives, fragments of lives start to communicate with each other. This operation, the modulation of the factual by the fictional, calls into question the stability of the reference, while detaching the biography from its referential framework. Even if the narrator pretends, with her overt documentary efforts, to give the referential a key role: "I was trying to be as objective and rigorous as possible. To describe and only to describe, in as few words as possible. Barbara. Wanda. Stick to the subject" (Léger 2015, 18), at the level of fiction that something happens. Even the narrator's journey to the United States, which is supposed to provide authentic documents and information, will reveal to be an opportunity to recount what the narrator is doing in terms of fiction: through fictional encounters such as the meeting with Mickey Mantle, the famous baseball player, who may have known Barbara Loden, but who died in 1995.

If the junction between fictional and factual is not without fault, it is because it is not intended to be invisible. It is there to disconcert, to displace the conception the reader is elaborating, by calling into question the stability of the reference. As a result, the novelisation becomes a field where what we can aspire to is no longer to grasp the other, but merely to "link [our] present with the history of certain emotions experienced by other people" (Léger 2015, 41), to connect disparate lives, fragments of lives in a kind of dissolve, in a kind of transition that gradually superimposes one image on the other. This technique, borrowed from the cinema, is exploited on several levels by the author in order to describe a film. This practice gives shape to



a narrative of lives that is open, on the one hand, to cinema, but also, necessarily, to fiction, to a “fictional archive” (Léger 2015, 57). It allows the narrator to reconstruct what escapes the realm of the factual, of the referential in “a life narrative that is no longer linear, but on the contrary discontinuous, irregular” (Colard 2012).

A series of biographical, autobiographical and fictional sequences thus constitutes the Légerian novelistic space, with the well-defined aim of telling the story of Loden’s life, of capturing her face. Barbara Loden plays Wanda in the film, she “*is* Wanda, as they say in the movies” (Léger 2015, 24). The narrator is therefore trying to find Loden’s face behind Wanda’s. In the film, Wanda’s face appears immediately after the description her husband gives of her in court where their separation is finalised. As Léger explains in the text:

When she comes in we already know all about her, the husband has let it all out, we know that he has to prepare his own breakfast, that she doesn’t care about anything, doesn’t take care of the house, doesn’t take care of the kids, neglects them, spends her days lying on the coach. (Léger 2015, 14)

It is as if Wanda’s face was drawn by her husband. She is identified, constituted as a subject by him: she is, in the words of Deleuze and Guattari, stuffed, from the start, into the black hole of subjectification, pinned to the white wall of significance (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, 167–91).

But what is a face? The face, we read in *A Thousand Plateaus*, is the product of an abstract machine. An abstract machine of faciality is first and foremost a white wall/black hole system with an axis of signifiacnce and an axis of subjectification. The role of the face would be to “delimit a field that neutralizes in advance any expressions or connections unamenable to the appropriate significations [...], to a dominant reality” (Deleuze and Guattari 2005, 168). Operating by binarisation, by assigning significances according to the established order, the abstract machine of faciality prevents and crushes multiplicity and polyvocality. This system of holey surfaces is evoked in Léger’s text, notably during the narrator’s journey to the United States, when the filmic and the literary spaces become superimposed, one sliding over the other. In this space conjugating the filmic and the literary, the filmic present – even when recounted, the film is being written in the present, in the time of the cinema – meets the narrator’s present “in a room in a 1960s motel near Waterbury, Connecticut [...] miraculously preserved” (Léger 2015, 40), which we see several times in the film and in which the narrator spends some time during her stay in the United States; or again, at the entrance of the Houdini Museum in Scranton, dedicated to the escape artist. It is in this museum that the narrator meets Mickey Mantle, the baseball player, with whom she talks about Barbara Loden, Marcel Proust, autobiography and writing in general. Mickey Mantle tells her how, in order to write his memoir, he “wanted to describe the trajectory of a baseball, [...] – the *hole* the ball makes against the background, its shape and how it has warped” (Léger 2015, 113), but he admits that he failed:

I still couldn’t describe the trajectory of a baseball, no more than I could describe Barbara Loden, I wouldn’t be able to make her spirit come back. Besides, I didn’t know her, her spirit I mean – maybe I glimpsed it through her body, or maybe I’m confusing it with [...] the warped shape, the disappearing and the reappearing of some sensation against a dark backdrop... (Léger 2015, 114)

Describing the trajectory of a baseball, the hole the ball makes against the background, the form and its deformation, the disappearance and appearance—all would be the challenge not only of (auto)biography, but also of novelisation, which would have to describe the image, capture and show what necessarily remains off screen between two consecutive images, making present the virtualities hidden within the folds of the filmic narrative and triumphing where the image fails, and where, with Léger’s words, truth lies “between appearing and disappearing.” Even if this challenge is doomed to failure (“I still couldn’t”), even if there are “so many obstacles” (Léger

2015, 25) and the narrator has access to very few documents, the book is still being written. The intrusion of the filmic present into the autofictional narrative thread dissolves the gap between the film and text; it provides the necessary suture for the creation of a space where the two narratives – filmic and literary – enter into an intersected becoming, bearing witness to the fact that “contemporary literature is no longer written in an irreducible singularity, but in the shared present of art, characterised by the impurity and hybridisation of languages” (Colard, 107).

