

Le sommeil dans *À la recherche du temps perdu*
de Marcel Proust : une étude intertextuelle

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Abstract

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This thesis examines the intertextual aspects of the sleep motif in *À la recherche du temps perdu* by Marcel Proust. Literary scholars and theorists have generally identified two dominant ways of depicting sleep in literature. One is the psychological approach, where the dreamer's experience is considered to be a false, psycho-affective one. The other approach, conversely, considers it as a real experience and often even as a spatio-corporeal journey into a different world. This study focuses on the spatio-corporeal approach in relation to Marcel Proust's depiction of sleep. The theoretical framework of the study is informed by Michael Riffaterre's notions of hypogram, descriptive systems and *intertextualité obligatoire*.

The analysis is divided in two parts. Firstly, the spatial aspects of Proust's sleep motif are considered. Notions such as spatialisation of sleep and geography of sleep, which have been established in previous Proust research, serve to highlight how Proust constructs a sleepworld within the novel, which runs parallel to the waking existence of the protagonist. Secondly, the study considers in more detail the specific intertextual convergences between the sleepworld of *La Recherche* and other literary texts, which also employ a spatio-corporeal logic in depicting sleep.

These readings seek above all to underline the continuity in the representation of the sleep motif in Proust's novel and the complex intertextuality that underpins it and highlights its spatio-corporeal nature. It is argued that the passages recounting sleep in Proust's novel, far from being digressions or disparate parts with no relation to one another, form a whole within the work – a parallel world where the protagonist lives a second life.