Reviews

Gallagher, Edward J[oseph], trans. *The Lays of Marie de France, Translated, with Introduction and Commentary*. Indianapolis/Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 2010. 193 p. ISBN 978-1-60384-188-7.

Unlike the treatment of other medieval works, this latest (prose) translation still does not offer a complete bilingual, Old French/English text, but allows at least for a comparative reading of one quarter of the twelve *lais* (*Guigemar, Bisclavret* and *Yonec*, as well as the Prologue, having been appended in Old French). Such an arrangement was last proposed in Burgess's and Busby's 2003 edition of their 1986 translation, the appended *lais* being *Lanval*, *Laüstic* and *Chevrefoil*. Astonishingly, E. J. Gallagher bases the French texts and his translation on the 1925 edition of the *Lais* by Karl Warnke, in unexplained disregard of more recent editions which could have been used, if and where necessary, as controls, and which at any rate should at least have been mentioned. On the other hand, while the target readership is nowhere identified, it is clear that the translator cares less about the many layers of erudite minutiæ under which have come to lie the *lais*, than about a "faithful rendition of the sense of the original" (xxv). He does not say much more about his translation "philosophy" and craft, but permits instead a few glimpses into his actual work habits. He explains, for example, his treatment of doublets ("he declared and announced") which, according to context and his personal judgment, he sometimes preserves and at other times collapses ("he spoke and said…" > "he spoke, saying…"); he devotes a full page to show how he did not abandon Marie's use of parataxis ("the drawbridge was down, the lady entered the city") as opposed to modern, interpretive hypotaxis ("the drawbridge was down, *and so* the lady entered the city"); and, in the absence of a medieval "concordance des temps," he reserves the right to impose on Marie's unsystematic use of tenses a regime of modern narrative logic. The examples demonstrate both the present-day stylistic concerns of Gallagher as a translator striving for readability and elegance, and his desire to give the reader a feeling for Marie's medieval way of constructing a sentence, an episode, a *lai*.

Here is the translator at work (on the interior prologue to *Guigemar*):

"[…] Oëz, seignur, que dit Marie / ki en sun tens pas ne s'oblie […]. [Q]uant il a en un païs / hume ne femme de grant pris, / cil ki de sun bien unt envie […] [s]un pris li vuelent abaissier: / pur ceo comencent le mestier / del malvais chien coart, felun, / […] / Nel vueil mie pur ceo laissier, / si jangleür u losengier / le me vuelent a mal turner; / ceo est lur dreiz de mesparler." (147)

Gallagher:

"[…] Hear, my lords, what Marie says, who does not wish to be forgotten in her time […]. [W]hen there are men and women of good repute in a country, those who are envious of their good name […] want to devalue their renown; for this reason they assume the stance of a malicious, cowardly, and felonious dog […]. If gossips or slanderers want to criticize me harshly, I in no way wish to abandon my work because of this; it's their right to speak ill of me." (4)

Burgess and Busby (2003 [1986]):

"[…] Hear, my lords, the words of Marie, who, when she has the opportunity, does not squander her talents. […] [W]hen there exists in a country a man or woman of great renown, people who are envious of their abilities […] [want to] damage th[eir] reputation. Thus they start acting like a vicious, cowardly, treacherous dog […]. But just

because spiteful tittle-tattlers attempt to find fault with me I do not intend to give up. They have a right to make slanderous remarks." (43)

The little that can be deduced from such a short sample would be Gallagher's closer adherence to the original ("que dit Marie" = "what Marie says" vs. "the words of Marie"; "tens" = "time" vs. "opportunity"; "s'oblie" = "to be forgotten" vs. "squander talents"; "bien" = "good name" vs. "abilities"; "abaissier" = "devalue" vs. "damage"; "mesparler" = "speak ill" vs. "make slanderous remarks") and his less colloquial vocabulary ("jangleür u losengier" = "gossips or slanderers" vs. "spiteful tittle-tattlers"); on the other hand, "to find fault" may render "a mal turner" better than "to criticize." Translations are matters of degrees, degrees of separation from the original and from the "mot juste" and context-sensitive phrasing; on this scale Gallagher should prove to have the lower, i.e. better score.

The translation is embedded in a framework of helpful commentaries: on the attempts to reconstruct Marie's biography, from Tyrwhitt in 1775 to the modern speculative identifications of the author with known historical figures (xi-xiii); on the literary 12th century (xiii-xiv); on what influenced Marie, from Celtic lays to courtly romances (xiv-xvi); and on the theme of love (xx-xxii), the genre of the *lai* (xvi-xviii), and Marie's narrative techniques (xxii-xxv). After the translation, each *lai* is commented on individually (86-123). Even a non-specialist reader will find the bibliography (xxvii-xxix, plus entries to be gleaned from the endnotes, xxix-xxxi) too sparse, and Burgess's *Marie de France: An Analytical Bibliography* (1977) and its supplements are not listed, though at least one useful website is; there are glossaries of proper names and of specialized English terms such as "hauberk" (136-142). Finally, the anonymous Breton lays *Melion* (translated by Gallagher) and *Tyolet* (translated by Margo Vinney) invite comparisons with *Bisclavret* and *Lanval*, respectively.

The *lectrice cultivée* and the *lecteur averti*, including students, will have in this book all they need to appreciate Marie and to enjoy a smooth reading of her *lais*. A hundred years after Eugene Mason's translation (1911) and a quarter-century after Burgess's and Busby's most recent effort (1986), it is good to have a new, finely honed rendering of one of the true monuments of French literature.

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Pascau, Stéphan. *Écrire et s'enfuir, dans l'ombre des Lumières : Henri-Joseph Dulaurens* (1719-1793). Éditions Collection des Gueux littéraires, Histoire de la littérature marginale : Paris, 2009. 318 p.

