Reviews

Maddox, Donald. *Fictions of Identity in Medieval France*. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature 43. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. xx-295 p.

Chrétien de Troyes's Erec awakens one morning to his bride Énide's soft lamentations about the disapproval their "amorous isolation" (84) as newly-weds has brought them, and Erec decides immediately to prove their critics wrong. Yvain, having overspent a year's tourneying granted him by his wife Laudine, is confronted by her messenger bringing total repudiation, and soon begins his "rehabilitative ascent" and "long odyssey" (86) of atonement back to Laudine. Perceval must face a loathly damsel at Arthur's court, berating him for not having inquired about the Grail Castle procession, and Perceval's renewed quest remains incomplete only because of the romance's breaking off.

Such *specular encounters* are legion in medieval narratives of all kinds, lengths, forms, and epochs. They define and redefine protagonists' identities and relaunch prematurely spent narratives. In Chrétien's works they signal a central crisis brought on by the pursuit of private satisfactions and resolved, after a corrective "quantum change of orientation" (84), for the benefit of the public (feudal) order and its (political, social, spiritual) institutions. In Renaut de Beaujeu's *Bel Inconnu*, such a "convergence of selfhood with a universal *ordo*" (109) has been replaced by a "state of enduring irresolution" in which the pleasure principle has become irreconcilable with social responsibility, and the self remains irremediably divided. The Prose *Lancelot* (the hero's multi-text *vita* before, "during" and after Chrétien's verse *Lancelot*) expands the thematic and structural functions of specular encounters considerably: in the guisenot only of human informants but also of ethereal voices, documents, inscriptions or iconic representations (83), they reveal aspects of personal and lineal identity, add perspective to the larger narrative, and coordinate historical (from Joseph of Arimathea to Galahad to universal history) and cyclic coherence (through temporal regression, prospection, temporal palimpsest, etc.).

Specular encounters, direct or mediated (in that case called "communicative processes" [39]), not only characterize all of Mariede France's *Lais*, they also bind the twelve texts into one coherent *recueil* of "fictions of reciprocity" (24-82). Such a pulling together of undeniably diverse tales would no doubt have been pulled off less elegantly and convincingly by less eloquent and subtle a scholar than Maddox. Yet reciprocity, supply defined as "various kinds of closing reciprocal relations" between couples (71), may well inform even "Equitan," "Bisclavret" or "Chaitivel"; moreover, without it the structure of the *recueil* cannot be (re)constructed, according to which three courtly *lais* alternate with four comic and five elegiac ones in a precise and instructively contrastive rhythm (72-80).

In a third chapter Maddox turns to four instances of specular encounters resulting not in identitary realization or revelations of truth but in the "hazy uncertainty" (162) of mere plausibilities. The morning after Lancelot's and Guinevere's tryst, blood is discovered in the queen's and her seneschal Kay's beds; Meleagant, whose prisoner the queen is, cannot but infer that Kay "a eü tot son buen [de la reine]," since he cannot conceive of the blood in Kay's bed as coming from the seneschal's wounds, and since only Chrétien de Troyes, "God, [the] couple, and [the] reader" know the "deeper truth" (135). On the basis of this and three similar episodes (from Béroul's *Tristan*, the Oxford *Folie Tristan*, and *La Chastelaine de Vergi*) Maddox details, on

the one hand, post-tryst encounters' "immense potential for renewal of narrative momentum" (160) and, on the other, "the emergence of multivalent perspectivism" and the twelfth century's renewed "interest in the cognitive dimension of discourse" (163): "assumptions based on perceptible signs are [not] incontrovertible demonstrations [but] merely what Aristotle calls 'arguing with a view to plausibility'" (164).

Specular encounters, finally, serve to confront protagonists "with a highly significant account of [their] origins, lineage, or family" (167), as in *La Fille du comte de Pontieu* (13th cent.) and Jean d'Arras's *Roman de Mélusine* (1393). Such accounts, as "bearer[s] of concise oral archives of empowerment," seek to allay, in a rapidly changing feudal world, "collective anxieties about the maintenance of continuity among generations and the potential evanescence of lineal memory" (191).

Fictions of Identity is by far too imprecise a title for this very probing, finely nuanced and much more than simply thematic study of "textualities of crisis," reflexivity, cognition, and lineage, and of the narrative schema that underlies them (and is referred to in all odd-page running heads). Consultors of bibliographies may not find in it exactly what they may have been looking for, but they will be compensated by Maddox's superb treatment of the complex Prose *Lancelot* matter, by his original reading of Marie de France (including the appendix [216-20] on the triadic structure of the *Lais* first published in 1985), by his engrossing exposition of the dialectics of lying and truth-telling, of specious reasoning made possible, he could have explained more fully, by the nature of language itself. Readers, including non-specialists and students, will find this Maddox to be *abordable*, not pecuniarily, to be sure (US$69.95), or materially (the retrieval of references from cumulative chapter endnotes [221-74] being exceedingly disruptive), but by virtue of a critical discourse whose adherence to plain English is liable to enhance their pleasure and enlightenment immeasurably.

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Higgitt, John. *The Murthly Hours: Devotion, Literacy and Luxury in Paris, England and the Gaelic West*. British Library Studies in Medieval Culture. London: British Library, Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000. xxii-362 p.

This is a magnificently executed and illustrated book of research on a magnificent book of hours from the late thirteenth century (with later additions, some in Gaelic [336-45], others in French [332]). It was most likely written and painted for Joan Comyn née Joan of Valence, daughter of Henry III's half-brother William de Valence, and cousin of Edward I; from her it passed to the line of her cousin-in-law John MacDougall of Lorne and on to John Stewart of Lorne (d. 1421) and his fourth son, Alexander Stewart (d. 1449), ancestor of the Stewarts of Grandtully (Perthshire). The Stewarts acquired Murthly Castle (Perthshire) in 1615, and the *Murthly Hours*' first clear mark of ownership still identifies a member of that family, George Stewart (d. 1827; his coat of arms includes the badge of a baronet of Nova Scotia); after the death of his second son, William Drummond Stewart, the book was sold first to James Thomson Gibson Craig (1871) and then to the third Marquess of Bute at Mount Stuart on the Isle of Bute (1887). Almost a century later it was rediscovered there by Higgitt and eventually bought by the National Library of Scotland (MS. 21000) in 1986 for £550,000.

A precious manuscript then and now, the *Murthly Hours* is also particularly valuable as an exemplar of medieval cross-Channel collaboration in "book"-making

(see 120-25). For the second, properly devotional part of the manuscript (current fol. 24^r-214^v) Higgitt considers in great and admirable detail three hypotheses: it was written and illustrated in England by English scribes and French illuminators; it was written in England and sent to France for illustration; it was written and illustrated in France (in the 1280s) by English scribes and French illuminators. Higgitt prefers the last scenario. He identifies the writing as clearly English and the decorations (historiated and secondary initials, line-fillers, borders) as akin to work produced by the (Cardinal Jean) Cholet group of artists, a subdivision of the so-called Sainte-Chapelle group, work such as the Montpellier Chansonnier (MS. Faculté de médecine H.196), a glossed psalter in Paris (MS. Arsenal 25), Aristotle's *Metaphysics* (MS. Arsenal 702), the Santa Barbara Bible (MS. University of California Library, Foot Purchase 1962), and a medical manuscript in Vienna (MS. Österreichische Nationalbibliothek 2315).

Having woven the *Murthly Hours* into the rich fabric of thirteenth-century European writing and painting styles, Higgitt attempts similarly to assign the book a place in the history of literacy and lay devotional practices (165-93). Adducing a great wealth of contemporary, circumstantial evidence, he finds it "likely" that Joan Comyn "could have read the Latin devotions but she would not necessarily have done so with much understanding. [...] [She] would almost certainly have read French with ease" (175); French, incidentally, is used only twice in the *Hours* proper, and in the captions accompanying the opening full-page miniatures bound in with the volume (fol. 1^r-23^r).

