Reviews

Cerquiglini-Toulet, Jacqueline. *A New History of Medieval French Literature*. Trans. Sara Preisig. Rethinking Theory, Stephen G. Nichols and Victor E. Taylor, eds. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011. 165 p.

Detached from Jean-Yves Tadié's two-volume collection of articles, *La littérature française : dynamique & histoire* (2007, Folio Essais 495-496, 765 and 929 pp.), where it was laconically entitled "Moyen Âge," this *New History* is far from being yet another survey reaching from the *Serments de Strasbourg* to the Matters of Rome, of France and of Brittany and on to the "Ballade des pendus." On the contrary, it identifies the various components of the cultural compact known since the end of the 15th century as (vernacular) "literature," or the Matter of Letters, and it studies the ways in which the resulting new understanding of writing in the Middle Ages influences today's reading and analyzing of medieval texts. In purpose and scope the book clearly calls for and deserves being made accessible, through this translation, beyond the narrow circle of readers of French.

Supranational bilingualism of Latin vs. the vernacular(s), bilingualism in France of *langue d'oïl* vs. *langue d'oc*, multilingualism of regional dialects vs. the eventual hegemony of *francien*, communal, oral vs. individual, visual consumption of literature, (lyrical and narrative) poetry as truth vs. untrustworthy prose, single works vs. the formation of cycles with the attending creation of multi-text codices destined to be torn apart in the printed book and by modern editing: Cerquiglini-Toulet mentions most of these elements of the backdrop against which the new reading of medieval literature must be practiced, beginning with parchment, paper, ink, quills and pens, and penknives to undo words. This is the "Materiality of Writing" (pp. 15-19) out of which codicologists, philologists and editors extract the texts we read and interpret*, having been alerted, through careful editing and expert commentary, to the material facts and how they may guide the production of text and meaning: the placement and execution of miniatures, for example, may point to a first reader's structuring and understanding of narrative, or variants will remind us of the *mouvance* of a text as a living construct.

In reading medieval texts attention must next be paid to "The Question of the Author" (20-37) and the question of the scribe. Authors are monks, nuns, nobles, clerics and civil servants, less often bourgeois or merchants; they sometimes overlap with jongleurs, troubadours, trouvères and minstrels as purveyors of literary edification or entertainment. They may identify themselves by name and origin, remain anonymous or receive a fictitious name; scribes may subject their name to wordplay and puns. They give their work a title, and when they do not, scribes or modern editors will. Authors identify and address their audience, differentiating their listeners or readers according to class, status, age and gender; sociologically speaking, the production and consumption of literature occurred in the realms of the Church (including the university), the courts, the city, writerly networks (e.g. *puys*) and literary regions (e.g. the poetry of Provence or Champagne, the lays of Brittany).

What did authors write about ("The Subject Matter" [65-79])? Jean Bodel divided the literary *matière* into the romances of Antiquity, the *chansons de geste* and the courtly romances, to which must be added the matters of God (e.g. hagiography) and of the comic (e.g. *fabliaux*). Matter needs form, it needs above all *proportio* (Thomas Aquinas), i.e. harmony ("The Paths to Writing" [80-99]). Out of this need grew rules of composition such as Chrétien de Troyes' *bele conjointure* or the genre-specific use of

alexandrines vs. octosyllables or the taximonies of poetic genres, stanzas and rhymes. More fundamentally, however, authors needed "Models of Writing" (107-112). They found them in grammatical treatises, in religious texts, in the juridical discourse and in testamentary writing, and they applied them either literally or parodically (e.g. *Doctrinals, Evangiles, Jugements*, Villon, respectively). What they worked out for themselves is the transition from binary thinking ("paien unt tort e chrestiens unt dreit" [*Roland* l. 1015]) to a more complex view of the world ("Ne bien ne mal, mais entre deulx" [Charles d'Orléans]), expressed also in the newly discovered *chiaroscuro* of manuscript illustration and resulting in the relativization of truth, social status, morality, psychological conditions, etc. This preter-modern ambiguous world is explored specifically in dream literature, in allegory and in tales of metamorphosis.

This erudite yet limpid "défence et illustration" of medieval, pre-book culture should silence those who claim that the Middle Ages may have had writing but did not have literature, that this era remains the "dark ages," an enigma, distant as it is in time and spirit. Cerquiglini-Toulet clearly and convincingly establishes the contrary: medieval literature exists in and of itself and as the necessary though often disputed bridge between Antiquity and the Renaissance. Remaining strictly descriptive and peppering her book with an abundance of examples and quotations from the widest range of works possible, she does not offer a study guide to the subject, not spelling out concretely how her observations and the many facts she adduces may impact on our understanding of what we read, and simply inviting us instead to be receptive to that impact in our interpretations; rather, she paints a richly detailed picture of the literary culture of medieval France. Attached are a useful historical and literary chronology (135-146), very few endnotes (147) and a good bibliography (149-165); regrettably, there is no index.

* Medieval manuscript culture has been entertainingly recreated in the early pages of Stephen Greenblatt's *The Swerve: How the World Became Modern* (New York: W. W. Norton, 2011), as it has been, of course, in Umberto Eco's *Il nome della rosa* (1980).

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Coski, Christopher. *From Barbarism to Universality: Language and Identity in Early Modern France*. Columbia, SC: The University of South Carolina Press, 2011. vii + 200 p.

From a vantage point Parnassian if not quite Olympian, Christopher Coski reviews the most influential writings on the French language from the Renaissance to the late nineteenth century, tracing how praxis and propaganda moved the status of French from a source of embarrassment (in the hyperbole of contemporaries) to the pre-eminent spoken and written medium of Europe. The author calls his relatively brief text 'a literary analysis of nonfiction works narrating a language and identity fiction inscribed in a specific historical period' (2). The lucidly written essays on six authors, one poet, one essayist, and four *philosphes*, are preceded by an introduction subtitled 'Themes, History, and Ideas'. Here Coski sets out a Saussurian paradigm of the interplay among reality, thought, and expression (imagine an equilateral triangle), as a heuristic tool for the exploration of the formation of individual and cultural French identities. This dynamic doodle might have served any number of investigative ends in the study of the history of a language and of attitudes towards it and, while stimulating, is at best only presciently adumbrated in the writings under consideration.

Chapter headings will situate the six writers in the evolution of French thinking on French language and language in general: 'Du Bellay's *Deffence et Illustration*: The Vernacular Inferiority Complex', 'Montaigne's *Essays*: The Baroque Mind, Language,

and Being', 'Descartes' *Discourse*: The Mind/Identity Complex and Human Language', 'Vaugelas' *Remarques*: Language, Quality, and Communal Identity', 'Condillac's *Essay*: Language, Analytical Method, and Identity', lastly 'Rivera's *De l'universalité*'. The author admirably situates these thinkers in their times, and calls attention to many lesser luminaries who wrote on language. In a clear and serene style devoid of critical jargon he gives the impression of paraphrasing long passages from each author, accompanied by frequent quotations, each superbly translated into expository English that is true to its original linguistic medium and spirit while according well with contemporary English usage. Each author is sharply profiled, the enthusiastic Du Bellay, skeptical Montaigne, arch-rationalist Descartes, and so on. There is relatively little effort to point up internal inconsistencies in a given author's work and no true dialectic is mounted between and among authors, save for noting the occasional difference of opinion on a given principle or point. There is then a tendency on Coski's part to rise above the passion of the argument. Only with Rivarol's hyperbolic claims does the author state explicitly that these are not only unfounded but internally incoherent. Although not an observation made by the author, it is interesting to observe how little role exemplification plays in the construction of these various arguments, Condillac's pair of pre-lingual children the single most important exception.

The conclusion is subtitled 'Binary Relationships and the Making of Myth'. Like the tripartite paradigm of the introduction, the many binary relationships recalled to attention, e.g., imitation and creation, could doubtless be found in the history of most cultures. Their grouping into clusters under the rubrics of environment, process, and agency is intended to illustrate the 'movement of self-perception from barbarism to universality' (149). There is a Wizard of Oz moment at the end of the book and a summation to the effect that we are not really in the realm of historical science after all: 'In removing the rise of French from the actual social, political, and economic factors that had pushed the language into a position of higher and higher status throughout the era, early modern thinkers managed to construct a myth, rather than a history, of their own [constructs'?] inherent value as universal models' (151).

Coski's book will make an admirable introduction to the individual or college class first approaching this fascinating topic. The author's own theoretical constructs are less compelling.

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Agin, Shane, ed. *Sex Education in Eighteenth-Century France*. *SVEC* 2011:09. Oxford: Voltaire Foundation, 2011. vi + 301 p.