Stéphan Pascau continue de rendre hommage à Henri-Joseph Dulaurens en publiant l'an passé, *Écrire et s'enfuir, dans l'ombre des Lumières : Henri-Joseph Dulaurens* (1719-1793). C'est la suite de son *Henri-Joseph Dulaurens* (1719-1793) *: réhabilitation d'une œuvre*, publié chez Champion en 2006. Ce dernier ouvrage établissait pour la première fois les « œuvres complètes » d'un auteur méconnu, même des dixhuitiémistes avertis, et annonçait la suite que voici.

Participant d'une recherche d'histoire et de critique littéraires, ce récent volet des travaux de M. Pascau propose une lecture unificatrice d'une œuvre qualifiée, à juste titre, de bigarrée. Le projet est fort bien mené. Si Dulaurens défie un classement de type « Lagarde et Michard », on ne le récupère pas moins dans le sillage de la littérature subversive (1740-1770), textes de toutes sortes qui alimenteront à la longue l'esprit de la Révolution. Procédant alors à la mise en place de la biographie de Dulaurens, Pascau place son auteur sous le signe de la marginalité, en quoi il ressemble au non moins extravagant Fougeret de Monbron (1706-1760), lui aussi poursuivi par les autorités pour

ses écrits licencieux. On constate dans un cas comme dans l'autre, la même insatisfaction, la même verve satirique, et la même fuite devant la répression policière. Pour emprunter une formule de Franco Venturi, nous dirons que ces deux auteurs incarnent la « révolte » des années 1750-1760. Révolte sentie dans tous les milieux littéraires — rappelons les déboires des encyclopédistes — mais vécue intensément par tout un « gibier à police » dans le monde de la littérature clandestine. On relira donc les pages que Venturi y consacre : « [c]es accrochages avec la police sont un exemple caractéristique des rapports entre l'autorité et les écrivains à cette époque […] d'une génération qui s'est sentie comme prisonnière de Paris et de la France […] » (*Europe des Lumières : recherches sur le 18e siècle*, Paris, La Haye : Mouton, 1971, p. 93). Frondeur-né, le portrait qu'on laisse de Dulaurens est bien celui d'un homme incapable de se soumettre à l'autorité.

Henri-Joseph Laurent naquit à Douai en 1719. Son frère, médecin de la Marine royale et maire de Rochefort, change le patronyme de « Laurent » en Dulaurens. (Notons au passage que notre auteur n'a signé aucun de ses textes de son nom mais a toujours eu recours à des noms de plume farfelus tels que d'Henriville, M. L***, Monsieur D***, Brise-Crosses, Modeste-Tranquille Xan[g]-Xung. Ce sont plutôt les éditeurs, lors de rééditions non contrôlées par l'auteur alors incarcéré, qui ont affublé Henri-Joseph du pseudonyme « commercial » de Dulaurens.) Pour en revenir au jeune Henri-Joseph, celui-ci présente de rares et précoces dispositions, bien qu'âgé d'à peine dix-huit ans, il fait profession solennelle chez les chanoines réguliers de la Trinité. Six ans plus tard il devient diacre, mais son esprit caustique lui attire bientôt l'hostilité de ses supérieurs. S'attaquant publiquement et de façon réitérée au jésuite Duplessis, Dulaurens finit par se faire haïr de la congrégation. Dans un effort pour le faire plier à ses volontés, celle-ci lui infligea des punitions d'une rare cruauté, cruauté dont, nous dit Pascau, l'œuvre de Dulaurens conserve le souvenir. Dans sa *Galerie douasienne* (1844) H. Duthilloeul explique que dans un premier temps on soumettait le prêtre rebelle à des punitions communes :

> Mais ces punitions ne pouvant suffire à maîtriser l'âcreté de son esprit et la fougue de son caractère, on inventa pour lui une punition particulière. Dans une chambre vaste, au premier du couvent, les Trinitaires firent établir une cage en bois, séparée des quatre murs par un espace égal, suspendue au plafond, et n'atteignant pas le sol ; on la garnit d'une couchette et on y enferma Laurens, sans lui laisser les moyens d'écrire. Il vécut plusieurs mois dans cette singulière prison (21).

Il est donc facile de comprendre pourquoi Dulaurens demande à changer d'ordre ! Quand on lui refuse cette permission, il prend le parti de s'enfuir. Il s'installe d'abord quelques mois à Paris où il rédige et publie la première suite du *Candide* de Voltaire (1760). C'est aussi à Paris qu'il collabore avec le jeune Groubentall de Linière à la rédaction des *Jésuitiques*, poème jugé irréligieux et immoral. Craignant une lettre de cachet, il se réfugie en Hollande et se met aussitôt aux gages des libraires d'Amsterdam (chez Marc-Michel Rey de 1761 à 1763), de Liège et de Francfort, mais sans pouvoir sortir de l'indigence. Il publie alors une édition augmentée des *Jésuitiques* ainsi que le *Balai* (1761), poème héroï-comique en XVIII chants inspiré de *La Pucelle* de Voltaire. En 1763 il publia *L'Arrétin* et commença *La Chandelle d'Arras*, achevé en 1765. La même année sort *Imirce ou la Fille de la nature*, et, un an plus tard, son chef d'œuvre, *Le Compère Mathieu, ou les Bigarrures de l'esprit humain*. Enfin paraissent en 1767 *Je suis Pucelle, histoire véritable* et *L'Antipapisme révélé, ou les rêves de l'antipapiste*. Dénoncé en décembre 1765 à la chambre ecclésiastique de Mayence comme auteur d'ouvrages impies, il est condamné à la prison perpétuelle (30 août 1767) et enfermé à Mayence. Il présente alors des signes de délire. À partir de 1788, il purge sa peine au couvent surveillé de Marienborn, où il meurt en 1793 à l'âge de 74 ans. Au moment de son

arrestation il préparait un *Dictionnaire de l'esprit*. Ce dernier ouvrage est resté inédit, le manuscrit étant conservé dans les archives diocésaines de Mayence.