How this (incomplete) series of twenty-three miniatures came to be part of the *Murthly Hours* remains unknown. The miniatures depict scenes from Genesis and Christ's infancy, passion and resurrection, and were probably intended as a pictorial preface to a private book of devotions, such as a psalter, or as a separate picture-book; they are by three distinct artists working in English styles ("direct, almost folk-like [...] in contrast to the refined 'courtly' æsthetic of the [Parisian] book of hours" [267]) between the 1260s and the 1280s. Higgitt shows how the original, complete series could plausibly have comprised seventy or more miniatures; such a psalter "preface" would be unusual but not unheard-of: the St. Louis Psalter (MS. Paris, B.N. lat. 10525) is preceded by seventy-eight full-page miniatures (229; further examples *ibid.*). As part of a picture-book, the surviving series has parallels in the Manchester Old Testament book (MS. John Rylands Library French 5), the Huth Bible (MS. Chicago, Art Institute 15533), the New York Old Testament book (MS. Pierpont Morgan Library M638), and the book of Madame Marie (MS. Paris, B.N. n.a.fr. 16251) (229-30). Otherwise, "there seem to be no examples of [...] extensive cycles of miniatures prefacing books of hours of this period" (230).

Higgitt has left no folio unturned, no quire uncollated, no sewing hole and ruling pattern unexamined to present as complete a description, analysis and appreciation of MS. Edinburgh, National Library 21000 as is currently possible. At once minutely detailed and wide in scope, his book celebrates an important and impressive work in the world's collection of illuminated manuscripts and invites scholars in the field to verify hypotheses where answers are not yet available, or to contribute elements of eventual answers from the far-flung depositories of medieval manuscripts. Meanwhile, mere bibliophiles can already enjoy not only the book on the book but also a digital facsimile of the original on CD-Rom.

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Jewers, Caroline A. *Chivalric Fiction and the History of the Novel.* Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000. xii-209 p.

Among the myriad characteristics of the novel, Jewers privileges the genre's "fundamental need, beyond storytelling, to quest for itself, to be engaged [...] in search of its own metafiction" (xi). Among the innumerable consequences of such reflexivity, she stresses the genre's "boundless potential of resituating the horizon of narrative," of "agitat[ing] for change [and] renewal" (xi-xii). Among the means by which this is effected, she singles out parody (25-27).

"Chivalric Parodies as the Prehistory of the Novel" thus explores the paths, from Chrétien de Troyes to Cervantes, along which the medieval romance "reacted to its own evolving narrative and consequently shaped its literary fortune as it deregulated itself into the novel [...] the romance contains prototypes of all the ironic, self-reflexive, and parodic properties we find so attractive in the modern novel" (7). Jewers, expanding on Haidu and others, shows how Chrétien forges a generic and narrative convention while at the same time "balanc[ing] its inflexibility" with unconventional, "novel heroes " (45) (Lancelot, Yvain); the "strong sense of generic parody" one gets from finding in "normative chivalric and courtly behavior [the tendency to] deviat[e] from those same norms" (53) becomes even stronger when reading *Aucassin et Nicolette* (45-53).

After this "Northern Exposure" of parody in romance Jewers finds, "Going South" (ch. 3), "systematic [parodic] debunking of the [...] mechanism of courtly adventure" (63-64) in *Jaufré* (also spelled *Jaufre*; A.D. 1169-70 or 1225-28). Parody operates in proper names (Jaufré's main adversary Taulat ["table"] embodies the very antithesis of the Arthurian Round Table; Estout ["haughty"] de Vertfueil evokes pride and jealousy [see also 68-69]; etc.); in regretful allusions to the devaluation of the chivalric code and to social decline; in depictions of an upside-down world in which a *sergent* may exact from knights a toll of their arms and horse, and in which reign violence and brutality (cf. Fellon d'Albarua). The chapter then veers into a very interesting, if insufficiently structured, discussion of short Occitan narratives (e.g. novas) and North-South intertextualities (e.g. Chrétien's *Le conte du Graal*) and intergenericities (e.g. fabliaux).

In *Le roman de Flamenca* (incomplete, most likely 1230-50), the "literary code is that of the northern French romance," yet at the same time the (anonymous) poet "break[s] away from its conventions [because of his] collusion with his own southern culture" (122). Indubitably convincing, this conclusion (repeated *verbatim* on page 129) finishes by emerging from a disconcerting forty-page maze of discrete observations and hypotheses in which the reader will gain valuable insights at every turn but lose sight of the big picture.

If *Flamenca* "is a romance to parody and absorb all romances—and to [...] mark a stage of evolution toward the modern novel" (129), Joan Martorell's (c. 1414-68) and Martí Joan de Galba's *Tirant lo Blanc* (1490) marks the last stage of that evolution (Jewers calls it a "realistic chivalric romance" [172] but most frequently a "novel," and Matorell a "precursor of the modern novel" [173]). Oxymoronic "chivalric realism" describes Matorell's ambiguous, experimental work and ambivalent world perfectly: *Tirant* "link[s] the ideal world of chivalry with the more realistic or naturalistic setting of the modern novel" (130), realism and naturalism being understood as the "distance from an original model combined with proximity to a portrayal of a more verisimilar world" (175). Tirant's proto-picaresque "peregrinations," his "unheroic death [in his bed rather than in battle], short marriage, and lack of reward for his deeds run counter to our expectation of the genre [...] there is [...] in his ending [...] a realistic reminder of the absurdity of life and the human condition" (158); *Tirant*'s pre-modern heroes are complex, unreliable, and "as

unstable as the political universe they inhabit" (136). Martorell bridges rather than opens "the gap between literary ideal" and social reality (156); he does not "kill off" the model in confrontation with the real world but "subtly accomodat[es] it in a modified setting" (146, 173). This he achieves thanks to the "regenerative power of parody," the "regenerative comic element" (176). And "parody" should have found its way into the title, for direct access to this important book by bibliographers errant.

Hans R. Runte — *Dalhousie University*

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Karczewska, Kathryn, and Tom Conley, eds. *The World and Its Rival: Essays on Literary Imagination in Honor of Per Nykrog*. Faux Titre 172. Amsterdam: Editions Rodopi, 1999. xxviii-301 p.

Adapted from Malraux, the title refers expressly to Per Nykrog's fundamental view of literary works, from the twelfth to the twentieth centuries, not as transcriptions but as rivals of the world. Secondarily, it may also hint at the atypical career and critical stances for which the Danish-born erstwhile philologist and "linguiste défroqué" (xiii) is known and now honoured: with books on Chrétien de Troyes, the fabliaux, Jean de Meun, Balzac, Proust, and Camus, and with articles on authors in-between, Per Nykrog has bestridden the world of French literature like few others, challenging with "informed innocence" (291) and "beguiling naiveté" (287) traditional ways and fashionable trends (e.g. the "death of the author," ahistoricism, non-referential analysis [xiv]), delighting in cutting through ever multiplying layers of criticism in order to "unearth[...] the writings of [...] authors interred by commentary and erudition" (285) (Conley calls him the "master digger in the soil of French literature" [286]). Logically if least importantly, the very form of these *Mélanges Nykrog* rivals the congratulatory genre: the honoree here contributes himself (reflections, in lecture or after-dinner-speech mode [1996], on *Le Misanthrope* as "a story reflecting [...] the impossible relationship between" the classical ideal of theatre [Alceste] and the *commedia dell'arte* [Célimène] in Molière's work and life [193-200]); there is no photograph playing its "deadly role as frontispiece" and no *curriculum-vitæ* "tombstone" (293) (there is, however, a list of Nykrog's publications from 1951 to 1999 [295-301]); and the editors' introduction may be said to frame the volume (Karczewska xiii-xxviii, Conley 285-93).