This issue of *SVEC* contains thirteen articles (all in English). Its title could be characterized as anachronistic, if not a misnomer, since what most of the articles document is precisely the *absence* of sex education in eighteenth-century France. As Jean Bloch points out, aside from the notable exception of Rousseau's influence at the end of the century, the decisive factor in this regard was "the sheer dominance of the Catholic Church in *ancien régime* education" (13). The result of this longstanding if waning institutional and ideological dominance was that, from conduct manuals to medical treatises, chastity (which was equated with moral virtue) remained the only legitimate option outside of marriage (whose main purpose was of course procreation) and precluded any open discussion of sexual development and education. When faced with such a shroud of repression and silence, researchers have to conduct what Jean M. Goulemot calls in the subtitle of his contribution (83-104) "an investigation into the margins,"—which will include, unsurprisingly, the numerous libertine novels of the period. While the conceptual links between such long-marginalized texts and any current

notion of what constitutes sex education remain tenuous, most of the articles in this volume provide worthwhile and sometimes entertaining reading. The following were of particular interest to this reviewer.

In "Miss Manners and Fooling Around: Conduct Manuals and Sexual Mores in Eighteenth-Century France," Allan H. Pasco, having pored over a wide variety of texts, confirms an anticipated *décalage* between eighteenth-century sexual practices and the "fact that conduct manuals are so lacking in explicit sexual education" (46). In "Curing Masturbation with a Bath, a Straightjacket, or a Wax Museum: The Strategies of Tissot, Bienville, and Bertrand-Rival," Kathryn A. Hoffmann, partly drawing on Michel Foucault's genealogical model (as do several other contributors to this volume), describes and compares, not without a sense of humor, three "eighteenth-century examples that help reveal the range of medical treatments and the public pedagogy of masturbation" (68). Shane Agin, in "The Construction and Education of the Sexualized Subject in Rousseau," examines the *Second Discourse*, the *Confessions*, and of course *Émile* in order to assess the sexual and emotional dimensions of Rousseau's pedagogical theory, according to which "the proper sexual education of an adolescent becomes a question of regulating sense and imagination so that the natural order of sexual development is ensured" (133). In "Correspondence School for Lovers: Epistolary Exchange and Sexual Education in Restif de la Bretonne's *Le Nouvel Abeilard*," Cecilia Feilla provides a fascinating analysis of a relatively obscure novel that was inspired by Rousseau's more famous *Julie ou la Nouvelle Héloïse*, and that shares similar social goals and values (if not the same methods): "to keep girls virgins until married and women faithful in marriage" (154). Chris Roulston, in "Female Education and Sex Education in Choderlos de Laclos's *Les Liaisons dangereuses*," highlights the inferior state of the education provided to young women in eighteenth-century France, as embodied by the manipulated and victimized character Cécile Volanges, whose "convent education has made her socially blind, unable to distinguish the necessary codes that make her world intelligible, and therefore unable to navigate society's treacherous waters" (191-92). A similar theme of social and sexual naivety among inadequately educated female characters, albeit for different narrative ends, is found in "The Comedy of Ignorance: Scenes of Sexual Initiation in Early Modern Pornographic Literature," in which Jean-Christophe Abramovici details the ways in which "scenes of instruction, initiation, and apprenticeship" (207) became a prominent topos in the libertine or pornographic genre.

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Smart, Annie K. *Citoyennes: Women and the Ideal of Citizenship in Eighteenth-Century France*. Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2011. xii + 259 p.

With a close (re)reading of Jürgen Habermas's *Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere* (1962) as a theoretical backdrop, Annie K. Smart seeks to demonstrate through her interdisciplinary study that in eighteenth-century France, "women were considered civic individuals and that the intimate sphere was considered a space for civic formation" (16). Smart thus aims to nuance a widely-shared analysis of gender roles during and after the French Revolution, according to which the public, political sphere was reserved for men, while women were relegated to a passive, subordinate role within the home. In so doing, Smart revalorizes the private home-sphere, endowing it with political content and describing it as the space in which civic values are elaborated and transmitted. The author, obviously aware of the dangers lurking on the conceptual path she has chosen to tread, is careful to point out that her study does not merely entail the retrospective ennobling of 'women's work' or the paradoxical rehabilitation of outdated gender roles:

"By postulating that there is a civic intimate sphere, this study does not seek to deny the importance of including women in the political arena" (234).

The six chapters of *Citoyennes* are mostly devoted to literary texts: Jean-Jacques Rousseau's *Émile*, Louis-Sébastien Mercier's *L'an 2440*, Félicité de Genlis's *Adèle et Théodore*, several of Olympe de Gouges's texts, and a sample of the numerous plays (mostly propagandistic) produced during Year II of the Revolutionary calendar (1793-94). However, chapter 5 provides an examination of visual art (paintings as well as popular prints) from the Revolutionary period. The chapter on Rousseau's *Émile* is crucial, setting the tone and the argumentation for the rest of Smart's study: "In welding civic and feminine ideals, Rousseau bestows on women a civic identity and formulates domestic space as devoted not only to the private cares of the family, but also to the reproduction of ties to the state" (55). It is this "reproduction of ties to the state," as opposed to equal participation in the duties and responsibilities of statecraft, that announces the innovative dimension of Rousseau's work and influence in the eighteenth century—as well as their limitations, from our perspective. By positing a continuum, instead of a strict separation, between the private and public spheres, between home life and political life, Smart provides new ways to consider not only well-known texts, but also the gendered and unequal representations that emerged from the Revolutionary period.

In subsequent chapters, Smart extends the conceptual grid of this private-public continuum to other authors and texts. For instance, in her discussion of the multifaceted work of the author of the *Déclaration des droits de la femme et de la citoyenne* (1791), Smart argues: "By speaking as a woman and for the nation, the *citoyenne* possesses both 'male' and 'female,' personal and public qualities" (146). The broader domain or definition of citizenship that emerges from this study is the result of an effort to transcend binary divisions between 'male' and 'female,' between the home-sphere and the political arena. Of course, such an approach runs the risk of understating the very real misogyny and gender inequality that characterized most of the Revolutionary era (and much of what followed). That said, Smart's meticulously-documented book provides an original and tightly-argued reinterpretation of the roles as well as the representations of women within the civic sphere during and after the Revolution.

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Jovicic, Jelena, éd. *La Modernité et la métropole: pour une lecture de l'espace urbain au XIXe siècle*. London, Ontario: Mestengo Press, 2007.

Six of the seven essays in this collection were presented at the Association canadienne des études francophones du XIXe at York University in 2006. Jean-Jacques Hamm explains the volume's organizing principle in his preface: the first four studies, which constitute Part I, by Yves Thomas, Michael Graves, Jelena Jovicic, and Philippe Basabose, present "la réalité du Paris de l'époque" (xiii); the fourth and fifth, by Elisabeth Gerwin and Jeremy Worth, examine the image of Paris in fictional texts (it is unclear why Jovicic's piece on Zola's *Au bonheur des dames* does not fall in this category); the final essay of Part II, by Máire Fedelma Cross, looks at Flora Tristan's visit to the Midi. Not surprisingly, the work of Walter Benjamin (particularly *Paris, capitale du XIXe siècle*, now known in its unfinished form as the Arcades Project), figures prominently in nearly all the essays.

Limited space does not allow for extensive analysis of every essay, even when the volume is as slim as this, but the contributions of Graves, Jovicic, Gerwin, and Cross merit special consideration. Graves showcases the aforementioned work by Benjamin, whose original intent was to create a case study and critique of Jung's theory of

archetypes, but who ultimately veered "towards a radically different epistemological approach" (22) resulting in "a work in an explicitly and overtly Marxist register" (22-23). Graves terms Benjamin's method "a historical dialectical materialism" (23) rooted in the theories of Lukacs and Freud as well as those of Marx. It is precisely his juxtaposition of Marxism and psychoanalysis that makes Benjamin's project so original, according to Graves. Particularly noteworthy here is the discussion of the bourgeois interior of mid-century, which, like the panorama of the early 1830s, is at once a reproduction of the outside world in miniature and an artificial construct "in the sense that the objects that fill this interior have been abstracted from their original context and juxtaposed in a way that has no internal logic" (27); it is, in short, "a dream world" disconnected from the unharmonious world outside the house (28). Jovicic offers a semiotic analysis of "la culture de consommation et ses articulations textuelles" in *Au bonheur des dames*, "[s]'inspirant, d'une part, du lien entre la littérature et l'architecture établi par Philippe Hamon, et d'autre part, du rapport entre l'architecture and l'économie politique" in order to demonstrate how "le discours sur la consommation informe et transforme ce texte zolien" (36). Jovicic proposes that the architecture of the *grands magasins* exerts such a powerful force on human bodies that "la frontière entre le privé et le public devient poreuse"; women lose themselves completely before the objects of their desire in what she calls "[un] fétichisme de la marchandise" (40). Gerwin's essay, "Circulation et exception: la ville dans *La Fille aux yeux d'or*," argues convincingly that Paris is the unifying element of the three sections of Balzac's *Histoire des Treize*; in fact, no less than a third of *La Fille* is devoted to it. "[N]on seulement les personnages habitent la ville," notes Gerwin, "mais la ville habite tout le texte" (68). Balzac's Paris is defined by movement, "mouvement mécanique de la ville elle-même aux yeux des nouveaux venus; mouvement plutôt animal selon les amateurs, qui eux-mêmes participent à cette circulation de corps et d'idées" (69). Finally, Cross's "Southern Comfort: A Parisian's Diary and Correspondence with Activists in the Midi of 1844" unfortunately sticks out a bit, not only because it is the only contribution that does not deal with Paris, but also because it, unlike the others, could have benefitted from a heavier editorial hand. Minor issues (extra spaces here and there, dangling modifiers, and an occasional lack of clarity in the writing) by themselves matter little but when they commingle do have an impact on the reader's ability to fully appreciate the excellent points being made. In her analysis of Tristan's journal and correspondence, Cross provides fascinating insights into the activist's attitude toward the inhabitants of Marseille and Toulon. A Parisian who saw herself as "a lone female figure, mother to the workers and martyr to the cause" (106), Tristan does not hesitate to criticize the southerners, targeting, among other things, the Marseille patois and even the physical appearance of the Marseillais, whom she found lacking in distinguishable features ("ils se ressemblent tous [. . .] J'aime mille fois plus la laideur des Lyonnais" [110]).