D'après Stéphan Pascau l'œuvre de Dulaurens relève de l'image de la fuite au sens pascalien de ce terme. Fuite devant les contraintes d'une vie religieuse forcée (25), fuite devant l'autorité, devant les bienséances, fuite vers des terres inconnues (86), vers l'onirisme (226), fuite, enfin, dans la folie (265). Rappelons à ce titre, l'importance du *Compère Mathieu*, « roman de la route », qui, au dire des Goncourt, est « d'un romancier qui a mené *Gil Blas* à *Jacques le Fataliste* ». Quant à la fuite « philosophique » de Dulaurens, Pascau émet ce jugement que l'on pourrait facilement appliquer à tout le corpus des textes à l'étude. « Ce diable d'auteur, écrit-il, explore tous les systèmes possibles, allant jusqu'à mêler dans une même équipe d'aventuriers philosophes, les représentants des modes de pensée les plus disparates ou les plus opposés. Aucune règle de conduite ne semble cependant obtenir sa faveur » (95). À la lecture de tels passages on est tenté d'ajouter à la liste des fuites la « fuite anarchique » ! Il est cependant fascinant de relever chez Dulaurens la réception des grands textes classiques. Voltaire y est certes bien représenté, mais Rabelais aussi dont Dulaurens s'est largement inspiré. Or c'est sans aucun doute dans le domaine de la réception littéraire qu'il reste bien des choses à dire sur le compte de ce « moine défroqué nommé Laurent », à qui Voltaire s'amusait à attribuer *L'Ingénu*.

L'étude de Pascau comprend une excellente bibliographie thématique. Y est énumérée l'intégrale des ouvrages relevant de la vie et de l'œuvre de Dulaurens. Le volume comporte également une notice biographique détaillée ainsi que des planches d'illustrations et des fac-similés.

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Guillevic*: Art poétique*. Translated by Maureen Smith with Lucie Albertini Guillevic. Introduction by Maureen Smith. Boston: Black Widow Press, 2009. 351 p.

Despite Guillevic's reputation as a major voice in 20th century French poetry, much of his prolific oeuvre remains unavailable in English. Maureen Smith's fine translation of his book-length poem *Art poétique*,[1] coming just two years after another bilingual Black Widow Press edition of Guillevic *The Sea and other Poems (1977-1997)*, translated by Patricia Terry,[2] is therefore most welcome.

The Introduction situates *Art Poétique*, which was first published by Gallimard in 1989, in relation to Guillevic's shorter poems by the same title, highlights the relevance of the dedication to La Fontaine (a topic on which one might have wished for further elaboration) and gives a more detailed commentary on the importance of silence in Guillevic's oeuvre. Smith also provides some interesting indications of artists and musicians who have been inspired by Guillevic's work. One oversight is the provision of a bibliography, especially since some of the texts quoted have been published in more than one edition.

One notices immediately Smith's decision to leave the title in the French. This serves to point up that *Art poétique* is not a traditional "art of poetry" but rather, as Smith writes in the Introduction, "a highly personal account of the process and experience of writing poetry … it is not a doctrine or a series of rules about poetry, about what poetry is or should be, but the sharing of that profound experience, the personal research of a poet,

1 Guillevic, *Art poétique*,.Paris : Gallimard, 1989.

2 Guillevic, *The Sea and other poems (1977-1997)*, translated by Patricia Terry, Introduction by Monique Chefdor, Foreword by Lucie Albertini Guillevic. Boston: Black Widow Press, 2007.

his hesitations and doubts" (p.1). The original text is subtitled *Poème*, as if to emphasise that this is not a didactic piece. Indeed, "living in poetry", the title of a series of interviews with the poet also translated by Smith,[3] would arguably be a suitable alternative title, since Guillevic depicts the task of the poet as inevitably bound up with a reflection on time and existence in the material world. The question of the poetic process, explicit in the short poems entitled "art poétique" that feature in several of his earlier volumes, is discernible at a metaphorical level throughout his oeuvre, in which images of genesis and metamorphosis – processes of becoming and transformation – are fundamental. Indeed the preoccupation with *poiesis* operates in the very texture of the word *écrire*, which acts as a nucleus from which, through an alliterative chain, there emanates a lexical network:[4] *cri*, *rire*, *rien*, *creux, creuser*, reflecting the way that the poetic process is envisaged as an experience that links the poet/poem with the cosmos: "The ocean also/Writes and never stops" (p.143). Similarly, the poet frequently exploits the homophony of *vers*, *à travers, traverser, ouvert*, so that movement and the "matter" of the poem collide.

A texture of the kind, so characteristic of the density of meaning embedded in Guillevic's deceptively simple language, poses the translator with some delicate choices. A word such as *cri* that has multiple possibilities in English may be best rendered according to the particular context. Thus in Smith's version the swallow "Twitters at times" (p.55), while the poem "shouts" its protests against death (p.105). Similarly, *creux* is rendered in one instance as "trough" (p.67) but elsewhere as "chasm" (p.222). In each case, her choice reflects the rigorous attention paid to rhythmic and alliterative patterns in English that is sustained throughout the translation. Another perplexing challenge, and one Smith highlights in an article about her experience of translating Guillevic,[5] concerns the issue of noun gender. The French gender system contributes to a non-hierarchical relationship between the human subject and the animal beings in *Art Poétique*, and indeed mediates a loss of differentiation between animate and inanimate existents. Speaking of her decision to opt for the neutral pronoun "it" to refer to animals Smith says, "Oui, j'ai «sacrifié», j'ai honte de le dire, des animaux" (Smith, 209). Her decision is undoubtedly a judicious one – any attempt to be faithful to the masculine/feminine genders of, e.g., *le coucou* but *la chenille*, would doubtlessly prove very messy. A comparable impasse that the French presents is the shifts indicated by the vocative pronouns *tu* and *vous* in the complex enunciation of Guillevic's verse.