Twelve colleagues have offered studies echoing Nykrog's wide-ranging interests, of which six deal with Old French and one with Occitan literature (Aileen Ann Macdonald on Alamanda's and Guiraut de Borneilh's *tenso* "S'ie.us quier conseill"): the fabliaux (Jan M. Ziolkowski, Keith Busby); Chrétien de Troyes (Douglas Kelly, Conley), Marie de France (R. Howard Bloch, Kelly) and Benoît de Sainte-Maure (Kelly); Jean Renart and *Partonopeu de Blois* (Matilda Tomaryn Bruckner); and the non-cyclic prose *Lancelot do Lac* (Carol R. Dover). The sixteenth century is represented by Lynn Tarte Ramey (on François de Billon's role in the *Querelle des femmes*) and Nancy Erickson Bouzrara (on Marguerite de Navarre). Lionel Gossman writes on Michelet, Christie McDonald on Proust, and Paulette Anne Smith on Scandinavian, Haitian, Indian and Christian tree mythologies "embody[ing] in absolute fashion the power of literary imagination to rival the world" (xxviii).

The editors, colleagues of Nykrog's at Harvard, do not point to the significant (?) absence of the eighteenth century in his "writing about literature" (he is said to hate the word "criticism") (xix) and in his *Festschrift* (the most recent article listed, on Diderot, dates from 1964). *Quoi qu'il en soit*, they and their authors have added another rich stratum of erudite analysis to literary history and criticism, a layer from which Per Nykrog will dig up with gusto the "quinte essence" (285), and which other

readers will add with pleasure and profit to their enjoyment and understanding of literature.

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Bolovan, Margaret M. *A Mazing of the Text: The Search for Signification in the Labyrinth of French Poetics*. Currents in Comparative Romance Languages and Literatures 75. Berne: Peter Lang, 2000. x+198 p.

The images and structures of the labyrinth recur frequently in poetry, as symbols of descent into the self, initiation and rebirth, of disorientation and death, but also of the weaving process of writing and reading. As a mythic symbol, whose archetypal nature has occupied an important place in the thought of Eliade and Jung, the labyrinth has, throughout history, accreted to itself a multitude of sometimes contradictory literary significations. To appreciate the maze in the text therefore demands close readings with a particular attention to intertextuality. Bolovan succeeds admirably in this, with her involved but lucid analyses of selected French texts from the sixteenth to the twentieth century. The most enjoyable of the chapters are on the longing for the ineffable in Joachim Du Bellay's *L'Olive*, the absence which haunts Stéphane Mallarmé's poetic creation, and Marguerite Yourcenar's deviant reworkings of myth. The figures of Theseus, Daedalus, Ariadne and Icarus are shown to recur and echo across poetic history, as projections of different desires and styles. If Bolovan's concluding remarks about Derridean *différance* may appear to impose a rather predictable postmodernist closure on the meaning of the labyrinth, the preceding studies show an admirable awareness of the pluridimensional quality of mythic signifiers.

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Jomphe, Claudine. *Les théories de la « dispositio » et le grand œuvre de Ronsard*. Études et essais sur la Renaissance 24. Paris: Honoré Champion, 2000. 410 p.

This solid work of research was originally defended as the author's doctoral dissertation at the Université de Montréal. Jomphe argues persuasively that Ronsard's incomplete epic *La Franciade* does not merit the relative oblivion into which it has fallen. Even great admirers of Ronsard's poetry seem mystified that he spent so much time composing during the French Civil War a clear imitation of Virgil's *Aeneid*. Ronsard's Trojan hero Francus whose goal is to leave Troy in honor to establish the French monarchy, is clearly based on Virgil's "pius Aeneas" who leaves Troy in order to found Rome. Ulrike Langer expressed well the general critical assessment of Ronsard's epic when she referred to it as "a boring epic." Jomphe readily admits that if scholars simply ask themselves if *La Franciade* keeps the interest of modern readers, they will most certainly agree with Langer's reaction, but Jomphe suggests that it is wiser to interpret *La Franciade* from the perspective of classical rhetorical theory which Ronsard knew so well. Her approach is historically very sound because it enables us to evaluate Ronsard's epic from a sixteenth-century perspective.

As Jomphe explains very clearly in the first half of this book, classical, neo-Latin, and French Renaissance rhetorical treatises stressed that a successful orator or poet should make artistic use of the five connected parts of rhetoric, i.e. "inventio," "elocutio," "dipositio," "memoria," and "pronunciatio," in order to create an

æsthetically pleasing and persuasive speech or poem. Jomphe describes how such important writers as Aristotle, Cicero, Quintilian, Horace, Erasmus, and Scaliger defined the rich complexity of "dispositio." She indicates that an effective orator or poet must "arrange" his or her ideas and arguments in a well-organized manner in order to lead readers and listeners to share the orator's or the poet's conclusions.

In the second part of this well-written book, Jomphe analyzes Ronsard's skill in "arranging" scenes, speeches, and even apparently unrelated events in order to help us understand Francus's heroic nature and his willingness to prefer his moral obligations over his personal desires. Just as Aeneas had to renounce his love for the Carthaginian queen Dido in order to fulfill his goal of founding Rome, so also Francus comes to realize that "le devoir" is more important than "l'amour." Jomphe describes very well Ronsard's creative and not servile imitations of specific episodes of love and combat in Virgil's *Aeneid.* Like such influential Ronsard scholars as Paul Laumonier, Isidore Silver, and Jean Céard, she understands that Ronsard's true originality can be found only in his creative imitation of specific classical works and in his imaginative application of rhetorical theory to his own lyric and epic poems. Jomphe's book on Ronsard's use of "dispositio" in *La Franciade* constitutes an important contribution to Ronsard and Renaissance studies and should be acquired by research libraries.

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Rutlidge, Jean-Jacques. *Les comédiens ou Le foyer. Le bureau d'esprit. Le train de Paris ou Les bourgeois du temps.* Édition critique de Pierre Peyronnet. L'Âge des Lumières 3. Paris : Honoré Champion, 1999. 382 p.

The scion of an Irish family long resident in France and ennobled for its assistance to the cause of the Young Pretender, Jean-Jacques Rutlidge (1742-94) led the kind of adventuresome life punctuated by literary endeavour and political intrigue that now seems particularly characteristic of eighteenth-century France. Born in Dunkirk, educated by the Jesuits, very briefly a soldier, always a freethinker, Rutlidge—or as he occasionally preferred to be styled, Monsieur le chevalier James Rutlidge, gentilhomme anglais—wrote a number of prose works, mostly in French, that clearly reflect the preoccupations of the society of his time, among them *An Account of the Character and Manners of the French* in 1770, the very successful *Quinzaine anglaise à Paris ou l'art de s'y ruiner en peu de temps* in 1776, and the *Essais politiques sur l'état actuel de quelques puissances* in 1777, not to mention the polemical writing which appeared after the outbreak of the French Revolution. In 1778 he founded *Le Babillard*, a periodical modelled on the *Tatler*, to ensure that his own observations on politics and current events were duly noted, but the paper, to which he alone contributed, folded after only four issues in April 1779; it was resuscitated briefly in May 1784 as *Calypso ou les babillards, par une société de gens du monde et de gens de lettres*. At the same time he was also writing for the theatre; the subjects of his plays were hardly less topical than his journalism, but Rutlidge, alas, was no Beaumarchais, and his sharp social criticism was not redeemed by art. The volume reviewed here contains three of his most notable dramatic efforts, including the one Rutlidge himself considered his best, *Le train de Paris ou Les bourgeois du temps*. All were written in 1776 or 1777 and have been described as satirical comedies: *Les comédiens* affords us a rare glimpse of the working of an eighteenth-century theatre as the actors assemble to consider which plays to adopt; their bickering is finally interrupted by the appearance of the ghost of Molière, who points the moral: "Devenez attentifs et modestes, souples et reconnaissants; alors

vous verrez renaître des hommes semblables à moi, et l'éclat de la scène française, qui penche vers sa ruine, lui sera rendu" (76). The various characters in this brief play may be considered *personnages à clef*—Gengiskan for instance would be the actor LeKain—and the same technique is used in *Le bureau d'esprit*, where the intellectual pretensions of Madame de Folincourt and her witless clique ridicule the attitudes struck in the salon of Madame Geoffrin: Voltaire, Diderot, d'Alembert and La Harpe are all included in this brave lampoon. "De l'impudence et du verbiage, c'est par où ils brillent," a young maidservant of the household explains,"battez-vous les flancs ; faites plus de bruit qu'eux, et je vous réponds que vous les mettrez au sac" (173). The third play takes aim at the vanity and arrogance of newly-ennobled young bourgeois who have flouted the solid virtues that brought fortune to their fathers to adopt *le train de Paris*, but all for nought: "Le fils du logis ! Un petit fat qui s'idolâtre et qui n'a pas le sens commun" (336), a well-established marquis concludes.