The other essays consider the Paris articulated by Benjamin, Du Camp, Nadar, and Fourier (Thomas); Paris through the mirror of the Exposition Universelle of 1889 (Basabose); and the Paris of Zola's *La Curée* and *L'Œuvre* (Worth).

That *La Modernité et la métropole* is, in many ways, typical of its genre—a conference-generated collection that is just cohesive enough—does not take away from the fact that every contribution exhibits serious scholarship and thus represents a worthwhile investment of reading time.

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Rogers. Peter. *The Mystery Play in Madame Bovary: Mœurs de province.* Amsterdam, New York: Rodopi, 2009.

It is a bold move to offer up yet another book-length study of a well-known masterpiece. Happily, Peter Rogers' rereading of *Madame Bovary* through the lens of religious allegory is fresh and edifying. Certainly it challenges the idea that Flaubert's corpus alternates between fixed and facile categories of themes, religious on the one side (*La Tentation de Saint Antoine, Salammbô*) and secular on the other (*L'Education sentimentale, Madame Bovary, Bouvard et Pécuchet*).

Taking as his departure point Flaubert's subtitle for *Madame Bovary* and its focus on provincial mores, Rogers first sketches the backdrop for this study by differentiating liturgical genres, from the *mystères* (which vulgarized in theatrical form the principal doctrines of Catholic scripture) to what were known as *miracles* (stories about saints) and *moralités* (stories containing a moral lesson). The predictable stock characters (Adam, Eve, Jesus, Mary, angels, etc.) of these didactic plays once performed in churches are delineated and their fictional counterparts in Flaubert's novel (Emma the Madonna, Charles the Savior), suggested. Beyond this vital staging of the Catholic literary history which underpins Flaubert's novel, it is also in the initial pages of the study that we discover Rogers' talent for unraveling not just the raucous ironies of Flaubert's dialogue, but also for exposing the way this dialogue and Flaubert's characters serve to inscribe a sacred sub-text in a novel traditionally considered almost exclusively, Rogers argues, in the light of its realism and modernity. A conversation between the pharmacist Homais and the priest Bournisien, during which the two rival characters argue about theater and the Bible only to conclude and agree on the dangers of the latter, is rightly viewed by Rogers as pivotal in its staging of the dialectic of science and dogma.

Certainly Flaubert, iconic for his artful attention to minutiae (pearls) and his obsession with a perfectly turned phrase, deserves the skillful attention to detail that Rogers makes tangible throughout a book that is unquestionably written for a specialist readership. A proper index would have made the book more user-friendly, and although the argument could also be made for an improved acquaintance with the scholarship on allegory and mysticism in Flaubert (see Gisèle Séginger, for example, conspicuously absent from Rogers' bibliography), Rogers' interpretations of key moments (Berthe's baptism, the *Comices agricoles*, Rodolphe's seduction of Emma, Hippolyte's operation, to name just a few) are informed and completed by comprehensive knowledge of the Flaubert corpus. *La Tentation de saint Antoine* and *Les Trois contes* are judiciously resourced. Rogers' discussions of Flaubert's spiritual musings in the earliest correspondence and of the notes on religious paintings by Lucas de Leyde and Salvator Rosa, which Flaubert viewed in Italy, are particularly illuminating. They allow Rogers to tease out the aesthetic, thematic and philosophical paradoxes of a Flaubert seen here to deploy a farcical Passion play as a matter of his own writerly catharsis at a historical turning point: when France was as passionately committed to old (religious) and new (scientific) paradigms.

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Berthier, Philippe. *Stendhal: Littérature, politique et religion mêlées*. Etudes Romantiques et Dix-Neuviémistes, Paris : Garnier, 2011.

Voilà un titre qui a de quoi intriguer tous les stendhaliens et, plus généralement, les passionnés de littérature romantique. Philippe Berthier, en évoquant le titre du livre de Victor Hugo, *Philosophie et religion mêlées*, réussit d'emblée à placer Stendhal dans un contexte historique et littéraire qui reste le sien tout en ne l'étant jamais complètement. Si, en effet, « ce n'est certes pas HB » (Berthier, 11) qui aurait adopté le projet et le

langage hugolien, il est tout aussi vrai que l'œuvre de Stendhal se place au croisement des différents discours qui dominaient son époque, obsédée justement par la nécessité de redéfinir le rapport entre littérature, politique et religion. Ce sont là les discours qui définissent de façon primordiale – au 19ème siècle ─ l'apparition du sujet dans l'espace public, et Berthier a raison d'affirmer dès le début que pour Stendhal « [le] combat romantique pour une littérature d'après Bérézina, quittant l'empyrée transhistorique d'un classicisme réputé intemporel, repose sur la conviction militante que le beau est toujours daté et engagé : la divine neutralité de l'esthétique est une imposture. » (Berthier, 11)

Avec l'ajout d'un essai original, ce livre recueille des études qui avaient paru en revue ou actes de colloque entre 1979 et 2008, en marge, donc, des ouvrages majeurs de Philippe Berthier, qui compte plusieurs volumes de critique stendhalienne, toujours dans un riche contexte littéraire et historique. Depuis *Stendhal et ses peintres italiens* (1977) jusqu'à *Stendhal en miroir. Histoire du Stendhalisme en France, 1842-2004* (2007), Berthier a consacré la plus belle part de sa carrière à l'étude de cet écrivain qu'il définit, avec raison, « attachant » avant tout. Ces études sont donc des *disjecta* qui gagnent sans doute d'une parution en volume qui les met en résonance en constituant un tout qui est quelque chose de plus et de différent de la somme de ses parties. Ceci d'autant plus que les critiques stendhaliens ont tendance à se constituer en tant que « fans » de l'auteur et qu'il n'y a pas d'aperçu ou détail pittoresque dont les *beylistes* ne soient pas friands et qu'ils n'arrivent pas à ajouter à leur image de l'écrivain. Aidé par quarante ans de recherches textuelles suivies et par une enviable maîtrise des sources les plus obscures, Berthier sait combiner, dans ses textes, la trouvaille d'archive avec des aperçus critiques soutenus par une profonde compréhension de l'ensemble de l'œuvre stendhalienne, des grands romans aux essais d'esthétique en passant par la correspondance et les nouvelles.

Ce recueil sera donc reçu avec intérêt et sympathie par un public toujours renaissant de lecteurs et de chercheurs universitaires. On trouvera de quoi réfléchir dans chacune de ces études, mais je parlerai plus en détail de celles qui m'ont semblé le plus aptes à retenir l'attention des critiques, spécialistes ou non. Dans le contexte général établi par Berthier, selon lequel les déclarations esthétiques de Beyle sont toujours en relation directe avec ses convictions politiques, l'essai intitulé « 'Notre Père Walter Scott' : Stendhal ou le fils émancipé » me paraît exemplaire : Berthier nous explique comment Stendhal se distancie de l'écrivain anglais à partir d'une prise de position qui est à la fois esthétique et politique. Coupable d'avoir servi l'aristocratie tory et d'avoir consenti à la lapidation moraliste de Lord Byron, Walter Scott est finalement rejeté par Stendhal, qui par ailleurs n'en partage pas non plus les choix stylistiques. Les descriptions poétiques et détaillées typiques de l'écrivain anglais, tout en lui semblant « admirables », le laissent froid, car il préfère, on le sait, les passions aux choses. Surtout, comme Berthier le dit très bien, « c'est dans l'ici et le maintenant » (Berthier, 87) que Stendhal choisit de développer ses romans historiques, choix qui relève du politique et de l'esthétique à fois.