Nonetheless, Smith displays admirable dexterity in achieving in English an effect of beguiling simplicity. Besides the attention to rhythm and alliteration already mentioned, closer inspection reveals the presence of wordplay and repeated motifs that create the translation's own texture. This is evident from the first poem, which introduces the quest for knowledge that constitutes the book's fundamental trajectory. The knowledge that the poem at its outset may proffer is deeply uncertain, reflecting Guillevic's conception of the fundamentally contingent nature of poetry: like the liminal image of the sea of *Carnac* "Mer au bord du néant"[6] or the recurrent image of the closed *armoire* that may or may not be opened that inaugurates Guillevic's first major volume *Terraqué*,[7] the poem resides in the realm of *peut-être*. *Art Poétique* opens with a hypothetical negation of this quest: "Si je n'écris pas ce matin,/Je n'en saurai pas davantage,//Je ne saurai rien/De ce que je peux être." Smith's translation subtly highlights this precarious trajectory through

3 *Living in Poetry: Interviews with Guillevic*, translated by Maureen Smith. Dublin: Dedalus Press, 1999.
4 "Network" – *le réseau* – is itself a fundamental Guillevicien motif. See Michael Brophy's influential essay « Le fragment et le réseau », *Europe*, juin-juillet 1990, n°734-735, pp.117-124.
5 Smith, Maureen, "Traduire Guillevic: un défi quotidien", in Michael Brophy (éd.) *Guillevic: La poésie à la lumière du quotidien*. Bern : Peter Lang, 2009, pp.201-213.
6 Guillevic, *Sphère* [1963] suivi de *Carnac* [1961]. Paris : « Poésie » Gallimard, 1977, p.143.
7 *Terraqué* [1942] suivi de *Exécutoire* [1949]. Paris : « Poésie» Gallimard, 1968, p.17.

the juxtaposition of "know" and "no": "If I don't write this morning/I'll know no more about it,//I'll know nothing/Of what I can be" (p.15). The reprisal of this slightly archaic negative form, "When a poem comes to you,/You know not whence or why" (p.101), "Wanting/I know not what" (p.195) makes it a central structuring motif. In the closing poem it serves to underscore a sense of coming full circle in the quest for knowledge: "You'll not be the rose,/It won't be you,//But between you there is/What you have in common,//Knowing how to live/And knowing how to share" (p.351). Here the accent on "not" in the first line stresses the recognition of the quest's limits, while the emphasis on "knowing", positioned at the head of the final couplet and repeated in the final line, reinforces the poet's ultimately optimistic affirmation. This kind of internal patterning gives the translation poetic depth.

Another such motif centres on Smith's rendition of the image of the poet "Comme vivant avec des racines" as "root-dweller" (pp.28-29). The double meaning of "dwell": "inhabit" and "ponder", aptly captures the stance of the poet, and is used later to translate *occupe* (p.103) and *se loger* (p.129). Such repetition also counterbalances the lexical expansion necessitated by the various renditions of a word like *cri*. The "root-dweller" image further suggests the homophone root/route; in Guillevic's geometrical imagination the poem is conceived as a double dynamic, both as a vertical structure rooted in the earth that like extends upwards like a tree or a standing stone, and also as a horizontal *traversée* emphasised by the repetition of the preposition "vers" with its wordplay noted above.

Another felicitous touch is Smith's rendering of Guillevic's pun on "arriver": "Qu'est-ce qu'il t'arrive?//Il t'arrive des mots" (p.52) with one on "matter": "What's the matter with you?/The matter is with me is words" (p.53). This not only effectively conveys Guillevic's tendency to excavate complex meaning in quotidian expressions, but also points to his materialist conception of language.

It is regrettable that this book is marred by a number of typographical errors in the French, and what one suspects are a couple of minor errors in the English. These are principally a matter of punctuation, though more unfortunate is a glaring misprint in the final poem, where *entre* is written as *entrer*. There also appears to be a missing quotation from *Possibles futurs* on page 5 of the Introduction. However these imperfections are but a minor irritation that hardly detracts from Smith's laudable accomplishment.

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McFadden, Cybelle H. and Sandrine F. Teixidor, eds. *Francophone Women : Between Visibility and Invisibility*. New York: Peter Lang, 2010. 143 p.

The collection of six essays co-edited by Cybelle H. McFadden and Sandrine F. Teixidor based on a comparative approach uniting Francophone, French and Women's studies, offers close critical readings centering on the visibility, invisibility and hypervisibility of the female body and sexuality in French and Francophone North African literature from 1900 to 2005. Proceeding in chronological order, the essays illuminate the roles of the female body with regard to political self-definition, segregation, seclusion, *métissage* and sexuality to reveal links between visibility and race, gender and class. Engaging with gender and feminist theories, Marion Krauthaker's examines ever-changing, performed, sexual identities in Colette's *The Pure and the Impure*. Colette, she argues, debunks patriarchal codes as mere constructions and sexual difference is not troubled, she shows, but perfectly "viable if binary divisions of gender characteristics and roles do not exist" (7). Rather than ignoring accepted binaries of traditional gender codes, she shows how Colette's characters successfully manipulate corporeal surfaces by using them through performance to invalidate patriarchal gender codes, avoid marginality and gain visibility.