At moments Rutlidge's satire can be amusing and refreshing: in *Le bureau d'esprit*, for example, Faribole (Marmontel) dismisses that very play as "une satire pitoyable, qui ne mérite pas la peine d'être lue" (208); to which Calcas (l'abbé Arnaud?) responds with alacrity: "Non, pas la peine d'être lue ; mais les flammes, Messieurs, les flammes" (208). As contemporary critics were quick to observe, however, the dramatic value of these comedies is slight: generally they move well within the traditions of their time, with cheeky soubrettes, scheming valets, stock platitudes, and happy coincidence. In the two longer comedies Rutlidge had the good sense to keep the dramatic focus on the predicaments of his young lovers; even so, the plots meander and the dialogue is uninspired. The present editor is right to suggest that the greatest value of these plays today lies in the flavour they can impart of the period in which they were written, and nothing has been omitted from this edition which might assist the modern reader better to recreate and understand it. There are biographical details on the author and information about the publishing history and reception of the plays as well as manuscript variants and notes on dated vocabulary. Specialists of the theatre, historians of the age, and graduate students *en mal de thèse* should all be pleased that three plays by this caustic, restive spirit are once again accessible in an attractive edition.

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Wilson, W. Donald. *La structure de dédoublement : objectivité et mythe dans* Les Thibault *de Roger Martin du Gard*. Birmingham, AL : Summa Publications, 1997. 238p.

L'idée maîtresse de ce livre est que *Les Thibault* sont une œuvre fondamentalement double, et « qu'il y a non seulement congruence, mais aussi consubstantialité entre les divers dédoublements qui structurent le roman » (8). Du Gard voulait écrire une étude sociale où il garderait une attitude « objective » et « scientifique », exprimée dans un style transparent. Mais, écrit Wilson, tout le roman est imbu de références mythiques par lesquelles l'auteur exprime un élément « subjectif ».

Dans l'analyse offerte par Wilson, c'est Oscar Thibault qui est le meilleur exemple de ce dédoublement. Père sévère qui représente une certaine société, Thibault est présenté de facon assez « objective ». Mais Wilson montre que ce personnage a aussi un côté mythique, car il dépasse son rôle de père et de représentant de la bourgeoisie pour devenir le père dévorateur « tout à fait archétypal » (13) et œdipien. Naturellement, la révolte de ses deux fils (surtout celle de Jacques) peut aussi se placer dans le cadre du drame œdipien, car elle révèle le désir de se libérer du père en le tuant. À cause de son rôle social, Thibault représente le matériel et le refus de la

transcendance, mais Madame de Fontanin s'oppose à tout ce qu'il personnifie, car celle-ci est « principe de vie » et « l'incarnation des "valeurs maternelles" par excellence : amour, tendresse, bonheur et compréhension » (60). Par ce biais mythique, l'auteur abandonne son objectivisme « scientifique » pour exprimer son attitude envers ses personnages.

Même au niveau mythique, Wilson décèle d'autres dédoublements. La figure de la Mère, par exemple, comporte aussi un élément impur qui la lie au matériel, tandis que le Père garde des traits qui le lient au spirituel. Les deux frères, bien sûr, sont des doubles qui se ressemblent et s'opposent en même temps. Bien qu'il se révolte contre son pére et qu'il possède un certain aspect anti-matérialiste, Antoine reste fondamentalement fils de son père, représentant de la société et englué dans le matériel. Jacques est le vrai révolté, le romantique qui rejette la société et le matériel, mais lui aussi a son aspect paternel et matérialiste, car « il y a un lien obscur entre Jacques et son père » (135).

Le dédoublement à l'intérieur du texte est à l'image de Du Gard lui-même, selon Wilson, car Du Gard, malgré sa vision matérialiste et pessimiste de la vie, « n'arrive pas à se débarrasser d'un optimisme, et jusqu'à un certain idéalisme, inné et instinctif » (152). C'est pour cette raison qu'il ne pouvait pas accepter le nihilisme implicite dans la mort de Jacques à la fin de *L'été 1914*. Il a, donc, ajouté *Épilogue*, volume qui ne figurait pas dans ses premiers projets. Dans cette dernière partie du roman, Antoine se transforme et accepte de plus en plus les valeurs de son frère mort, sans aller, pourtant, jusqu'à adopter tout l'idéalisme de celui-ci. Antoine garde un certain réalisme, et « c'est par le biais du personnage d'Antoine que Martin du Gard trouve le moyen de dépasser les oppositions véhiculées par la structure de dédoublement » (161). Par conséquent, « le principe de dédoublement correspond en fin de compte chez Martin du Gard à une bipolarité, à une complémentarité, et à une dialectique, plutôt qu'à une opposition irréductible » (161).

Dans ses deux derniers chapitres, Wilson montre que la voix du romancier-narrateur dans *Les Thibault*, qui s'efforce d'être « objective », est « partout contestée par une autre optique : celle des personnages » (176). Le point de vue « subjectif », celui des êtres humains voués à la mort et saisis par l'angoisse de l'anéantissement, est exprimé par les personnages, surtout dans certains textes enchâssés. D'ailleurs, un objectivisme scientifique rigoureux n'est jamais possible, car tout sujet est obligé de vivre au monde en tant que sujet. Le romancier, même s'il essaie de rester hors du texte, y met un peu de lui-même, car « être de chair et non de papier, il ne peut pas être vraiment présent dans l'univers fictif, il ne peut non plus en être complètement absent » (205).

Wilson nous offre ici une analyse minutieuse des *Thibault* qui révèle des aspects insoupçonnés du roman, mais qui en même temps, s'applique très souvent à l'acte d'écrire en général. Ce livre constitue un apport appréciable au corpus critique voué aux écrits de Martin du Gard.

David J. Bond *Université de la Saskatchewan*

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Cohen, Albert. *Book of My Mother*. Trans. Bella Cohen. Intr. David Coward. UNESCO Collection of Representative Works. London: Peter Owen Publishers, 1997. 124 p.

In *Dalhousie French Studies* 51 (Summer 2000) I stated that Albert Cohen's *Le livre de ma mère* (1954) had not yet appeared in English (p. 121). I was mistaken. A reader informed me that Bella Cohen, Albert Cohen's widow, had indeed published the *Book of My Mother* in England in 1997. The unheralded appearance in English of this,

Cohen's most popular and enduring book, an international best-seller translated into eleven languages, confirmed my own long-standing view that Albert Cohen remains a virtual unknown in much of the English-speaking world, and most especially in North America. It was nonetheless with great anticipation that I obtained a copy of the book in order to review it here.