L'attention de Berthier au côté tout politique, et même théorique, de l'intervention stendhalienne dans les débats de son temps, s'exprime aussi dans « La mort de Danton ? », qui explore la position impossible de Julien Sorel par rapport aux étiquettes, elles-mêmes fragiles et incertaines, de la Restauration telle qu'on la voit – et on la vit -- dans le soi-disant 'château' de M. de Rênal. Le langage de la Révolution, et ses catégories morales et politiques, ont laissé une empreinte irréversible dans la psychologie française. S'il est vrai que le problème de Julien est que, où qu'il aille, « on ne sait d'abord pas où le mettre » (Berthier, 90), ceci dérive de l'impossibilité de sa situation, et de son existence même. On ne s'étonnera donc pas que dans l'essai qui s'intitule « Histoire et Roman », Berthier dise que « l'Histoire, c'est donc vraiment, pour Stendhal, la substance même d'un être » (134) et même qu' « il y a donc en Stendhal, un historien raté » (135), selon le mot de Michel Foucault. L'histoire, cependant, déçoit Beyle, qui

détaille la modernité presque uniquement pour en affirmer « le néant » et la nécessité de l'oublier par l'amour ou d'autres passions également mortelles.

D'autre part, Berthier a sans doute raison de parler d'un côté moins explicite de l'inspiration stendhalienne, c'est-à-dire une sympathie pour des sentiments religieux que son anticléricalisme politique semblerait interdire. Berthier, qui est par ailleurs un éminent critique de Chateaubriand, est particulièrement à cet aspect de la sensibilité de Stendhal, dont d'ailleurs, comme il le souligne dans « Dieu, La Femme et le Roman », Julia Kristeva avait déjà parlé dans son *Histoires d'amour*. Que ce soit ses héroïnes Italiennes, les brigands de *L'Abbesse de Castro*, le tendre ecclésiastique que deviendra Fabrice Del Dongo, et jusqu'au séminariste mécréant qu'a été Julien Sorel, tous les grands protagonistes stendhaliens sont sensibles à l'extase mystique et à la contemplation de l'éternel. C'est d'ailleurs un des côtés les plus attachants de ces jeunes solitaires, pour qui Dieu est, avant tout, une absence, un témoin muet, ce que Berthier définit très bien comme « une sommation à laquelle on se sait infidèle. » (Berthier, 207). Dans « Mystique, érotique et politique à Bray-le-Haut », Berthier précise d'ailleurs les référents esthétiques de cette caractérisation spirituelle des protagonistes stendhaliennes : en particulier, les références à Julien Sorel « comédien et martyr » -- Berthier cite Jean Genet ici de façon tout à fait appropriée même si quelque peu inattendue – que le lecteur peut sûrement imaginer a plusieurs reprises en tant que Saint Clément, Saint Sébastien, ou autre « aimable victime » au physique délicat et torturé. Loin, donc, de nous présenter une vision purement satirique de l'esprit religieux, Stendhal montre d'en apprécier la profondeur esthétique, érotique et même morale, bien qu'il raille et dénonce tout ce qui se lie à la politique corrompue de l'église catholique et au moralisme étriqué de l'éthique protestante.

Le lecteur a sans doute compris que les essais contenus dans ce volume méritent de trouver une place dans les rayons de toute bibliothèque beyliste. Sous la plume de Berthier, le génie multiforme de l'apostat grenoblois nous apparaît non seulement comme un pari lancé aux lecteurs à venir, mais aussi comme une véritable vocation à l'actualité qui enchaîne Stendhal à son présent par des liens qui, pour être controversés, n'en restent pas moins indissolubles.

Giuseppina Mecchia *University of Pittsburgh.*

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Claudel, Paul. *Théâtre I*. Ed. Didier Alexandre et Michel Autrand, avec la collaboration de Pascale Alexandre-Bergues, Jacques Houriez et Michel Lioure. Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 72. Paris : Gallimard, 2011. 1708 p. *Théâtre II*. Ed. Didier Alexandre et Michel Autrand, avec la collaboration de Pascale Alexandre-Bergues, Shinobu Chujo, Jacques Houriez et al. Bibliothèque de la Pléiade 73. Paris : Gallimard, 2011. 1873 p.

This new edition of Paul Claudel's theatre is the fourth to appear in the Pléiade collection, bidding us cast a fresh eye on the playwright's singularly uncompromising trajectory, from the epic turbulence of *Tête d'Or* (1889) through to the redemptive mime of *Le Chemin de la Croix n^{o} 2* (1952). While the corpus holds few new elements, the manner in which it is presented differs significantly from previous editions. Theatre remains bound up for Claudel with an incessant re-writing and re-working of conflicting tendencies whose resolution can only ever be fleetingly apprehended. Successive versions of major plays bear witness to the potentially infinite bifurcations of the Claudelian quest, which no single dramatic composition can definitively encapsulate and satisfy. Preceding editions had placed versions of the same work together, thus proposing a unified sum of endeavour that largely collapses the complexity of the intermediate periods during which new plays emerged and informed aspects of the next incarnation of the work in question. In this edition, plays are presented in order of their dates of

composition with a view to promoting a firmer grasp of how Claudel's dramatic art evolved as a whole over the decades, in accordance with various biographical occurrences and the aesthetic and ideological choices of a given moment.

It is the contingent nature of this drama, subject to unfolding events and unplanned encounters, that the editors seek to highlight in their strictly chronological approach. Perhaps most striking in this respect are the far-reaching repercussions of Claudel's sudden, improbable conversion in 1886, the tumult of which spawns the unruly personages of the first plays, torn between revolt and acceptance, driven by forces that manifestly exceed their own finite measure. What matters to the playwright is less the polished, completed work than the myriad possibilities of the "drame à l'état naissant". One of the principal ambitions of the current edition is to capture this theatre in its very genesis, ever in the making as it undergoes frequent textual revision and then further mutates during the challenging passage from page to stage. To this end, an appendix entitled "Autour de..." has been established for each play, containing all manner of texts authored by the playwright, from preparatory notes and variants to prefaces, letters and talks. In the section devoted to *Le Soulier de satin*, the full version for the stage, devised in collaboration with Jean-Louis Barrault, has been strategically located. Claudel discovered the art of stage direction in 1912, and the demands of dramatic space and time, the ludic and self-reflexive aspects of performance, the desire for an all-embracing spectacle that fuses different art forms and blurs the boundaries between actors and audience, are thrown into fitting relief throughout the two volumes.

Nine scholars considerably expand the critical material provided by Jacques Madaule and Jacques Petit in the preceding edition that dates back to 1965-1967. Choosing the notion of "démesure" or "outrance" as the key theme of his meaty introduction, Didier Alexandre analyses with eloquent precision those aspects of Claudelian drama that diverge from other literary currents of the time and ensure a questioning as relevant and irreducible today as it was at its moment of inception. Delineating five main periods of creativity, he considers how the power of language and the necessity for action underpin a theatre in which the former self is discarded, the new man emerges, but to engage with a calling that is neither wholly fathomable nor ever truly exhaustible. He thus draws attention to the unformulated or latent nature of meaning in these plays. Beyond this stimulating overview of more than half a century of production, each play is accompanied by a succinct critical assessment whose areas of enquiry are largely the same throughout: the origins of the work, the dramatic form it espouses, its significance, its reception and performance. The aim, as stated at the head of the edition, is to provide an informative framework that draws on biographical fact without getting caught up in loose or debatable interpretations. Furthermore, the pieces take stock of a wide range of more recent research and commentary, setting out a network of references that might be fruitfully pursued by the reader. In sum, the edition acts as an important opening for a renewed appreciation of Claudel's exacting theatrical itinerary – one that defies easy categorisation, yet retains in its very unfinishableness all the force of a breathing, vital enigma whose boundlessness, far removed from Symbolist ennui, brings forth the voice, gestures, rhythm and images of endlessly inventive stagecraft.

Michael Brophy *University College Dublin*

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Laroche, Hadrien. *The Last Genet: A Writer in Revolt*. Trans. David Homel. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2010. p. 331.

Incoherent and self-serving, this is not a "monograph" (8) about Genet's actions and the two revolutionary movements, the Black Panthers and the Palestinians, to which he tied himself between 1968 and 1986, the year he died. It can only be recommended to the

most die-hard of deconstructionists enamored with the superfluous, the substanceless, and the superficial.

The last incarnation of Genet, whose "trip" (296) Laroche portends to follow in his three-part meandering and often unreadable meditation, is both "*the one at the end*" and the "*lowest*" (9). Let the incoherence of the text speak for itself: "[it does not] draw the line between masturbators and combatants, the poetic and the political encounter" (42-3); "[it was] *concerned with (need) the movement (transformation) of men subjected to a violent legacy (disenfranchisement*)—the impoverished, forgotten, invisible" (57); "[it wants] *to express trash, misery, absolute misfortune*" (59); "[it becomes] that *reflection of the joy of the rich in the eye of the poor man*" (77); and the space and time it created can be described by the expression "everyday fraternity" (49).