In her comprehensive chapter on Assia Djebar, which zeroes in on image, vision and representation in *Women of Algiers in their Appartment* and *L'Amour la fantasia*, Mary Ellen Wolf enters the ongoing dialogue with postcolonial Djebar critics on gaze theory and the veil as a metaphor for visibility and invisibility in both colonial and post-revolutionary Algeria. Wolf adds to the already large corpus on Djebar, stressing the need to "recognize and dismantle the all-pervasive orientalizing practices, assumptions, and tendencies that continue to haunt our own processes of representing Muslim women" (35). Western readers and critics, she argues, need to realize that they can be easily manipulated by sensationalist media coverage and are indeed limited, if not unable to accurately interpret links between the veil and corporeal identities and agency of non-Western women. Since the veil is outside the realm of their own cultural practices, they are limited in grasping the complexities of this identity marker, and its meanings with regard to religious affiliation, femininity, oppression and/or resistance. Sandrine Teixidor's comparative approach uses gaze theory and Foucaultian panopticism in twentieth century novels by Algerian, Moroccan and French Algerian writers Malika Mokeddem (*The Forbidden Woman*), Assia Djebar (*Women of Algiers in their Apartment*), Fatima Mernissi (*Dream of Trespass*) and Nina Bouraoui (*Forbidden Vision*). In her close readings, she discusses the use of curtains, veils, and doors as metaphors for female invisibility, *corps spacialisés* and objectification that go hand in hand with darkness, illiteracy and silence. Teixidor shows how female characters use their powerful female gaze as a tool of resistance by engaging in voyeurism and taking partial control of the panopticon, thus transcending their male-imposed feminine condition and spatial segregation: "Invisible to the Other, they look at the visible" (58). In so doing, women can revolt by temporarily stepping out of the closet and destabilize power binaries such as male/female, powerful/powerless. Drawing on Foucault, gaze and gender theories, Adrienne Angelo revisits Bouraoui's *La voyeuse interdite*, *Garçon manqué* and *Poupée Bella* as textual sites of resistance and corporeal difference; Bouraoui's narrators, she contends, confront their corporeal boundaries and use strategies of vision and voice to articulate their radical alterity. Caroline Beschea-Fache analyzes identity in terms of *métissage*, the mirror stage, corporeal alterity, and gaze theory in Bouaroui's *Garçon manqué* and Sandrine Bessora's *53 cm*, departing from a theoretical discussion on the polymorphic nature of *métissage* as a dynamic principle that "helps shape contemporary post-colonial identities rather than (being) a tragic colonial effect" (105). In her close reading, she shows how characters undergo identity crises in which they break away from their mixed origins and come to occupy a third space by reinventing various shifting identities for themselves through the mirror of the Other. Finally, Cybelle H. McFadden analyzes the cancerous female body, sexuality and the photo in Annie Ernaux and Marc Marie's *L'Usage de la photo*, focusing on the interplay between visual and literary texts that serve to represent that which is not visible, in particular middle-age female sexuality and breast cancer. The hypervisibility — visibility through writing—linked to notions of trace by Derrida and Baudrillard "ironically depends on the banality of the accompanying black and white photos" from which the cancerous body is absent (126). While the conceptual idea and purpose of this collection is made clear from the outset, many of the essays overlap with regards to choice of novelists — Bouraoui figures prominently — thematic, and theoretical approaches. While the novels of North African women writers are coherently synthesized, the connection to Colette and Annie Ernaux seems somewhat tentative and warrants some more thorough explanation. Still, this collection deserves to draw the attention of scholars working on contemporary French and North African Francophone women writers, and given its mix of primary materials by French, French Algerian and Algerian women writers, it could be used in an English language seminar on contemporary French and Postcolonial

Francophone Women's writing focusing on corporeal identities and representations of the female literary body.

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Beik, William. *A Social and Cultural History of Early Modern France*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. 420 p.

One can easily imagine that a subject as wide-ranging as *A Social and Cultural History of Early Modern France* would be difficult to synthesize without sacrificing either sufficient depth or overall coherence. Yet historian William Beik manages to portray the reality of the lives of the French from peasants to nobles in great detail while also taking the long view to demonstrate how small social changes over time led to the instability and discontent that ultimately resulted in the Revolution. As he states in his introduction, he focuses on life outside Paris and deals only briefly with the king and life at the court. Approaching his subject from a structural perspective, Beik looks at each element of society as part of a larger system that changed somewhat over time but whose continuities emphasize what was most unique about early modern French society. The author eschews the teleological model; he is most interested in the ways this society functioned in its own right rather than the ways it anticipated the modern era.

Beik divides his discussion and analysis of this period into the traditional, recognizable categories: rural vs. city life, the nobility, the monarchy, ecclesiastical power, warfare and society, social bonds and protest, and the rise of courtly society and aristocratic decadence. Yet these categories prove to be neither distinct from one another nor without complex contradictions within each; the author makes this clear in every chapter in a highly nuanced and careful way. The social fabric of early modern France was so tightly interwoven that previous delineations between, for example, the peasants and the nobles, demand reevaluation. Beik demonstrates that we must question whether noble culture was so different from popular culture. Indeed both shared common beliefs regarding arranged marriages, gender roles within the family and the community, the sense of honor, the defense of honor, and the violent retribution exacted in the case of insult to honor. These core values, contrary to popular belief, by and large brought the two ends of the social spectrum together rather than setting them apart. Where they most differed was in how much was at stake, of course. Transgression of implicit social mores might lead to violence or social exclusion in both cases but, as Beik puts it, a humiliated noble had more to lose than a humiliated commoner.

The author also comments on the latest scholarship on this period, particularly the work of social historians whose analysis, for example, of women and skilled labor has reversed previous conceptions of women's roles in and outside the home that once greatly limited our understanding of their power in society. Often women's historians argued that one way the Catholic Church oppressed women was by establishing a patriarchal model to be replicated on the level of the family. This study provides evidence to the contrary. Within the Church abbesses were extremely powerful locally, often defying Church rules and acting in the spirit of self-governance within their parish. In this sense the author appeals to us to rethink our assumptions about women in the clergy during the *ancien régime*. Likewise, religiously devout laywomen formed community service organizations that allowed them to assert a kind of spiritual independence from their husbands and their confessors. Despite being subject to all sorts of constraints, laywomen nevertheless ran businesses, acted independently, worked side by side with their artisan husbands, and often were in charge of family bookkeeping or were themselves heads of households.