The reflections Mickey Mantle shares with the narrator about the hole the baseball makes against the background evoke the white wall/black hole system that freezes the play of signification by breaking down all connections. The face emerges and takes shape, takes form where the baseball meets the background. But Léger, like her double Mantle, refuses to play the game by staging the flight of faces that evade the grip of significance and subjectification. Instead of tracing and drawing the well-defined contours of a face – Loden’s face – the narrator proposes a proliferation of faces. Instead of making the face, instead of giving the illusion of a face traced in a biographical manner, she dismantles it, taking as her model not the Anglo-American novel praised by Deleuze in *Dialogues* (Deleuze and Parnet 1987) for its ability to trace a *line* of flight instead of making a *point* (*emphasis added*) — but an American film. It is through Loden’s film that Léger shows us how a line of flight is traced in the gap and in the interstices that remain between the superimposed faces. Instead of placing the central eye necessary for the constitution of the subject, Léger prefers to proceed by a continuous displacement of the geometrical point, not letting the contours of the face freeze. And while doing so, she has recourse to dissolves or cross-fade transitions, a technique associated with cinema, but becoming a narrative technique in her text.

The transition between two images is a cinematographic technique recycled by Léger for literary purposes. On the one hand, the use of dissolves ensures the conjunction of the two systems, cinematographic and literary, but it also outflanks the white wall/black hole system of the abstract machine of faciality. The different narrative threads of the novel – the paragraphs recounting the film and those describing Barbara Loden or the life of the narrator and her mother – are carefully separated from each other at the beginning of the text. However, as the narrator is more and more overwhelmed and drawn in by her subject, the boundaries become increasingly blurred. New folds of the film emerge before the eyes of the reader-spectator, as one face disappears and is replaced by another within the same paragraph, like a dissolve that reveals a new image, a new face. The most striking examples of the appearance of one face behind another show how characters who occupy the same place in the narrator’s perception, even if only momentarily, will overlap or coincide in the novelised space: Wanda “is buried beneath this dark, shapeless body, out of sight under his bulk, he’s heavy[,] I’m fighting for breath, he’s crushing me” (Léger 2015, 118–9). This example shows how Wanda’s vanishing face evokes the face of the “I,” that of the narrator (also involving the reader into a game of identifications), all within the same sentence (lost in translation). And then, we can see the face of the narrator’s mother give its way to Wanda’s face:

For hours she [the mother] wandered around Cap 3000, just wandered around, for hours. From the outside, she says, I must have looked like a doctor’s wife doing some shopping, from the outside what can you see of the deepest despair [– w]e see nothing on Wanda’s face as she drifts around town; all we see is a woman waiting, killing time. (Léger 2015, 33)

The last quotation illustrates the superimposition of the face of Barbara Loden, that of Wanda, the film character whose features becomes visible when the light goes out, and finally that of the mother wandering around the shopping mall: “The light goes on. I can see Barbara’s face. The light goes off. Wanda is leaning over the man lying beside her, watching him. The light goes on.



A woman [the mother] is walking alone through a shopping mall. The light goes off” (Léger 2005, 68).

The dissolve process is used in cinema to create continuity between two shots, two disparate shots, which are momentarily superimposed. In this novelisation, two or more disparate faces are superimposed. This cinematographic technique allows Léger to create a multiple visual network able to escape facialisation, this white wall/black hole system that brings with itself the promise of a rocklike identity, overtly criticised by Deleuze and Guattari.

Léger’s text refuses “to put an end to the almost imperceptible way the image vibrates” (Léger 2015, 95) by retaining a certain trembling of the image. “I would think that I recognised the contours, but I could never be sure: everything had shifted, the image was out of focus.” (Léger 2015, 102), remarks the narrator. The text speaks precisely of this instability, of the impossibility of making one face, of assigning a fixed significance, of writing a “definitive biography” (Léger 2015, 76). This trembling “blurs the image, marks it with an essential uncertainty, [and] keeps the form from ’taking’”. These shifts, this succession of passages from one face to another, mean that the “referents are lost, and [... t]he subject loses its texture in favour of an infinitely proliferating patchwork”. There is no longer a face, “there is no longer a subject that tries to conform to the image [...]. Rather, a zone of indistinction, of indiscernibility, or of ambiguity seems to be established between two terms,” between two superimposed terms (Deleuze 1998, 77–8). This connection is not necessarily the product of a pre-existing resemblance; the similarity will be produced precisely by the shift, by the becoming contiguous of the two faces, which leave behind their spatiotemporal coordinates in order to be connected, in order to communicate. It is analogy by modulation, the connection of disparate elements that undoes the referential relationship, through the superimposition of several faces, through the resulting seriality of faces.