While the "vibrant style," "freedom of mind" and "beauty" of Laroche's "provocative" painting of Genet's dark side are all lauded on the book's back cover, one would be hard-pressed to make head or tail of the three "*circles of matter*" (10)—Genet's critique of friendship, violence, and history—that ostensibly undergird the work. And Laroche's hypothesis? That Genet's political project "embraces the movement of a hurried impulse," that Genet "comes running in the name of man, concerned" (9). That in the last line of his acknowledgments Laroche honors his debt to Jacques Derrida, in whose own prose we might as well be drowning, is hardly surprising.

It is undeniable that questions pertaining to the disinherited, to identity, nation, territory, indeed to immigration are all, as Laroche's advocates at Arsenal Pulp Press believed, "relevant" in today's world. But in his quest to discover the "poetry" of Genet's later years, to retrace Genet's journey from "emotional old age to haggard witness" (30), Laroche will surely lose even the most ardent readers. Other than an unconventional chronology spanning from 1517 (when Erasmus published *The Complaint of Peace Spurned*, or *Querela Pacis*, and to which Laroche ties the "direction of intent" in the political will of Genet's final incarnation) to 2010, the centennial of Genet's birth, there is little of interest or logic in this "dangerous rambling" (241). As though to underscore the sheer gratuitousness of his efforts, Laroche has the gall to admit on the final page that he had hoped to offer the last Genet's story as a trip: "up the course of a river, toward its source. But there is no source (origin). If we could write this story with a needle on the inside of an eye, it would give thought to those who know how to think" (296).

Readers undertaking the journey will have only themselves to blame.

Brian Gordon Kennelly *California Polytechnic State University*

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Jannarone, Kimberly. *Artaud and His Doubles*. Ann Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2010.

Kimberly Jannarone's recent monograph *Artaud and His Doubles* is truly one of the most profoundly original and thought-provoking works of literary criticism dedicated to Antonin Artaud to date. Jannarone courageously challenges mainstream interpretations of Artaud's complex oeuvre, replete with numerous paradoxes and blatant contradictions, which place the artist on an intellectual and even spiritual pedestal. As the aptly named title of her book affirms, Jannarone focuses mainly on the 'Theater of Cruelty' advocated by Artaud in his seminal text *The Theater and Its Double*. In stark contrast from traditional criticism which lauds the tormented playwright, poet, and theorist as a counter-hegemonic luminary that endeavored to undermine the establishment in order to create a more just social order, Jannarone presents a compelling and cogent argument for (re)-conceptualizing Artaud and the worldview that he articulates in *The Theater and Its Double*.

Underscoring the excessive veneration and euphoric subjectivity that are emblematic of many scholarly studies related to Artaud, Jannarone guides the reader on a "journey, that is unpleasant, (and) disturbing" (x). Given that Artaud often longs for a cataclysmic event that would annihilate every trace of humanity on this planet, Jannarone convincingly contends that the author is more of a nihilistic misanthrope as opposed to an avant-garde humanist striving to create a "better world" (xi). Elucidating Artaud's somber worldview, in which existential anguish reigns supreme without the possibility of any sort of transcendence, that clearly reveals itself in *The Theater and Its Double*, Jannarone asserts, "Artaud's prose relishes the carnage, pointing us away from any wishful interpretation of this as an imagined restorative event" (42). Based on meticulous close readings of numerous primary texts from the author's extensive repertoire, Jannarone persuasively hypothesizes that Artaud's writings reflect a deeply pessimistic *weltanschauung* of a tortured soul that never mentions anything which resembles a remedy for the human condition. In fact, the only 'solution' that Artaud ever proposes is complete and utter destruction. As Jannarone explains, "he (Artaud) never writes of people being happy, and his dream for the individual is its dissolution, not its fuller articulation" (15).

In addition to highlighting the disquieting cerebral trauma from which there appears to be no escape in Artaud's *oeuvre*, Jannarone also notes that the author's dramaturgical theory is quite disconcerting when viewed from an objective lens. Incorporating a wealth of research concerning crowd theory and mass behavior, Jannarone posits that *The Theater and Its Double* seeks to create an atmosphere of both "immersion and agitation" or a carefully manufactured form of revolt whose ultimate meaning is entirely imposed by the director of the play (92). Although Artaud's revolutionary ideas have profoundly changed the course of contemporary theater and his concepts have often been championed by dramaturgical initiatives with humanistic aspirations such as the "Living Theater," Jannarone reveals the unfortunate reality that Artaud's ideal director closely resembles a totalitarian dictator. Jannarone supports her provocative yet sound arguments by exploring Italian and German fascist theater as more logical 'doubles' that are indicative of Artaud's actual artistic and philosophical vision for humanity. According to Jannarone, it is in this context in which the author's fascination with mesmerism, "the belief that being […] (is) composed of 'animated matter,'" should be understood (126). The cosmic mysticism that is so often associated with Artaud is not transcendental, benevolent, or philanthropic, but instead it represents an unhealthy obsession to control the entire material universe like an omnipotent puppeteer whose soul seeks oblivion rather than reconciliation.

In summary, *Artaud and His Doubles* is an essential tool for (re)-envisioning Artaud's multifaceted, prolific, and diverse corpus. Artaud is undoubtedly one of the greatest dramaturgical thinkers of the twentieth century and the modern era whose ideas have forever revolutionized the stage. However, Jannarone's compelling, well-reasoned monograph cautions academicians with pure intentions and humanistic agendas to no longer misappropriate Artaud's theories to support personal agendas that are antithetical to the author's profound nihilism and evident disdain for humanity.

Keith Moser *Mississippi State University*

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Cazenave, Odile and Patricia Célérier. *Contemporary Francophone African Writers and the Burden of Commitment.* Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press. 2011. 246 p.

Odile Cazenave and Patricia Célérier, explain the scope of this volume in their introduction: "By looking at *engagée* literature from yesterday (when the African writer

was implicitly seen as imparted with a mission) to today (when authors usually aspire to be acknowledged primarily for their works as writers), this book addresses the current processes of canonization in contemporary francophone African literature." (2) They successfully argue in their book "that aesthetic as well as political issues are now at the forefront of debates about the African literary canon as writers and critics increasingly acknowledge the ideology of form." (2)

The book is divided into four chapters of approximately equal length. The first chapter, "Enduring Commitments," focuses on defining *engagé* novels and proposes new interpretations of the novels by the enduring militants: Ousmane Sembène, Alioum Fantouré, Mongo Beti, Ahmadou Kourouma, Aminata Sow Fall, Emmanuel Dongala, and Henri Lopès. Chapter two is entitled "The Practice of Memory." In this chapter, the authors study how the past, and, more generally, history, is confronted and reconstructed. In particular, they analyze the figure of the national hero (in Boubacar Boris Diop's *Le cavalier et son ombre*, Tierno Monénembo's *Cinéma*, Werewere Liking's *La mémoire amputée*, and Patrice Nganang's *La joie de vivre*) and examine how myths are revamped and subverted (in Gaston-Paul Effa's *Tout ce bleu* and *Mâ*, Tanella Boni's *Les baigneurs du lac rose*, Véronique Tadjo's *Reine Pokou,* and in the novels by the Malagasy authors: Michèle Rakotoson's *Lalana* et Jean-Luc Raharimanana's *Nour).* The last section of this chapter is devoted to the project "Rwanda: écrire par devoir de mémoire," for which ten writers residing in Kigali wrote about the 1994 genocide. Special attention has been given to the novels *Murambi, Le livre des ossements* of Boubacar Boris Diop, *La phalène des collines* of Koulsy Lamko, *Murekatete* of Monique Ilboudo, *L'aîné des orphelins* of Tierno Monénembo, *L'ombre d'Imana* of Véronique Tadjo, and *Moisson de crânes* of Abdourahman Waberi.

In Chapter Three, Casenave and Célérier explore how contemporary Francophone African writers investigate the ideological implications of narrative and engage in new aesthetics. Two main topics are highlighted: violence and immigration. Postcolonial violence in the city is discussed in Isabelle Boni-Claverie's *La grande dévoreuse*, Ken Bugul's *La folie et la mort*, Cécile Vieyra's *Une odeur aigre de lait rance*, Alain Mabanckou's *Bleu blanc rouge*, Sami Tchak's *Place des fêtes*, and Bessora's *53 cm.* Children having become voices of violence is revealed in Emmanuel Dongala's *Johnny chien méchant*, Ahmadou Kourouma's *Allah n'est pas obligé*, Tierno Monénembo's *L'aîné des orphelins*, Jean Roger Essomba's *Le dernier gardien de l'arbre*, and Florent Couao-Zotti's *Charly en guerre*. The theme of immigration is analyzed in the works of Calixthe Beyala, Daniel Biyaoula, Alain Mabanckou, Jean Roger Essomba, Bessora, Fatou Diome, Leonora Miano, Abdourahman Wabéri, Patrice Nganang, and Sami Tchak amongst others.