Corrections to the presumed historical record are frequent in this study, making it an indispensable guide to students of this period and for all those curious about what France was like prior to the transformations attributed to the Enlightenment. It is worth mentioning that Beik also cautions against the tendency to see continuity when in fact radical difference exists. His discussion of popular revolts comes to mind. Rather than viewing public rebellion as a cultural constant in France from the Middle Ages to the present, Beik meticulously details the difference in the sixteenth century between a riot, for instance a street protest against a tax collector because of what he represented, and a religious massacre, which was an attack against a category of people because of *who they were*. People rioted in ways we cannot imagine in this pre-Revolution era, a point that Beik illustrates with colorful, if not stomach-turning, description.

Providing the basis for understanding the particular set of historical circumstances that have come to define the French over time, this analysis also sheds light on very recent cultural events and cultural identity generally in France. In matters of religion, the author compels us to consider the roots of the notion of *laïcité*, so much a concern for contemporary French society. The Church dealt with matters we would deem undeniably secular in the seventeenth century, although church and state were by no means separate. Viewed through this historical prism we see that the term *laïc* today means to the French not simply the imperative to rid the public sphere of religious messages or symbols in the name of Republican values. Rather, any reference to the presence of religion in civil affairs recalls a deep-seated memory of insidious control and repression, among other things. Then, as now, religion in France is intimately entangled with politics.

An accomplished and well-regarded historian, Beik's research is excellent and his writing style is highly engaging. The examples he gives, such as the gritty details of city life, the behavior of soldiers or the waywardness of the village priests will entertain and inform, not without evoking some pity for those who suffered through what in many ways was a brutal, violent, and unjust society. Although the France of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries resembles very little the France of today, the author collapses the distance with a *raconteur*'s ability to render present and alive what some might consider the dull and distant past.

Anne Quinney *The University of Mississippi*

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Martin, Morag. *Selling Beauty: Cosmetics, Commerce, and French Society, 1750-1830*. Baltimore: John Hopkins UP, 2009. 228 p.

Morag Martin's historical study of cosmetics in the latter part of the Eighteenth Century and into the Napoleon Restoration of the Nineteenth Century not only enlightens any novice researcher by providing a sound historical overview of beautification products, the work also slides nicely into more complex issues, examining the role of gender, gender control, femininity, masculinity, commerce, consumerism, class, fashion, market, citizenship, and advertisement. Her study closely presents a world of cosmetics, of make-up paint, of perfumery, and of rouge to relay who wore it, what they wore, for which reasons they wore it, and to some degree, how they wore it. By focusing on the theme of eighteenth-century cosmetics, Martin hijacks dominant beliefs – proliferated by movies, websites, comical recreations, and fashion blogs – that the time period looked as it did in a Sofia Coppola movie. Instead she shows how the cosmetics of the elite were gradually democratized for anyone whose pocketbook or credit could bear the purchase. In this regard, the Revolution permitted the bourgeoisie and lower social classes to appear just as the elite had looked in the Old Regime when cosmetics were limited to the wealthy. Martin claims that a growth of cosmetics consumers instigated a commercial revolution, one focusing on products, as well as their proliferation, production, and advertisement.

Everyone participated in some regard, whether as elite merchants or street sellers, to the "consumer revolution" (43) represented by the explosion of store windows and "actual shops" (48). Women, now considered "good consumers" (133), had before them a wealth of choices of products, of brands, of stores, and of prices, making women buyers no longer at the "mercy of the shopkeeper" (67). Women could know the ingredients used in the products and could make enlightened choices based on advertisement, cost, scientific information, doctoral approvals, and government patent stamps.

On tall hair and heavily painted faces, Martin develops her thesis that such a fashion of cosmetics in the aristocracy waned in the latter half of the Eighteenth Century to become its opposite, a signifier of women's inherent unseemliness. For example, heavily white-washed faces, intense rouges, obscurely placed black dots, and scented hair powders were no longer considered the fashion and were seen by others as required necessities for covering up the disease-infected body (102). Consequently, the natural look "preached by Rousseau" (122) became more and more the fashion and although women still adorned their faces with make-up, less of it, and more natural in tone, was considered a respectable aesthetic (123). Paradoxically, paints were to create artificially the look *au naturel*. Heavy paints previously *à la mode* slowly became *démodé* as they gave way to medical and public discourses on the safety of using noxious chemicals in fard. Now having public knowledge about the chemical dangers of cosmetic products, women who chose to continue wearing dangerous compounds on their faces, despite medical information based on science, became socially stained as having an indelectable character and were believed to have "unspoken faults" (81) in need of public concealment. She shows how in various *affiches* the same negative discourses against the moral and sinful pretense of wearing cosmetics were rightfully diverted, if not ignored, to highlight the product, its hygienic status, and its medical safety for the hopeful consumer.

Martin concludes that "the folly of fashion" (153) was not simply a feminine preoccupation. Rather, men painted themselves for social acceptance just as women had been doing. The strong appeal for masculine virility in post-revolutionary France and in the beginning of the Romantic era, however, had men further pulled in to issues of vanity (164-72). With the loss of the wig and hair powder, both representative of Old Regime ideals, men's lack of hair or bald dome were unacceptable signs of "degeneration and impotence" (173) and were seen socially as abhorrent consequences of bad health, illness, and much to their dismay, masturbation or syphilis (165). Vanity products for hair loss (greases, potions, pommades, toupees) became fashionable among men and even though false, the fabricated *coiffe* had to pass as natural, real hair since artifice and deception were still stigmatized. Men's vanity at toilette was kept personal and secretive often "publicly denied" (170) for fear of appearing socially, sexually, and financially unsuccessful.

