

Matt Phillips, 'French Studies: Literature, 2000 to the Present Day', *Year's Work in Modern Language Studies*, 80 (2020), 209–260

DOI for published version: <https://doi.org/10.1163/22224297-08001010>

[TT] Literature, 2000 to the Present Day

[A] Matt Phillips, *Royal Holloway, University of London*

*This survey covers the years 2017 and 2018*

[H2]1. General

Alexandre Gefen, *Réparer le monde: la littérature française face au XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Corti, 2017, 392 pp., argues that contemporary French literature has undergone a therapeutic turn, with both writing and reading now conceived in terms of healing, helping, and doing good. G. defends this thesis with extraordinary thoroughness as he examines the turn's various guises: as objects of literature's care here feature the self and its fractures; trauma, both individual and collective; illness, mental and physical; mourning and forgetfulness, personal and historical; and endangered bonds, with humans and beyond, on local and global scales. This amounts to what G. calls a new 'paradigme clinique' and, like any paradigm shift, this one appears replete with contradictions, tensions, and opponents, not least owing to the residual influence of preceding paradigms; G.'s analysis is especially impressive when unpicking the ways in which contemporary writers negotiate their sustained attachments to a formal, intransitive conception of literature, and/or more overtly revolutionary political projects. His thesis is supported by an enviable breadth of reference: G. lays out the diverse intellectual, technological, and socioeconomic histories at work in this development, and touches on close to 200 contemporary writers. Given the broad, synthetic nature of the work's endeavour, individual writers/works are rarely discussed for longer than a page, and though G.'s commentary is always insightful, specialists on particular authors or social/historical trends will surely find much to work with and against here. Throughout G. maintains an evenhanded attitude, neither defending nor refuting the effectiveness of contemporary literature's reparative aims, while enthusiastically observing the transformations and innovations fostered by its ambitions.

*Profession? Écrivain*, ed. Gisèle Sapiro and Cécile Rabot, CNRS Éditions, 2017, 368 pp., is an invaluable sociological resource for understanding the changing status and role of writers and literature in the contemporary period. The authors (all social scientists) demonstrate a dual process of professionalization and precarization affecting writers in the last few decades, interrogate the relations and sometimes tensions between forms of symbolic, professional, and financial recognition, and detail and examine the various factors shaping the contemporary literary field and the lived condition of writers: professional bodies, digital technology, residencies, the diversification of public engagement formats and collaborations with other artists, literary prizes, professional development and creative writing courses, copyright law in France and the EU, and so forth. The studies are based especially on qualitative data (interviews with various literary professionals, representatives, mediators, and of course (anonymized) writers themselves), though include a good deal of quantitative data and analysis also. Overall, the work demonstrates a redefinition of literary activity in the contemporary period, with (often financially precarious) writers dividing their time and energy between public engagement, writing, and other forms of artistic work/collaboration, giving their person as well as their writing, while for the most part continuing to subscribe to a disinterested conception of the literary vocation. In the conclusion, S. and R. consider some of the possibilities for and obstacles to the collective mobilization of writers against precarization.

Diana Holmes, *Middlebrow Matters: Women's Reading and the Literary Canon in France since the Belle Époque*, Liverpool U.P., 244 pp., the first extended study of middlebrow French literature, combines narratology and cultural studies to locate and interrogate a branch of literature at once commercially successful and culturally scorned, and demonstrates how this scorn ties into gendered oppression and the cultural denigration of feminized qualities. H. identifies the core characteristics that make a text accessible for middlebrow reading, but she also shows how the middlebrow is socially and historically constituted, with literary prizes providing a channel for seemingly more highbrow texts to become available to a middlebrow audience, and new features developing over time. Contemporary writers discussed include Claudie Galla, Amélie Nothomb, Anne Gavaldà, Tatiana de Rosnay, Muriel Barbery, and Catherine Cusset, many of whom have received little critical attention; the innovative final chapter offers a 'double reading' of Marie NDiaye's *Trois femmes puissantes*, demonstrating how the same text might be read from a middlebrow and literary critical perspective, and how each reading might inform the other. H. is sensitive to the risks posed by the middlebrow, which often makes pleasurable forms of sensitive sociohistorical material; but her overarching attitude is ultimately affirmative, celebrating 'the regular practice of imagination, exploration and empathy' fostered by middlebrow literature. These salutary claims are familiar from work in ethical criticism, and might face similar critical challenges met by the latter. But in combining enthusiasm for the pleasures and possibilities of literary reading, and analysis of the formal and historical bases of works popular with readers but neglected by critics, H. here offers a refreshing contribution to the study of contemporary French literature.