Neither novel, essay, poem, *mémoire*, or *confession*, but all these and much more, *Le livre de ma mère* is Cohen's intimate and moving hymn to motherhood. It is a short work, barely seventy pages long in the Pléiade edition (1993), and yet, judging by the overwhelming response it met with at the time of publication, *Le livre de ma mère* spoke hauntingly, movingly to a whole generation whose lives had been shattered by fascism and war. Since publication *Le livre de ma mère* has never been out of print.

Le livre de ma mère in fact was begun during Cohen's wartime stay in London. The first version of the text, entitled "Chant de mort," appeared in London, in four instalments of *La France libre* (1943-44). It was ostensibly Cohen's response to his mother's recent death in occupied France. Then in 1952, Cohen reworked the original texts, dictating, according to his own intimate formula, a new book to his companion and later wife, the English-born Bella Berkowich. Cohen did so, he later stated, to acquaint his new love with his dead mother "so that they both could love her."

Bella Cohen's translation is therefore a significant event, for she was a witness to the transformation of one text to another and the distillation of the book's many and varied themes. She also played an important role in its composition. And so, in a very personal sense, *Le livre de ma mère* is also Bella Cohen's book. And it is no doubt for that reason that her own English version has been more than forty years in the making.

Cohen's great gift to literature was the way he renewed the language of biblical lamentation in a style commensurate with the manifold and complex ironies of the modern world. Those acquainted with his works are taken by his talent to express in a style unlike any other, the whole chorus of human emotions, emotions which validate the human in the face of godless absurdity. An article signed S. M. in *L'Écho-Liberté* (6 July 1954) summed it up this way:

> C'est sans doute qu'Albert Cohen a du talent et que ce talent dirige sa plainte, la fait monter, descendre, s'enfler, s'amenuiser selon les règles du plus grand art. [...] Une forme se crée dans le moment même où le tulmulte des sentiments devrait abolir la forme, et cette forme est force car elle porte en elle une poésie séculaire, celle des chœurs et des pleureuses, une poésie intime et familière aussi, faite de l'habituel quotidien.

The challenge therefore is to render Cohen's inimitable poetic style, to recreate the obsessive, haunting cadences of his own very personal prayer-like incantation. It is a challenge only partially met by the *Book of My Mother*.

One obvious difficulty is the translator's failure to create from one chapter to the next an accurate sense of time and place. The book takes us in short segments from 1905 to 1950, from the Dreyfus Affair to the Nuremberg Trials, as it were. Each decade has its own ring, its own language. When, in Chapter VI, at the beach around 1910, Cohen describes the public conveniences as a "vespasienne aux relents mélancoliques" he is not saying "the public urinal, malodorously melancholic" (38). The euphemistic "vespasienne"—rather than the dictionary translation of the word proposed—describes an Edwardian sense of bourgeois propriety and respectability from which the narrator and his mother are excluded and which, in any case, are undermined by the "melancholy bad odours" the "vespasienne" gives off. The image evoked in this short phrase is a good example of a particularly subtle way Cohen

attacks bourgeois convention and the "human animality" that convention invariably disguises. And it is stylistic subtlety of this sort that a translation must convey.

The same stylistic subtlety is evident in Chapters X-XIII which capture to perfection the pretentious, class-conscious atmosphere of League of Nations Geneva. The "smart set" (55) whose invitations the narrator accepts—leaving his mother alone in his flat—only partially expresses the guilt implied in Cohen's use of the slightly precious, ironic term "mondains inviteurs." The 1920s phrase "smart set" suggests to me at any rate, "bright young things" and "sloe gin," whereas here, those hosting the party are quite explicitly a self-important, middle-aged "countess" and her "ambassador husband." In the same chapter the translator's use of familiar "phoned" rather than the more formal "telephoned" does not suggest the refined 1930s stylizations Chapters X-XIII clearly lampoon.

Other problems include the English version's many gallicisms. "Pâte d'amande" is marzipan and not "almond paste" (69). "Furniture of my mother" (40) should be "my mother's furniture" and "fables of La Fontaine" (43), "La Fontaine's fables." "My Jewish origin" (30) should be "My Jewish origins," and "soixante kilos de bifteck" (66), used to describe a young lover, would be best translated by "a hundred and fifty pounds of beef" and not "sixty kilos of beefsteak." "La pureté du lac de Genève" is clearly the "purity [or cleanliness] of Lake Geneva" and not "the cleanliness of the lake in Geneva" (51), and "my father's affairs improved" should rightly be "my father's business improved" (31). Likewise, the Mother's baby talk, "les pruneaux sont des petits nègres," would be better rendered by period words like "piccaninnies" or even "golliwogs" rather than the equally politically incorrect "little black men" (121).

All this being said, the real difficulty with *Book of My Mother* is Bella Cohen's unidiomatic English phrasing. The book's awkward sentence construction both intrudes on the reader's pleasure and obscures Cohen's poetic incantation. It would be too long to quote from the text at length, but one might point out its infelicitous overworking of the relative pronoun: "for that night I caused suffering to a blundering saint—a true saint *who was* unaware that she was a saint" (56), "she had phoned the smart set *who* had invited me and *who* were certainly her inferiors"; or its awkward grammatical constructions: "Like a good and faithful dog, she accepted her humble fate, which was to wait, alone in my flat *and sewing* for me—to wait for my return from those smart dinners from which she thought it natural to be debarred" (61).

Finally, the proof-readers at Peter Owen Publishers deserve to be singled out for the unfortunate typos, starting with the one on the first page.

It is not pleasant to criticize the work of the widow of a favourite author, especially when that same woman, as Albert Cohen's literary executor, has done so much these past twenty years since his death to encourage scholars dedicated to her late husband's *œuvre*. It is even more difficult to give only mitigated praise when the work in question is so obviously a labour of love. But one cannot help feeling that, as was certainly the case with *Belle du Seigneur*, Bella Cohen would have been well advised to leave the translation of her husband's most beloved book to a professional. As it stands, because of the problems touched on here, it is fair to assume that the *Book of My Mother* will not get the popular acclaim it deserves. It is acclaim which those who enjoy and respect Cohen's works had every right to anticipate.

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Connor, Peter Tracey. *Georges Bataille and the Mysticism of Sin*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. 198 p.

Mystic and dreamer or thinker firmly grounded in the world of everyday realities? Believer in the non-rational or one who recognised the importance of critical consciousness? Proponent of sadistic violence or defender of the sovereign presence of others? Political revolutionary or solitary thinker who disdained involvement in the affairs of the world? Writer who put faith in human discourse or reluctant user of words who saw that they were not just inadequate, but inimical to the tasks that he set himself? Subversive who rejected all roles and constraints or believer in the impossibility of life without prohibitions? Which of these was George Bataille?

Connor would argue that the terms in the above list would better be linked by "and" than "or." His answer is that Bataille is all of these things, and that Bataille's thought embraces many apparently opposite and mutually exclusive characteristics, while, at the same time, offering no harmonisation or closure, for "in reality there is only non-sense [...] the experience of the impossible" (163). It is Bataille's idea of mysticism that Connor sees as the unifying principle behind this seemingly contradictory view of life. He is at pains to point out that mysticism, for Bataille, is not the traditional experience found in the works of such Christian mystics as Saint John of the Cross or Saint Theresa of Avila, which have as their goal "the revelation of a unitative state in which the mystic experiences oneness with God" (53). For Bataille, mysticism is the expression of an inner experience, a "state of ecstasy, of rapture" (53). It is a moment that provokes questioning of meaning, a state of non-knowledge "prior to the coagulation of meaning that makes sense out of experience" (55). This is not a confessional experience that is meditated on and forced into the mould of a religious credo, but a naked experience that takes place before and beyond discourse.