Martin's work focuses on what Cissie Fairchilds dubbed "populuxe" goods that are "cheap copies of luxury goods aimed at the urban working classes" (3). By disseminating previously unaffordable products from the elite to the bourgeois and to the working class, cosmetics mark a 'populuxe' of French society, which in turn signifies a larger market of consumerism, product competition, and thus a nascent "culture of advertising" (4) during the Eighteenth Century. In such a market, the populus could have products of luxury. Thus, the inability of recognizing class signifiers (dress, make-up, purchases, *coiffe*) created a social confusion in which the elite were indistinguishable from the bourgeois and the working class. Martin reveals how in the Eighteenth Century, cosmetics not only reveal one's class; they also conceal it.

Kristi Krumnow *Utah State University*

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Vessels, Joel E. *Drawing France: French Comics and the Republic*. Jackson, MI: Mississippi UP, 2010. xii + 305 p.

The author examines the evolution of *les bandes dessinées*, or "BD," against the backdrop of French political history. The conclusion is a familiar one: BD have developed into a popular art form that has not only gained widespread critical recognition, but that holds a special place within contemporary French culture. In that sense, the study of BD provides an exceptionally broad pathway toward a better understanding of French cultural patterns. What makes this book interesting and innovative is on the one hand its longer historical reach within France (stretching back to the *Monarchie d'Orléans*, 1830-48), and on the other its focus on the various forms of resistance encountered by the graphic art form during the stages of its development. The current critical and even governmental acceptance of BD, acclaimed as they are for their sophisticated blend of text and images, was not pre-ordained. As the author of *Drawing France* shows, they have only recently been widely perceived as both artistically valid and quintessentially French—after having been long decried as stultifying American imports that lowered French schoolchildren's literacy standards.

Joel E. Vessels makes the case that the origin of BD can be traced back not just to the Swiss cartoonist Rodolphe Töpffer, but also to the political caricatures that proliferated in France during the reign of Louis-Philippe. In the first chapter, the author's discussion of Charles Philipon's famous "Les poires" visual sequence, during which the king's head gradually metamorphosizes into a plump pear, links early examples of graphic political satire to what would become a sequential art form. The second chapter transitions somewhat abruptly to the twentieth century, and Vessels establishes a pattern of comparing the domestic evolution of BD (with examples such as Christophe's *La famille Fenouillard* or Saint-Ogan's *Zig et Puce*) with American influences, including the hugely popular *Journal de Mickey*. While they were generally categorized as a form of light entertainment mainly intended for children, BD nonetheless became the object of much criticism from both the Catholic right and the Communist Party, due to their presumably deleterious effect on young minds. This level of convergent criticism was "the result of the larger contest between the left and the right over the right to speak of and for the cultural patrimony of the nation during the tumultuous years of the run-up to World War II" (71).

That French cinema and theater flourished during the dark years of the German Occupation is both paradoxical and well-known. Vessels argues that the Vichy Regime "might also have saved" (73) BD in France. With competition from American comic strips eliminated, the domestic production of BD was encouraged, especially if it contributed to the dissemination of *Pétainiste* ideology: "there were a number of examples of the medium ... utilizing its conventions and forms to press the message of the National Revolution to France's youngest citizens" (93). The postwar years brought an end to paper shortages and to some forms of censorship, allowing BD to flourish during the period dominated by "la tradition franco-belge". However, Vessels shows that government intervention was never absent, and that cultural policy alternated between watchful oversight and outright banning of some BD. The fact that BD gradually became accepted as an artistic medium for adults as well as children is partly due to the ever-present threat of censorship, and to the countercultural aura that BD thus tended to acquire. The belated governmental embrace of BD in the 1980s by Culture Minister Jack Lang did little to change an art form that no longer bore the stigma of mindless entertainment. In his study of the interaction of BD and governmental policy, Vessels discusses more recent developments, such as the role played by BD during the 2002 presidential election and the bitter controversies over the publication of political satires that depicted the prophet Muhammad (2005-06). Throughout his study, the author

provides a lucid account of how an initially denigrated graphic medium became established and naturalized within French culture.

One minor quibble is that there is an insufficient number of illustrations for a book devoted to BD. The more serious problem is that this well-researched study is unfortunately marred by large numbers of glaring typographical errors and stylistic infelicities: "Fountainbleu" (xi); "Françoise Rabelais" (3, 237, 292); "Legend Napoléonienne" (19); "hebdomaire" (42); "journaux l'enfantine" (62-65); "provisoir" (76); "principle" instead of "principal" (78, 81, 108, 129, 137, 148, 227); "journals l'enfantine" (82); "autorités des occupation" (83); "l'Ideel Fanfan" (97); "idée éducatif" (121); "journaux illustrée" (127); "Lang spat out" (185); "François Mitterand" (throughout ch. 6); "idée d'France" (211); "Dessin de Presse et d'Humor" (217); "tend to not surprisingly predominate" (218); "It's very openendness, the ability to apparently forever imagine" (234); "the principle political cartooninst" (239); "one of the most intellegent supporter's" (247); "équivant" (272); "journals d'hebdomadaire" (274); "qer février 1950" (278); "La Vent Aux Mineurs" (288). To this list, which is by no means comprehensive, should be added the indiscriminate capitalization of French titles, as well as the use of word-for-word and therefore misleading translations: "Propositions of law" (144); "Keeper of the Seals" (146). A scholarly work merits higher levels of editing and proofreading, especially when published by a university press.

Edward Ousselin *Western Washington University*

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Enguehard, Françoise. *L'archipel du docteur Thomas*. Roman. Éditions Sudbury : Prise de parole, 2009. 206 p.