The last chapter treats "The Fashioning of an Engaging Literature: The Publishing Industry, the Internet, and Criticism." It focuses on new literary series (Gallimard's *Continents Noirs*, Hatier's *Monde Noir*, L'Harmattan's *Encres Noires*), the publishing houses (Serpent à Plumes, Editions Kaya Makhele, Actes Sud, and Nouvelles Editions Africaines) and the website Africultures, and stresses the importance of book fairs, literary festivals, and book prizes. Finally this chapter points out the discrepancy between, on the one hand, the fact that information on francophone African literature is more easily accessible, and, on the other hand, the reality that there is a considerable delay in its translation.

This skillfully written, well-researched, nuanced and balanced book touches on various genres but concentrates on the novel. It integrates judiciously close textual analysis into more theoretical and/or general assertions. Numerous endnotes, a bibliography and an index are provided at the end of the book.

The works discussed in this book are, generally speaking, rather well known and acclaimed in the French and francophone world at large. Most writers belonging to the

youngest generation divide their time between their country of origin and France. Consequently, this book is not concerned with authors and novels that may be known in their country of origin but have not acquired international acclaim. It also does not mention prizes devoted to national authors, nor does it cite local publishers or presses. Finally, although the title mentions "Contemporary Francophone African Writers," it surprisingly does not include North African writers.

On the whole, this book will appeal to scholars interested in learning about recent trends in contemporary Sub-Saharan literature written in French. It clearly shows how one can observe a shift in these francophone authors' "commitments" over the last fifteen years or so. More generally, it will contribute greatly to the field of post-colonial studies.

Thérèse De Raedt *University of Utah*

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Chirol, Marie-Magdeleine. *Gaston Kaboré: Conteur visionnaire du cinéma africain*. Lyon : Presses universitaires de Lyon, 2011.

La parution du livre de Marie-Magdeleine Chirol marque un grand moment dans l'histoire du cinéma africain. Dans cette première étude entièrement consacrée à l'œuvre cinématographique de Gaston Kaboré, considéré comme l'un des pères du cinéma burkinabè, Chirol propose de tracer le parcours esthétique et thématique du cinéaste en tant que « conteur engagé » (11). Grâce aux données biographiques et à une présentation quasi-exhaustive de sa filmographie, l'œuvre de Chirol s'interroge sur les différents rôles que joue Kaboré comme fonctionnaire, conseiller technique, administrateur, cinéaste, conteur, critique social, écologiste et, surtout, historien de son pays. Bien que l'auteure souligne l'importance de Sembène Ousmane dans le développement du cinéma en Afrique subsaharienne, elle le met rapidement à l'écart pour faire honneur à Kaboré dont le cinéma a une portée à la fois régionale et universelle et qui a inauguré une tendance « culturaliste » chez les cinéastes africains (29). Parmi les grands axes de lecture que propose Chirol se trouvent la problématique du soi et de l'autre, la valeur de témoignage des films kaboréens, la transposition de la tradition orale et donc du conte à l'écran, la coexistence entre la linéarité et la circularité du temps, l'urbanisation, le topos de la ruine et la condition de la femme africaine. Or sa présentation ne succombe jamais à la répétition. En effet, chaque film est pris sous un angle différent afin de montrer la richesse de la production artistique du cinéaste.

Cet ouvrage est composé de trois parties majeures et de deux appendices dont un entretien entre l'auteure et le cinéaste. La première partie offre au lecteur des repères biographiques et filmographiques nécessaires pour comprendre la démarche cinématographique de Kaboré aussi bien que les analyses de fond de ses quatre longs métrages (*Wênd Kûuni*, *Buud Yam*, *Zan Boko* et *Rabi*) proposées dans la deuxième partie. La troisième partie présente trois courts métrages destinés à l'origine aux téléspectateurs africains (*La Vie en fumée*, *Roger le fonctionnaire* et *Chronique d'un échec annoncé*) afin d'illustrer l'engagement social, politique et écologique de Kaboré. La force de l'œuvre de Chirol se trouve dans les sept heures d'entrevue dont des extraits paraissent en appendice. Egalement importants à signaler sont les résumés et génériques des films, documentaires et reportages de Kaboré qui se trouvent à la fin du texte. Étant donné que ces films ont connu une distribution relativement limitée, le lecteur appréciera en particulier la partie intitulée « Où trouver les long métrages de Gaston Kaboré ». Si cet ouvrage présente un intérêt pour les amateurs et les étudiants de cinéma africain, voire de troisième cinéma, c'est un livre incontournable pour les chercheurs dans plusieurs domaines de pointe y compris le cinéma, l'histoire et la civilisation africaines, l'écocritique ainsi que toute approche interdisciplinaire au septième art.

Jennifer Howell *Illinois State University*

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Gallant, Janine et Maurice Raymond, dir. *Dictionnaire des œuvres littéraires de l'Acadie des Maritimes, XX^e siècle.* Sudbury (Ontario) : Éditions Prise de parole, 2012.

Ce livre collectif publié sous la direction de Janine Gallant et Maurice Raymond constitue une grande contribution à l'étude des littératures minoritaires au Canada ainsi qu'à celle des littératures francophones plus généralement. Organisé comme un dictionnaire avec son classement alphabétique des titres, cet ouvrage propose de cataloguer les œuvres incontournables de l'Acadie des Maritimes. Dans l'avertissement, les éditeurs annoncent leurs critères de sélection qui comprennent le lieu de publication des textes (qui doit se faire en Acadie), la provenance des auteurs (qui doivent être nés en Acadie) et le temps vécu dans la région (Gallant et Raymond écartent par exemple les auteurs qui y étaient nés mais qui ont passé l'essentiel de leur vie en dehors de l'Acadie). Il s'ensuit que les ouvrages retenus se portent tous sur la région et sur l'expérience acadienne des auteurs.

Pour ceux qui connaissent mal l'Acadie et sa production littéraire, ce livre inclut également une présentation de la région (son histoire, ses mythes fondateurs, le contexte de l'émergence de sa littérature au vingtième siècle, l'importance de la ville de Moncton dans la conscience acadienne). Sans négliger aucun des trois genres, cette présentation aborde les enjeux singuliers qui touchent le roman, la poésie et le théâtre acadiens. Les spécialistes tout comme les non-spécialistes apprécieront en particulier la qualité de l'édition et le choix du corpus. En outre, comme de nombreux collaborateurs ont contribué à la rédaction de l'ouvrage, la diversité de la voix critique se fait l'écho de celle du corpus. Les articles, dont chacun correspond à une œuvre littéraire, se constituent de résumés descriptifs et parfois d'analyses critiques. Quant à ce déséquilibre apparent au niveau de la présentation, Gallant et Raymond soulignent que le contenu des articles varie en fonction de la signification attribuée aux œuvres (même si cette signification n'est pas justifiée pour les non-spécialistes). Le seul point faible se trouve dans son organisation. Toutefois si le lecteur préfère un classement des ouvrages par nom d'auteur, il se contentera de consulter l'*Index par auteur* qui facilite largement l'utilisation du dictionnaire.

Jennifer Howell *Illinois State University*

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Parayre, Catherine. *Littératures francophones minoritaires (Canada, 1999-2010): Entretiens et textes*. Vienna: Praesens Verlag, 2011.

Au Canada les littératures francophones minoritaires désignent celles dont les auteurs vivent en dehors du Québec mais qui privilégient une écriture en français. C'est dans ce contexte que le français devient langue minoritaire face à l'anglais. Pour citer l'auteure de cet ouvrage, Catherine Parayre, « Il est alors question de littératures dominantes (anglophone ou, au Québec, francophone) et de littératures minoritaires (parmi d'autres, celles d'expression française hors du Québec) » (11). Installée au Canada dans l'Ontario où elle poursuit ses recherches en littérature contemporaine en occitan, langue de sa famille, Parayre commence à s'intéresser au statut de la langue française dans les régions anglophones du Canada puisqu'il lui permet d'établir un parallèle entre cette langue dite minoritaire et l'occitan, langue minoritaire en France. Grâce à une connaissance personnelle, Parayre se met en contact avec des auteurs franco-canadiens afin de mieux comprendre les enjeux des littératures (et non de *la* littérature) canadiennes. Ce qui en résulte est l'ouvrage présent dans lequel Parayre propose à ses lecteurs une brève

introduction aux littératures francophones de l'Ontario, du Manitoba et du Nouveau-Brunswick.