Connor's study is divided into three sections. The first one situates Bataille in relation to other mystics such as Dionysius the Areopagite, Augustine, Nicholas of Cusa, Saint John of the Cross, Saint Theresa of Avila, Péguy and Shestov, as well as to a variety of other philosophers and artists such as Bergson, Nietzsche, and the Symbolists. This section also deals with Sartre's objections to Bataille's mysticism and it concludes that, of all of Bataille's "mystical ancestors," he is closest to the Neoplatonic school of mystics. The second part is the most absorbing in the book. It deals with Bataille's relation to language, which is clearly a problematic area. Since the experience that Bataille describes is "sufficient unto itself" and "finds its satisfaction in silence" (48), the mystic who writes about it violates this silence and "allows himself to be tainted [...] by the noise of the world" (49). Furthermore, to name an experience that "is its own authority" (50) through the medium of another authority (language) is an apparently self-destructive enterprise. Added to this is the problem that mystic experience involves the loss of self, of the "'I' of a knowable lived experience" (60), but language requires a subject, a referential "I" in order to function. Finally, this experience has to be expressed in words already contaminated by use in other domains, and in a language that forces closure on something that is a "perpetual undoing of meaning" (69). Consequently, "to write, for Bataille, is to make words continuously empty themselves of meaning in a work constantly restarted, constituted by the impossibility of completion" (69).

The third, and least convincing, section of the book is entitled "Mysticism and Morality." Bataille rejects traditional imposed morality and roles, insisting instead on absolute freedom, the unleashing of passion in the "free expression of impulses opposed to the calculations of reason" (144). He sought moments of ecstatic experience that are outside normal categories of time, while morality requires, at the

very least, "a moment of self-reflection wherein an individual contemplates the consequences of an act, and hence submits to a thinking of ends" (97). Yet, Connor argues, Bataille acknowledged the importance of accepting the existence of others and of respecting it. Every page of Bataille's *Inner Experience*, he says, "burns with the urgency of the ethical." Perhaps—but there is still some truth to Sartre's objection to Bataille (quoted by Connor): "I don't see why, according to your principles, one wouldn't rape human beings as one drinks a cup of coffee" (123). Bataille clearly had considerable difficulty finding a satisfactory answer to Sartre.

It would be unfair to tax Connor with the unconvincing nature of an argument that really belongs to Bataille. Indeed, Connor's book is a closely argued, clearly written and lucid exposition of a very complex and multi-faceted body of work. It is an extremely useful addition to a growing volume of studies on a writer who provokes fascination in some readers, repulsion in others, and sometimes both of these in the same reader, but who, whatever one's reaction, deserves our attention.

David J. Bond — *University of Saskatchewan*

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Allen, James Smith. *Poignant Relations: Three Modern French Women.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2000. 270 p.

Allen's informative and intriguing historical study examines the autobiographical writing of three nineteenth-century women, Marie Leroyer, Geneviève Breton, and Céline Renooz. None of the three achieved literary success or stature through writing, although some of their work made it into print during their lifetimes or posthumously. It is precisely the relative obscurity of Leroyer, Breton and Renooz that makes Allen's sensitive study of their work so fascinating. As representatives of the modern French *bourgeoise*, the three provide a glimpse of the prevailing intellectual, cultural and political climate of the time and of how women negotiated a space for themselves within it. Their autobiographical writing provides insight into the construction of female identity and agency as it intersects with the historical moment, in this case from Marie Leroyer's birth in1800 to Céline Renooz's death in1928.

The "Relations" in the title refer both to human bonds cultivated and maintained through discursive activity, and to the act of relating or narrating. The author adopts the historian Karen Offen's term "relational feminism" as a more appropriate descriptor of the feminist consciousness he sees in Leroyer, Breton and Renooz. "Relational feminism" grows out of a particular cultural tradition, whereas "individualist feminism" is rooted in a universalizing transhistorical individual. Allen finds that the novels, short stories, travelogues, memoirs, diaries, personal correspondence, essays, journalism and scientific treatises left by Leroyer, Breton and Renooz show evidence of a distinct feminist consciousness even though none identified with the feminist cause of the period. At different points in their lives, to varying degrees and with varying consequences, all three suffered from the social, economic, civic, political, moral and religious constraints imposed on them as women of their class. Their writing bears testimony to the struggle to reconcile their creative talents and ambitions with the restrictions of their gender. Allen argues convincingly that in their discursive relations the three show traces of a feminist consciousness defined as a recognition of gender inequalities and the arbitrariness of gender roles, a sense of solidarity with women, articulated goals for change, and the possibility of achieving freer lives for themselves and other women. In the persistence of their writing practice Leroyer, Breton and Renooz adapted, modified, broadened, challenged, and resisted the boundaries within which they lived as

nineteenth-century women. Allen identifies common concerns and themes that appear in their writing, whatever the genre in which they chose to give them shape, and suggests that they reflect those common to women of their class.

Jeannette Gaudet *St. Thomas University*

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Stevens, Sonya, ed. *A History of Women's Writing in France.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 314 p.

In her article on the paradox of feminist criticism, Myra Jehlen asks: "What do we understand about the world, about the whole culture, from our new understanding of the women's sphere within it? " (81).* Stevens's recent collection of essays on the history of women's writing in France goes a considerable way to providing an answer to Jehlen's pressing question. Responding to a need to present women's writing in its historical and relational context, Stevens's volume surveys women's ongoing and vigorous investment in the cultural life of France. The history covers an impressive fourteen hundred years of women's literary production across all genres, from the earliest extant texts of the Middle Ages up to the flourishing late twentieth century. The collection is neatly divided into twelve highly readable chapters situating the work of French women writers, some canonical and many non-canonical, within the traditionally recognized, chronological periods of literary history. Given that the last one hundred years "represent, in many ways, a realization of so many aspirations articulated by women in earlier periods," half the chapters of the collection are devoted to women's writing in the twentieth century (7). Of these, two chapters cover women's fiction (with 1969 providing the convenient dividing line) and three cover autobiography, poetry and theatre; the closing chapter of the volume is an overview of trends in what has become contentiously recognized as "French" feminism. Three highly useful bibliographies are included. Perhaps the most exciting of these is the last, a bibliography of women writers and their work providing references to all the titles and authors presented in the history. Even given the rigorous selection process made necessary by the format, the wealth of writing produced by women is more than evident, maybe even a little overwhelming, from the briefest glance at the substantial bibliography. Women not only engaged in the philosophical, religious, æsthetic, scientific, pedagogical and political debates of their time, but also shaped them in significant and innovative ways through their written work. The popular and critical success some achieved in their lifetimes undermines the perception created by traditional literary histories that, except for a few luminaries, women's writing was and is marginal to that of their male counterparts. What is also abundantly clear from the collection, however, is the continuity of concerns and the common themes in women's writing over the centuries. At the core of women's concerns right up to the present day is the difficult negotiation of the public and private spheres. Gender relations and childbearing, marriage and women's subordination, access to education and the spirited defense of the female sex against calumny and prejudice are some of the themes treated in essays, treatises, letters, and pedagogical manuals or illustrated in prose fiction and poetry. As well as resisting cultural constructions imposed on women and affirming female agency, writers also sought to define and broaden the role for women within the given constraints imposed by their particular historical and socioeconomic situation. Some women's writing gives expression to a profound ambivalence about the possibilities for real and permanent change in the female condition.

When read in conjunction with any of the usual histories of French literature in which women's writing is seriously underrepresented, Stevens's volume permits a full

and balanced appreciation of the collective cultural past of France. The essays provide a valuable synthesis of the work accomplished to date in recovering and reevaluating women's texts. *A History of Women's Writing in France* is undoubtedly a significant resource in French literary history for scholars and students alike.

* "Archimedes and the Paradox of Feminist Criticism." *Feminisms: An Anthology of Literary Theory and Criticism*. Eds. Robyn R. Warhol and Diane Price Herndl. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1991.

Jeannette Gaudet *St. Thomas University*

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Jefferson, Ann. *Nathalie Sarraute: Fiction and Theory: Questions of Difference*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000. 214 p.