With the gesture of fading one face over another, the author is giving up the idea of capturing a single face with well-defined contours; instead, she proposes facial features that can no longer be subsumed to a single face; she proposes a proliferation of faces that trace the map of an unknown landscape. And even if the unknown face refuses to be appropriated, we understand that this is because the Légerian face is never one, it is actually a multiple physiognomy from the outset: Wanda’s face is Alma’s face, but also that of Barbara, who interprets her. Alma Malone, Wanda Goronski, Barbara Loden, the narrator, the mother, but also Elizabeth Taylor, Delphine Seyrig and Sylvia Plath, Emily Dickinson, Madame Hanska and Marina Vlady, Marilyn Monroe, Madame Bovary and Edna, a multitude of names mentioned in the text, implying a great number of faces (possible supplements?) that take on a collective value by being superimposed on one another in a hybrid environment, at the junction of image and text. Attesting to the plurality of identity, faces in perpetual becoming and multiple connections, act as the centrifugal forces of the new, literary text. To render the image blurred, the geometrical point must be constantly displaced, while subjectification as the constitution of a stable subject must be constantly thwarted, through a play brought by the seriality of the superimposed faces. This interplay of appearance and disappearance prevents the face from taking a rigid form, hinders it from becoming conform, and, at the same time, allowing the literary text to thematise, in a metatextual gesture, the problem of subjectification and significance across genres.

## Works Cited

Baetens, Jan. 2018. *Novelization: From Film to Novel*. Feeney, Mary tr. Columbus: Ohio State University Press. [Baetens, Jan. 2008. *La novellisation. Du film au roman*, Bruxelles : Les Impressions Nouvelles.]





- Blatt, Ari J. 2005. "Remake: Appropriating film in Tanguy Viel's Cinéma." *Contemporary French and Francophone Studies*, vol. 9, n° 4, 379–386.
- Colard, Jean-Max. 2012. *Filmographie et récit de vie: autour des Larmes d'Olivia Rosenthal* (conference paper, Saint-Etienne, 19 October 2012) Available: [http://jeanmaxcolard.com/media/portfolio/telechargements/rosenthal\\_028o.pdf](http://jeanmaxcolard.com/media/portfolio/telechargements/rosenthal_028o.pdf) Access: June 26, 2024.
- Colard, Jean-Max. 2015. *Une littérature d'après. « Cinéma » de Tanguy Viel*. Dijon : Les Presses du réel.
- Deleuze, Gilles. 1998. "Bartleby; or the Formula." In *Essays Critical and Clinical*. Smith, Daniel W. and Michael A. Greco tr. London: Verso, 68–90. [Deleuze, Gilles. 1993, « Bartleby ou la formule. » In *Critique et clinique*, Paris : Minuit, 89–115.]
- and Félix Guattari. 2005. "Year Zero: Faciality." In *A Thousand Plateaus. Capitalism and Schizophrenia 2*. Massumi, Brian tr. Minneapolis, London: University of Minnesota Press, 167–191. [Deleuze, Gilles et Félix Guattari. 1980. « Années Zéro – Visagéité. » In *Mille Plateaux. Capitalisme et schizophrénie 2*, Paris : Minuit, 205–34.]
- and Claire Parnet. 1987. "On the Superiority of Anglo-American Literature." In *Dialogues*. Tomlinson, Hugh and Barbara Habberjam tr. New York: Columbia University Press, 36–76. [Deleuze, Gilles et Claire Parnet. 1977. « De la supériorité de la littérature anglaise-américaine. » In *Dialogues*, Paris : Flammarion, 47–91.]
- Foucault, Michel. 1994. "Las Meninas." In *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. New York: Random House, Vintage Books Edition, 3–16. [Foucault, Michel. 1966. « Les suivantes. » In *Les mots et les choses : une archéologie des sciences humaines*. Paris : Gallimard, 19–31.]
- Karácsonyi, Judit. 2014. "Fictions and Realities: On the margins of Barbara Loden's *Wanda* and Nathalie Léger's *Supplément à la vie de Barbara Loden*." *Americana – E-Journal of American Studies in Hungary*, vol. X., n°1. Available: <https://www.americanaejournal.hu/index.php/americanaejournal/article/view/45180/43831> Access: June 26, 2024.
- . 2016. "Visages à la frontière du cinéma et de la littérature." *Chimère – Potentialités cinémas*, n° 89, 195–203.
- Léger, Nathalie. 2015. *Suite for Barbara Loden*. London: Les Fugitives, tr. Lehrer, Natasha and Cécile Menon. [Léger, Nathalie. 2012. *Supplément à la vie de Barbara Loden*. Paris: P.O.L.]
- Middeke, Martin. 1999. "Introduction." In *Biofictions. The Rewriting of Romantic Lives in Contemporary Fiction and Drama*. Middeke, Martin and Huber Werner eds. Rochester, NY: Camden House, 1–25.
- Ropars, Marie-Claire. 2007. "On Filmic Rewriting: Contamination of the Arts or Destruction of Art's Identity?" *Rouge* n°11. Available: [http://www.rouge.com.au/11/filmic\\_rewriting.html](http://www.rouge.com.au/11/filmic_rewriting.html) Access June 26, 2024.