Étude relativement innovatrice dans son genre, elle fournit des renseignements nécessaires à la compréhension de l'histoire ainsi que des contextes culturel et linguistique de ce vaste pays. Dès les premières pages, Parayre souligne la perspective dans laquelle les littératures canadiennes sont souvent abordées, à savoir celle de l'identité. Quoique la question identitaire reste pertinente, Parayre cherche à lire ces littératures autrement. Selon elle, les littératures francophones minoritaires du Canada sont celles « du plein et de l'ajout, du supplément » (19). Au lieu de fournir une histoire littéraire exhaustive des auteurs franco-canadiens qui résident ailleurs qu'au Québec, Parayre propose au lecteur de lire leurs textes à partir de la notion d'ajout qu'elle définit de la manière suivante : « on peut ajouter la dimension minoritaire ou pas » (18). Ainsi peut-on imaginer ce qu'elle appelle « une réflexion linguistique effacée » de la part des auteurs (18). La question identitaire liée à une appartenance linguistique passe au deuxième plan. La décision d'écrire en français dans un milieu anglophone devient un choix personnel, facultatif qui « apporte une voix souvent critique au discours francophone et/ou national » (16). L'ajout se montre donc comme une tentative d'élargir, de diversifier et de multiplier la production littéraire canadienne, d'aller au delà d'une certaine interprétation de la littérature francophone et de sa place au Canada.

Organisé en trois parties (« Introduction », « Questionnaire : Les auteur-e-s expliquent », « Analyses de textes ») et en une annexe composée de textes inédits, le livre de Parayre contribuera certainement à ce domaine de recherche jusqu'alors peu exploré. J'ai notamment apprécié les entretiens avec des auteurs aussi bien que les analyses détaillées de leurs ouvrages, ce qui m'a fait découvrir, parmi d'autres, des auteurs congolais à Toronto. En outre, l'introduction de Parayre sert à situer ces littératures francophones minoritaires dans l'histoire du Canada en général et du Québec en particulier. Pour ceux qui connaissent mal le contexte canadien, cette partie se trouve particulièrement utile. Si la voix de Parayre s'efface parfois devant celles des éditeurs et des auteurs interviewés, c'est pour mieux cerner les enjeux spécifiques de ces littératures sans les « surinterpréter » (33), pour mieux mesurer l'importance du plein et de l'ajout dans ces littératures qui sont minoritaires sans pour autant être insignifiantes.

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Bessy, Marianne. *Vassilis Alexakis. Exorciser l'exil*. Amsterdam/New York: Rodopi, collection Monographique Rodopi en Littérature Française Contemporaine, 2011. p. 289.

La remarquable monographie de Vassilis Alexakis par Marianne Bessy, Assistant Professor à Furman University (États-Unis), publiée en 2011 dans la prestigieuse maison d'édition Rodopi, est de double intérêt : essai littéraire sur la littérature exilique, elle analyse la topique du déplacement avec une focalisation du plus général au particulier en approfondissant dans l'œuvre romanesque d'un cas singulier pour la littérature française : l'écrivain Vassilis Alexakis (prix Médicis en 1995 et Grand prix du roman de l'Académie française en 2007). Ni Grec ni Français, le discours d'Alexakis mérite l'attention des critiques car il s'inscrit dans un large mouvement diasporique qui a traversé l'Europe du XXe siècle. En ceci, l'ouvrage de Marianne Bessy est essentiel non seulement pour la découverte ou ré-découverte d'un écrivain phare des lettres modernes européennes, mais aussi d'une œuvre dialogique sur les questionnements de l'homme moderne et post-moderne : identité, altérité, quêtes et déchirements. Elle élabore aussi une problématique de l'exil et de l'expérience de l'exil dans un monde en perpétuelle mouvance. De cet angle bien original, l'étude de Marianne Bessy « [é]tude novatrice à bien des égards »

(Bishop 9), invite à une lecture ou une re-lecture neuve de l'œuvre de Vassilis Alexakis ancrée dans l'embrassement et les quiétudes du monde moderne et post-moderne.

Plusieurs sont les axes qui forment l'ouvrage de Marianne Bessy. La migrance, les quêtes identitaires, la double langue et la double culture. Bien qu'Alexakis ne soit pas un écrivain en situation d'exil, loin de là, le *topos* de l'exil proposé par Marianne Bessy fait fondre les interrogations et les angoisses de l'auteur en quête perpétuelle. L'auteur qui vit dans l'entre-deux et qui écrit dans l'entre-deux, ne sait pas en fait qui il est. Dans toute son œuvre, roman après roman, Alexakis tisse sa propre vie et en même temps celle de l'exilé. L'auteur se projette dans l'espace et le temps et s'interroge d'abord sur sa langue maternelle, puis sur sa langue paternelle, pour trouver un ancrage existentiel.

Marianne Bessy peint avec minutie le portrait d'un auteur double. Si plusieurs critiques se sont penchés sur l'œuvre de Vassilis Alexakis, le livre de Marianne Bessy est le premier ouvrage sur Alexakis. Il a le mérite de présenter une analyse critique de l'ensemble des œuvres d'Alexakis parues entre 1974 et 2007, voire onze romans, le récit autobiographique *Paris-Athènes* et le recueil de nouvelles *Papa*.

Après une majestueuse introduction sur l'auteur (15-31) que Marianne Bessy aborde du côté de la francophonie, de la langue et du roman biographique et autobiographique contemporain, Bessy insiste sur le réflexion de la « multi-appartenance » (31) et de « l'hybridation cultuelle » (29) qui caractérise les écrivains du XXe siècle.

Trois chapitres composent cette monographie sur l'écrivain grec d'expression française. Dans le premier « L'Auteur et ses doubles : écriture de soi entre fiction et autobiographie » (33-86) M. Bessy se concentre sur l'écriture de soi entre fiction et autobiographie afin de dégager les procédés d'écriture alexakienne – l'autobiographie faisant partie intégrante de l'écriture d'Alexakis. « Chez Alexakis, la réalité rattrape la fiction sur une multitude de niveaux », écrit M. Bessy (46), sur tous les niveaux et sur toutes les ondes, dirai-je. Sans pour autant aller jusque dire que cette « multiplication des apparitions auctoriales » (47) est narcissique, mais un jeu d'écriture plutôt inconscient chez Alexakis qui part du « je », pour décrire l'autre. Le je-sujet est ce que l'auteur connaît le mieux. Du reste, on ne peut pas parler non plus de trauma chez Alexakis, mais d'une quête à l'infini. La quête de l'homme moderne. La quête d'Alexakis est sur plusieurs niveaux : quête d'identité, quête d'appartenance, quête linguistique, quête d'écriture. D'où cette insistance autobiographique dans toutes ses œuvres.

Après l'étude sur l'écriture du moi dans le Premier chapitre, très caractéristique chez Alexakis, le deuxième chapitre intitulé « Langue française, langue grecque : choix, identité et création » (87-153) est consacré à la langue : double langue française et grecque en corrélation avec l'identité et la création de l'auteur. Il est vrai que la critique attache une grande importance à la question du choix de la langue de l'auteur. L'auteur aussi réserve une grande part de ses romans à la question de la langue, qui semble le traverser d'un roman à l'autre, le persécuter même. Marianne Bessy se penche longuement sur la langue du romancier et examine à son tour la thématique linguistique des écrits romanesques d'Alexakis, notamment dans trois romans : *Talgo*, *La langue maternelle* et *Les Mots étrangers* afin de montrer le déplacement linguistique de l'auteur qui est fait de manière « libre et délibéré[e] » (87). Partant du bilinguisme littéraire avancé par Rainier Grutman, Bessy reprend le thème de l'auto-traduction chez Alexakis, analysé notamment par M. Orphanidou-Fréris, selon qui l'auteur « fait coexister les textes dans un entre-deux linguistique et textuel » (101). L'alternance des deux langues est à la base d'une œuvre double, ce qui est très significatif chez Alexakis qui utilise les deux langues et construit ses fictions dans un dialogue constant entre les deux langues et les deux cultures. Mais la langue est aussi synonyme de l'espace, avance M. Bessy. Ainsi, après l'espace grec et français, *Les mots étrangers* font appel à un troisième espace linguistique, le sango, langue du Centrafrique. Le héros du roman « se reconnaît dans la

langue étrangère qui lui renvoie l'image de sa propre aliénation linguistique » (140), souligne très justement M. Bessy.

Enfin, dans le Troisième chapitre « Lieux et espaces : pérégrinations alexakiennes » (155-234) M. Bessy approfondit sa réflexion sur les lieux et les espaces dans l'écriture d'Alexakis. « [L]a description des lieux [...] prévaut souvent sur l'action », écrit M. Bessy (161), ce qui est vrai. L'auteur s'adonne à des descriptions détaillées des lieux extra et intradiégétiques au point de délaisser la narration et oublier même le narrateur. Pourtant Marianne Bessy a bien vu que « la tentative d'appropriation spatiale semble en général se solder par un échec. Les lieux demeurent élusifs et les personnages sont condamnés au déplacement et à la non-appartenance » (176).

Le livre est complété par un entretien avec Vassilis Alexakis (chapitre quatre « Il faut utiliser l'imagination de la vie » [235-259]), que M. Bessy a réalisé avec l'auteur à Athènes, en janvier 2010.