Jefferson has contributed a welcome and important piece of scholarship with this, the first book-length study published on Sarraute since the author's death in October 1999. Jefferson's book has a lot to recommend it. As co-editor of the Pléiade edition of Sarraute's (almost) complete works in 1997, she brings to this study an enviably thorough knowledge of all areas of Sarraute's literary production including fiction, critical essays and numerous interviews given over the course of the author's sixty-year career. Consequently Jefferson's discussion is well-grounded, striking a healthy balance between consolidating and framing previous scholarship on Sarraute and then forging new insights into the operations of her poetics. Indeed, given the complex, often contradictory notions she discusses, it is worth mentioning that Jefferson writes with a clarity that matches her informed authority, and thereby avoids the unfortunate tendency of some previous Sarraute scholars to mimic, albeit unwittingly, the prose style of the author being studied.

Although several chapters of this book have appeared previously in different forms, *Nathalie Sarraute: Fiction and Theory* is a thoroughly original work. Jefferson organises her study around an examination of the issue of difference—and its correlative, opposing term, sameness—as it manifests itself in various guises across Sarraute's writing in the form of exclusions, assimilations, separations and contaminations. Thus, instead of examining individual works Jefferson opts to illustrate and interpret her concepts with examples from many, judiciously selected sources. The study is divided into seven chapters with three broad headings: "Difference and Human Relations," "The Body and Sexual Difference," and "Genre and Difference." She astutely identifies and subsequently unpacks a self-contradictory kernel that should ring true with the perception of most readers: that Sarraute's writing is characterised by "the ceaseless demand [...] for a recognition of its own difference, even as it constantly holds out the possibility of an erasure of all difference as something that separates and divides" (12). This unstable, paradoxical stance leads Jefferson to discuss intersubjective relations in Sarraute's work, especially between writer and reader figures in fiction, criticism and in the public life of the author. However, perhaps the most intriguing chapter of the book is Jefferson's discussion of how gender is represented in this contradictory affirmation and erasure of difference, especially given Sarraute's steadfast and remarkable stance that as a writer she has no gender.

In order to chart her way through these divisions, Jefferson performs in her introduction a succinct and very useful overview of how difference has been construed by competing discourses in the human sciences: from Saussure, Barthes and Derrida, to Lyotard, Girard, Mary Douglas and feminist critics (both essentialist and existentialist). This discussion alone lends great merit to the book and is an excellent critical survey for those interested not only in Sarraute, but also in

literature and cultural studies in general. While I concur with Jefferson that, in the end, Sarraute does not have "an implicit theory of difference which could be brought to light by comparison with theories whose arguments are formulated in explicitly conceptual terms" (12), it would nevertheless have been interesting to bring back some of the critical terms from the introduction in later chapters, in order to gain some extra interpretative traction.

Nathalie Sarraute: Fiction and Theory will prove to be essential reading for future scholars of Sarraute, the New Novel and for all those who have been intrigued by the unique, poetic vision of this author.

Mark D. Lee *Mount Allison University*

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Verdaguer, Pierre. *La séduction policière : signes de croissance d'un genre réputé mineur : Pierre Magnan, Daniel Pennac et quelques autres.* Birmingham, AL : Summa Publications, 1999. 315 p.

Cette étude est la meilleure analyse du polar français moderne publiée à notre époque. Ce jugement se base sur les critères suivants : choix des auteurs étudiés, profondeur de l'analyse, concepts exprimés, intérêt de la lecture, style de l'écriture. *La séduction policière* excelle dans tous ces domaines. L'auteur démontre une connaissance exceptionelle du genre, français et anglophone, ainsi que de l'analyse littéraire. De plus Verdaguer, respectant le genre étudié, conserve constamment l'intérêt du lecteur.

L'introduction se compose de trois parties. La première examine le contexte critique des dernières années et délimite l'ampleur de l'ouvrage. La deuxième analyse la problématique de l'enquête et explique le fondement du choix : les œuvres des auteurs étudiés sont constituées d'enquêtes, c'est-à-dire d'énigmes policières augmentées d'une originalité stylistique, thématique ou érudite. La troisième partie examine la problématique du genre et ses valeurs idéologiques.

L'ouvrage est divisé en trois parties. La première étudie et compare les deux conteurs Pierre Magnan et Daniel Pennac. Elle est subdivisée en trois chapitres. Dans le premier, l'auteur examine les pluralités et les divergences, les priorités culturelles, l'écriture et les repères littéraires. Le deuxième chapitre se concentre sur le provincialisme de Pierre Magnan. Verdaguer analyse le fantastique mythique et littéraire de ce magnifique conteur provençal : l'aspect provençal de son écriture, sa connaissance et la façon dont il exprime la magie des lieux, le sortilège du temporel et du surnaturel, en fait toutes ces caractéristiques qui forment le puissant attrait de ses polars. Le troisième chapitre examine « le petit monde de la justice » de Daniel Pennac, ses récits féeriques, ses héros séraphiques et l'importance de la mémoire historique française. L'auteur étudie les positions idéologiques du monde pennacien et souligne la position antifasciste du romancier. Verdaguer dégage ce qui constitue l'attrait majeur de la saga des Malaussène : l'art du langage. En effet, Pennac est incomparable dans la manipulation du français : il a le génie de juxtaposer des niveaux de langue associée à un procès de société.

La deuxième partie analyse l'écriture polaresque au féminin, c'est-à-dire le monde de Fred Vargas, Estelle Monbrun et Anne de Leseleuc. L'auteur commence par l'étude de la position du polar français. Il précise que dans ce contexte la spécificité du roman policier n'a jamais suscité d'intérêt. Dans cette optique Verdaguer évoque les différences entre les modèles policiers dominants en France et en Grande-Bretagne, pour ensuite étudier de près l'œuvre de ces trois romancières ; il met en valeur la « féminité » de ces écrits, une « féminité » qui s'exprime d'une façon différente selon chacune de ces trois écrivaines. L'univers de Fred Vargas est peuplé d'esprits libres ; Estelle Monbrun ajoute à son roman policier une dimension satirique et un

esprit proustien ; Anne de Leseleuc présente l'univers historique frappant par la « masculinité » de l'avocat gaulois sous l'empire de Vespasien.

La troisième partie s'ouvre bien logiquement sur une étude de la trilogie égyptienne historique de Christian Jacq. Verdaguer examine les œuvres des deux historiens, Leseleuc et Jacq, et rapproche leurs intrigues idéologiquement comparables. Il conclue que ces romans indiquent clairement l'idée d'une constante des comportements humains ; ils permettent aussi de révéler la nature du mal contre lequel se battent l'enquêteur gaulois et le juge égyptien.

Le deuxième et dernier chapitre dissèque le roman noir de Didier Daeninckx. La vision du monde de Daeninckx, sa philosophie de la noirceur, son ironie tragique sont empreintes d'une force moralisatrice, c'est-à-dire d'un « net désir d'édification morale ». Daeninckx pose le problème de la responsabilité collective, celle de l'oubli. De par là, ce sont aussi des polars qui évoquent le passé national, mais dans l'optique spécifique de mise en garde, « car qui oublie se condamne à retomber dans les mêmes travers et à commettre les mêmes fautes » (237).

Cette étude se termine par une synthèse de l'état du polar français et par des annotations minutieuses qui témoignent d'un extraordinaire travail de recherche.

Ira Ashcroft *Wilfrid Laurier University*

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Koreman, Megan. *The Expectation of Justice: France 1944-1946*. Durham: Duke University Press, 1999. 340 p.