On lit ce livre avec plaisir, comme on passe une bonne soirée avec des amis intéressants et une conversation agréable. Un grand mérite de l'ouvrage, c'est de présenter Saint-Pierre-et-Miquelon, cet archipel fort attachant qui a rarement servi de décor à un roman. Les protagonistes tombent un peu par hasard sur une boîte de photographies du début du vingtième siècle, encore sous forme de plaques de verre. Quand un photographe les développe et les imprime, on s'aperçoit qu'elles constituent un reportage fascinant sur l'archipel de l'époque. Ils se demandent alors qui était ce docteur Thomas qui a pris les photos, et pourquoi il a laissé le carton derrière lui. Ils mènent leur enquête parmi ceux qui l'ont connu et dans les archives de la Marine française, et on découvre alors un homme remarquable, tout en parcourant l'histoire de la région et même l'histoire de l'Europe durant la première moitié du siècle dernier.

L'auteure met l'accent sur l'histoire des photographies et les efforts pour reconstituer la vie du docteur Thomas. On le voit donc surtout de l'extérieur, à force de rassembler des renseignements, mais c'est déjà beaucoup, et très intéressant. Mme Enguehard, qui écrit de façon à toujours capter et retenir l'attention des lecteurs, n'approfondit pas ses personnages. Émilie a un beau potentiel, elle est vivante, alerte, et on la quitte sans trop savoir qui elle était. François et Jacques sont juste esquissés. La relation entre Émilie et François est présentée si sobrement qu'on ne sait rien de leurs émotions, de ce qu'ils ont dans le cœur, de ce qu'ils font de cette fascination qu'ils éprouvent l'un pour l'autre. Ce n'était pas le propos de l'auteure, qui voulait parler de l'archipel et du docteur, mais c'est pourquoi le roman donne l'impression qu'on a juste effleuré les personnages, comme des convives à un repas qui nous ont fait bonne impression mais au sujet de qui on n'a pas appris grand-chose. On a toutefois une meilleure image de l'archipel, tellement il est bien décrit et raconté.

À un moment donné, l'auteure parle de la contrebande dans les années vingt, provoquée, dit-elle, par la prohibition « au Canada et en Amérique ». Il n'y avait pas de prohibition au Canada, mais des différences de taxes douanières pourraient expliquer

cette contrebande. Vu que le docteur y attachait de l'importance, il aurait été bon de mieux montrer les raisons et la nature de cette contrebande, de quels produits il s'agissait et à qui ils étaient vendus. Ici et là, on lit des scènes romancées qui décrivent certaines photos et les occasions où elles ont été prises. On a du mal à croire, à la fin du livre, que ces vignettes ont été écrites par une jeune fille de seize ou dix-sept ans, aussi talentueuse soit-elle, mais ce n'est pas impossible.

Ce roman a reçu le Prix des lecteurs Radio-Canada 2010 et mérite d'être lu.

Jean-François Somain *La Pêche, Québec*

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Soha, Daniel. *La Maison. Une parabole*. Roman. Toronto : Éditions du Gref, Collection Le beau mentir nº 13, 2009. 168 p.

Voici un roman qui se lit avec plaisir. Il est très bien écrit et l'histoire, de page en page, maintient l'intérêt du lecteur. C'est aussi un bon travail d'édition, avec peu de scories (notons le personnage qui sort de ses « gongs », ou une mise en abîme qui devrait être une mise en abyme). La couverture est excellente, originale. Au début, dans un prologue, Réjean Toupin, attaqué par des loups, songe à une grande maison lorsque la meute se jette sur lui. Le récit commence aussitôt, à la première personne, et le narrateur s'appelle Pierre. Voyons de quoi il s'agit. Une trentaine de personnes sont apparues dans une maison de style victorien, avec juste des bribes de souvenirs. C'est une situation qu'on trouve parfois dans des romans et des films de science-fiction, et M. Soha y ajoute même un « cuistaumatt' » tiré de Star Trek, sans basculer toutefois dans le roman d'anticipation. L'histoire est traitée ici de manière directe, réaliste, parfois onirique. Les personnes essaient de découvrir qui ils sont, pourquoi ils sont là, pourquoi on les a privés de leur mémoire. Sont-ils des condamnés ? Des malades ? Comment doivent-ils conduire leur vie entre eux ? Quelle attitude adopter à l'endroit des puissances inconnues qui contrôlent la maison ?

L'auteur évite de s'éparpiller dans des interrogations et des discussions à propos du « sens de la vie », se contentant de quelques bons dialogues sur le sujet. Des personnages sont bien campés, notamment Panjer et Jack (un peu caricaturé toutefois). Des passages, tels que la mort du nounours Martin, sont très bien menés. Ici et là, des détails nuisent à la crédibilité. Le narrateur fréquente la bibliothèque de la maison, qui ne doit pas être bien grande, et y trouve un exemplaire de *La maladie infantile du communisme*, pas dans la collection 10/18, par exemple, mais aux éditions de Pékin. Il y a une section de périodiques, et il ne cherche pas à connaître, ou ne le dit pas, leurs dates et endroit de publication. Ce serait pourtant capital, si on cherche à savoir qui on est, ce qu'on a pu faire, où on est. Un personnage lance un anglicisme, un autre reconnaît la faute, et ne le prend pas comme indice. Un personnage situe ses bribes de souvenirs parmi des mimosas, ou lance une blague « marseillaise », ce qui fait penser à la Provence, alors qu'un autre se saoule au Jack Daniels. L'Indien s'appelle Kahnawake, nom iroquois, et est présenté comme un des derniers Beothuks, qui habitaient Terre-Neuve. Tout au long du récit, le type d'amnésie est peu convaincant et les personnages ne semblent pas mener une enquête bien rigoureuse, ni même quitter la maison. Avec trop de trous et de bouts de ficelle qui ne tiennent à rien, le dénouement laisse le lecteur sur sa faim. La conclusion (« *Peut-être serait-ce dans une certaine mesure la fin d'un rêve, la fin du monde, ou en tout cas la fin de la littérature. Ou en tout cas d'une certaine littérature.* ») semble un peu grosse. Ce bon roman, intéressant, aurait pu aller plus loin, avec plus de profondeur.

Jean-François Somain *La Pêche, Québec*