Le livre de Marianne Bessy est un très beau livre, bien documenté et bien argumenté avec un sens aigu de la recherche. Si dans les trois premiers chapitres du livre « L'Auteur et ses doubles », « Langue française, langue grecque », « Lieux et espaces : pérégrinations alexakiennes », M. Bessy cherche des conclusions aux questions qu'elle se pose pour définir l'écriture d'un écrivain grec et francophone, sans savoir ce qu'elle va découvrir dans les analyses dans lesquelles elle se lance de plein cœur dès le début, la conclusion de l'ouvrage (261-268) est digne de ce dialogisme critique qui apporte finalement les réponses attendues. En effet, au terme de cette étude, Marianne Bessy voit très clair : Alexakis n'est pas vraiment un exilé, ce qu'ont soutenu plusieurs critiques qui ont vu chez Alexakis un "apatride" ou un "être déchiré". L'exil chez Alexakis est plutôt un fantasme et un projet d'écriture. L'entretien avec l'auteur en fin de volume est bien éclairant sur ce point et illustre encore une fois un écrivain séduisant et une écriture fictionnelle identitaire.

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Reader, Keith. *The Place de la Bastille: The Story of a Quarter*. Liverpool University Press, 2011. 184 p.

Not only is Keith Reader's history of the faubourg Saint-Antoine, also known as the *quartier de la Bastille* or, to locals, "la Bastoche", a lively historical account of the neighborhood's revolutionary spirit from the twelfth century to the present, it is also a love letter to Eastern, right bank Paris and its inhabitants. Those residents, scorned and feared for so long as the *classes dangereuses* (code for the working class), represent the turbulent and wild side, the Id of Paris, to the otherwise civilized museum city of the tourist's imagination. As Reader describes it, they have always been kicking up dust in protest and setting fire to institutions, penal or otherwise, as well as having a raucous good time even before their home became the site of the symbolic and literal destruction of the Ancien Régime. Knowing its history, one might easily believe that this area of Paris is the most interesting part of the city, from a sociological, ethnographic and cultural perspective.

Beginning with the 1198 construction of the first institution – a residence for repentant prostitutes – on what was a marshy wasteland like its neighbor, the Marais, the author narrates the development of the various industries that sprung up in the faubourg Saint Antoine and have remained there ever since. Workmen naturally chose it as their abode, exempt as it was from taxation, and the furniture business in particular found a home there because of its access to wood. Indeed, *ébénistes* continue to practice their craft there today to the appreciative crowds who may watch them at work in the Viaduc des Arts just eastward of the Opéra Bastille. Considerable attention is given to the

quartier's eponymous prison and its illustrious prisoners although it is by no means the central focal point of the narrative, nor, as the author makes clear, the neighborhood itself. The tale of this part of the city is woven together with descriptions taken from fictional works (poetry, novels, plays, and film) as well as anecdotes from semi-fictional and non-fictional accounts. Whether from the pen of Jules Michelet or from the mouth of Hugo's Gavroche, it is clear that the area surrounding the Bastille knew rioting on levels we cannot imagine, before and after 1789. The six major uprisings (1789, 1830, 1832, 1848, 1851 and 1871) and their attendant violence and chaos so well documented here gave way to a period of relative calm. Not coincidentally, Haussmann helped curb disorderly activity by eliminating the densely populated beehive of buildings and thus, the strategic advantages of those structures for rioting, that existed prior to his rationalizing boulevards and wide-open *places*. The author is right to point out that it is not simply that changes to the urban landscape wiped out the disgruntled masses raging against the government; they simply moved further north and east to what is now known as *la banlieue rouge*.

Yet even with the birth of Modern Paris, the rebellious energy of the *faubourgeois* did not wane, it merely rechanneled itself into a celebratory vigor characterized by the Auvergnat's love of the *bal musette* and the transformation of the rue de Lappe into a kind of dance corridor. The area's nightlife was what the area could offer a visitor; otherwise the proletarian population seemed to rule the streets in such a way as to cut themselves off from the increasingly more fashionable Marais to the west. Here we recognize the Quartier de la Bastille in the detective novels of Georges Simenon and the films of Marcel Carné and René Clair. It seems that the 1930s were a kind of *âge d'or* for the Bastoche in terms of it acting as the perfect backdrop to the France of Léon Blum and the *entre-deux-guerres* gaity that was not to last.

Perhaps the darkest hour in this history, the years of the Occupation, has been glossed over too rapidly. The 11th *arrondissement* as a whole was home to many Jews from Turkey and the Balkans who settled in this neighborhood following the collapse of the Ottoman Empire. Although the living conditions were at first cramped, Jews were able to re-establish themselves in their traditional roles as textile merchants and traders. Obviously the arrest of 8,000 Jews in 1941 by the Paris police and German Gestapo devastated the community and it has only been through recent waves of immigration from Eastern Europe and North Africa that the community has been re-established. But you won't find these details here. The author gives short shrift to the Jewish presence in this area throughout his account, choosing instead to focus on the working class without identifying the particulars of its ethnic makeup. Aside from several distracting typographical errors, this may be the only significant shortcoming of an otherwise highly entertaining and informative book.

More than the prison that once stood there, the Bastille Opéra which now adorns the Place, along with the tourism it generates and its controversial construction, occupies the last chapters. While it has brought new affluence and high culture to the area, there are some who lament the extinction of the dilapidated charm that formerly characterized the neighborhood. Much of Paris has undergone this transformation, with the exception of the 19th *arrondissement,* as higher rents have forced the working class into the suburbs. Now that the Bastoche is *branché*, it is more crucial than ever to have at hand such an engaging and knowledgeable portrait of its tumultuous past. As a bonus, the author concludes with a walking tour of the *faubourg* worthy of any seasoned *flâneur* of Paris.

Anne Quinney *The University of Mississippi*

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Jensen, Katherine Ann. *Uneasy Possessions: The Mother-Daughter Dilemma in French Women's Writings, 1671-1928.* Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2011. 450 p.

Although there have been many recent books on the connection between mothers and daughters, Katherine Ann Jensen's study charts new ground by providing an innovative approach to the subject, as she discusses the relationship between mothers and daughters in works by five French authors spanning four centuries. In particular, Jensen examines the psychological power structure at the core of mother-daughter relationships, whereby mothers demonstrate their dominance by treating their daughters as possessions. Jensen characterizes this power dynamic as mother-daughter reflectivity, an ideology which also forces the daughter to be viewed as part of the mother's self, highlighting one of the key components of the study— the complexity of maternal narcissism. As a critical lens, Jensen relies on the intersubjective psychoanalytic theory of Jessica Benjamin who studies domination in heterosexual relations, whereas Jensen focuses on the power struggle in the mother-daughter bond.

Jensen begins by studying the fictional relationship between Madame de Chartres and the princess in Madame de Lafayette's *La Princesse de Clèves.* Here, the mother attempts to define her daughter as an exceptional woman to create a "masterpiece" of her own narcissistic image as an embodiment of maternal perfection. While Madame de Chartres instills the importance of virtue upon the princess to protect her from illicit passion, she nevertheless represses her daughter's independence, as the concept of the autonomous subject was yet to emerge in the seventeenth century.

From this fictional relationship, Jensen turns in Chapter Two to the real-life connection between Madame de Sévigné and her daughter, Madame de Grignan. In this illuminating reading of their correspondence, the author posits that Sévigné strives to identify herself as an exceptional mother by writing letters to her daughter as a means of fulfilling her own narcissistic desires, thus sustaining her maternal fantasy of omnipotence even in Grignan's heterosexual desire with her husband.

The third chapter focuses on the Enlightenment portraitist, Elisabeth Vigée Lebrun, and her devotion to her daughter, Julie. Similar to Chartres' and Sévigné's, Lebrun's maternal narcissism is driven by the idea of creating Julie as a second self; but she goes further in using Julie in visual and written portrayals to enhance her own self-image. For Lebrun, this strategy assures her dominance, while fostering dependence on Julie's behalf.

In the next chapter, Jensen's shifts to the autobiographical writings of Georges Sand, focusing on the complex interplay of maternal narcissism with her two "mothers," the working-class Sophie Delaborde Dupin, and her paternal, aristocratic grandmother, Aurore de Saxe Dupin, who raised Sand. Aurore exerted her authority over Sand, treating as an object and denying her recognition as an individual, which Sand tolerated because she believed her subjugation would eventually enable her to emotionally reconnect with her mothers.

Mirroring Sand's predicament, Colette's fictional autobiography, *Break of Day,* sustains the focus on mother-daughter reflectivity, as the daughter-narrator in this work attempts to liberate herself from her mother's possessive grip. However, the failure to achieve recognition as an autonomous self, as with Sand, ultimately resulted in feelings of loneliness and inferiority.

Jensen's masterfully crafted book sheds new light on the relationship between mothers and daughters, while offering a major contribution to the field of women's literary history.

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