Qu'est-ce que la notion de justice ? Et comment ce concept fondamental se concrétise-t-il lors de situations exceptionnelles, comme celles que peut entraîner la défaite et l'occupation prolongée d'un pays, suivies de sa libération et de tous les problèmes inévitables inhérents à sa reconstruction ? Ce sont ces questions que se pose de façon très méthodique l'ouvrage de Koreman, en traitant le cas de trois villes provinciales de dimensions assez modestes qui se sont trouvées pendant la deuxième guerre mondiale placées sous des régimes différents : Rambervilliers, près de Nancy, sous contrôle allemand, Moûtiers, dans la zone d'occupation italienne, et enfin Saint-Flour, dans la région contrôlée par le gouvernement de Vichy.

L'hypothèse de base de cette étude a le mérite de la simplicité, si ce n'est nécessairement celui de la nouveauté : le gouvernement provisoire dirigé par le général De Gaulle, dans l'intérêt du pays dans son ensemble et pour renforcer l'union nationale et l'image de la France auprès des Alliés vainqueurs, crée un « mythe de la Résistance » dont le but premier est de présenter le pays comme une victime de la barbarie nazie, plutôt que comme un auxiliaire dévoué de la cause des occupants. Une des conséquences de la mise en place de ce mythe est le sentiment de déception qu'éprouve une partie de la population, qui attendait des résistants maintenant au pouvoir le grand nettoyage promis. Déception qui, dans la période qui suit immédiatement la fin du conflit, cause des contrastes certains entre les nouvelles autorités et diverses couches de la population.

L'auteur identifie trois types de justice également importants, et diversement réalisés, selon les endroits et les circonstances particulières des villages dont l'histoire est ici reconstruite : la justice légale (s'occupant des traîtres et des collaborationnistes), la justice sociale (touchant à la distribution équitable des biens dans la communauté) et la justice honoraire (déterminant qui, des vivants et des morts, mérite honneur ou mépris). L'examen détaillé de la vie dans ces trois petites villes de province, nourri d'une analyse subtile de la presse de l'époque, de documents tirés des archives municipales et du fonctionnement des cours de justice, fournit un portrait fort intéressant et nuancé d'un phénomène complexe que l'iconographie

cinématographique et photographique a figé dans un sens univoque. On a l'impression en lisant ces pages de retrouver l'ambiance de grisaille et de confusion éthique et morale des romans d'Alphonse Boudard, d'André Héléna, ou des quelques autres petits auteurs populaires qui ont donné de la France de l'Occupation et de la Libération la représentation exempte de fards que la grande littérature n'a pas toujours su pourvoir. Avec en plus la précision dans le détail et l'objectivité que la distance temporelle — et aussi spatiale, ce livre étant basé sur une thèse de doctorat américaine — peuvent assurer.

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Bosher, J. F. *The Gaullist Attack on Canada, 1967-1997*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000. 331 p.

In his reassessment of France-Quebec relations, Bosher takes a fresh look at what he calls the "Gaullist cold war with Canada." He first examines Gaullist intervention in Canada and Quebec, and Canada's reaction to it. He then situates this intervention within the broader field of French imperialism.

In his introduction, Bosher suggests that Gaullist hostility towards Canada dates back to the early 1960s, with the arrival in Quebec of Pierre-Louis Mallen. A Frenchman dedicated to the Quebec separatist mouvement, Mallen's role was to prepare De Gaulle's visit of 1967 and to maximize its effects. In Part 1, the author clarifies why De Gaulle thought it worthwhile to send Mallen to Quebec. De Gaulle sought to reinforce ties with the province by taking advantage of political changes in Quebec that favored French intervention, and by evoking postwar economic, political, linguistic and cultural simliarities between France and Quebec, most notably their struggle against American and British domination. Bosher then addresses the first Gaullist assault on Canada in 1963, focusing on official relations between France and Quebec and a series of high-profile visits to Quebec by French officials, as well as a network of underground conspirators and "espions." He pinpoints De Gaulle's intention to support Quebec nationalists and to work towards liberation. The author next discusses De Gaulle's visit of 1967. He remarks that De Gaulle's famous "Vive le Québec libre !" was not, as some would have it, a mere slip of the tongue, but that it reveals De Gaulle's hidden agenda to further the Quebec separatist movement. Bosher moves on to examine reactions in France and Quebec to this visit, noting that in the short term, more and more groups saw De Gaulle as sympathetic to the wishes of the Quebec populace. This led to an increasingly favourable attitude in Quebec towards the French president and separatism. The author shows how De Gaulle then turned his attention to Acadia and sought to cultivate a French political agenda to rouse the Acadians through linguistic and cultural support. In the final chapter of Part 1, Bosher describes the activities of what he calls the "French 'Quebec mafia'," a mysterious and ambiguous, yet closely-knit network of prominent French political figures and diplomats deployed in Quebec. Although some members were temporarily involved in Gaullist aggression, others actively encouraged and assisted Quebec separatists.

Part 2 centres around varying Canadian responses to this Gaullist intervention. Bosher discusses how Marcel Cadieux, under-secretary of state during the 1960s, repeatedly warned the federal government of Gaullist activity in Quebec. According to the author, the federal government disregarded these warnings and allowed more frequent France-Quebec relations independant of Ottawa. Indeed, Bosher is highly critical of the Canadian government for its complacent, ambivalent attitude, which, instead of deterring Gaullist intervention, only served to facilitate De Gaulle's

mission. He next seeks to elucidate the reasoning behind Ottawa's reaction; to do this, he compares the Canadian and French political systems and the role of these differences in France-Quebec relations. Bosher shows that, in the Canadian tradition, Prime Minister Trudeau's reaction to De Gaulle was not drastic enough and was rooted in anxiety over Francophone-Anglophone relations. This reluctance to confront De Gaulle permitted the French president, traditionally a more aggressive and powerful political figure, to increase and strengthen ties between France and Quebec, and even to bypass and undermine Ottawa completely in his dealings with Quebec. Bosher contends that it was Ottawa's ambivalence towards De Gaulle and its failure to take direct action against Gaullist intervention which contributed to the RCMP's inability to stop the Gaullists and to handle the October Crisis of 1970. In fact, Bosher links Gaullist intervention to the FLQ movement, and points to Gaullist events, policies and decisions around the time of the October Crisis that indicate support and preparation for a Quebec war of liberation. He goes on to describe secret military operations developed under Pearson and Trudeau to combat any such liberation movement, and justifies the use of the War Measures Act as a means of blocking the political wing of the FLQ in any attempt to gain public support that would have led to an insurrection during the crisis.

With Gaullist intervention and Canada's responses broadly explored, the six chapters of Part 3 situate De Gaulle's actions within French imperialism. Bosher exposes the creation of "la francophonie" as a Gaullist move to develop a worldwide Francophone empire with specific political goals. According to Bosher, Francophonie would allow France to continue its power and domination in Northern Africa, to expand its control over the French-speaking world, to establish not only cultural, but economic and political ties between member countries, and to stimulate separatist movements in other Francophone regions. The author provides an in-depth examination of French political policies, as well as international affairs in which the French government was involved, such as the *Rainbow Warrior* affair of 1985. This discussion allows the reader to gain a valuable insight into the aggressive workings of Gaullist principles and aims in Quebec and around the world. As Bosher notes, much of this Gaullist aggression was destined to combat and counteract increasing British and American influence on the international scene. Part 3 concludes with a look at the origins of this Gaullist hostility towards Anglophone nations, and exposes how Gaullists have traditionally tailored history to fit their political aims. By drawing on evidence from the Bonaparte and Bourbon eras, and then comparing them to De Gaulle's regime, Bosher places Gaullist imperialism within the historical context of French imperialism, and shows how De Gaulle has been elevated to mythical status by an exaggeration of his deeds and accomplishments.

Noting the relevance and necessity of a study dedicated to Quebec separatism and France-Quebec relations, the author aims throughout his work to shed new light on an old issue. In revealing the true intentions of Gaullist intervention in Quebec and exposing the underlying motives of France-Quebec relations, Bosher contributes a new perspective to the study of Canadian and Quebec history.

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