*The Made and the Found: Essays, Prose and Poetry in Honour of Michael Sheringham*, ed. Patrick McGuinness and Emily McLaughlin, Cambridge, Legenda, 2017, 204 pp., is a magnificent tribute to this finest of critics; as the editors aptly put it, 'a curious, border-crossing, genre-defying, analytical-creative homage *in kind* to someone who had all of those qualities in person and on the page' (ix). As well as poems, essays, and memoirs by writers on and with whom S. worked (including Yves Bonnefoy, Jacques Réda, Gilles Ortlieb, Jacques Roubaud, Gérard Macé, Anne Portugal, François Bon, Pierre Alferi, and Michel Deguy), the collection includes two pieces on contemporary French writing: Patrick McGuinness, 'Paul de Roux between Made and Found' (122–131), an elegant meditation on types and grades of attention which, in conversation with S.'s work on everyday life, finds in R.'s  *carnets* a tactful, 'sustainable' form of observation between intensity and slackness; Laurent Demanze, 'Le "Hasard heureux" du contemporain: réflexions sur l'étude de la littérature au présent' (166–174), which interrogates what it means and what is involved in studying contemporary literature, focusing on some of the key questions this poses for the researcher, concerning the boundaries of a literary corpus, the relationship between the academy and literary creation, and literary value and processes of legitimation.

A few recent works have interrogated the role of the media and visual culture in the contemporary literary field. Vincent Kaufmann, *Dernières nouvelles de la société du spectacle (Ce que les médias font à la littérature)*, Seuil, 2017, 280 pp., is interested in how audiovisual and digital technologies have transformed what he calls (after Michel Foucault) the 'author-function' and (after Pierre Bourdieu) the literary field. He argues the economies of attention and visibility established by these technologies lead to the undoing of that autonomous field described by Bourdieu in *Les Règles de l'art* (1992), founded on symbolic capital and diverse literary institutions, as authors increasingly come to resemble other cultural figures in adapting themselves to the conventions specific to new media ecosystems. In a chapter on 'le grammaire du spectacle', K. examines what he identifies as the basic cultural units of this paradigm ('comparution', confession, authenticity, transparency, and

sacrifice); this analysis is then developed through a discussion of several autobiographical/autofictional writers, focused as much on their mediatic self-presentation as on their texts. If the rise of life-writing is certainly exemplary of the changes K. is here seeking to describe, one might have hoped for more sustained discussion of other strands of contemporary French literature. Noëlle Revaz and Michel Houellebecq earn mention more as writers who have depicted the spectacle than as ones symptomatic of it; a later chapter offers interesting commentary on a number of crowdsourced/crowdfunded literary projects, though none of these are Francophone. K.'s attitude is more acutely ambivalent than Gefen's; though he and the book's blurb disavow a 'décliniste' perspective, the tone often veers close to sardonicism. Nonetheless, this ambivalence helps render this an engaging and thought-provoking study of its subject.

Galia Yanoshevsky, *L'Entretien littéraire: anatomie d'un genre*, Garnier, 391 pp., adopts a rather different approach and attitude to one feature of literature's mediatization. Y. considers the literary interview a distinctive genre, one with a 'littérarité' and a (verbal and nonverbal) creative potential all its own, and worthy of consideration as part of authorial œuvres. Y. examines the history and functions of the interview, and does so with remarkable thoroughness, from each of the angles she approaches it. The timeframe of interest here extends back to the late 19<sup>th</sup> c., but ample attention is granted to the interview's contemporary forms and transformations. The first chapter traces the history of the literary interview alongside the history of its various supports, from the written press through the radio, television, and the internet. The second chapter focuses on matters of orality and dialogue, the different formats these can take, the disadvantages and possibilities of oral interviews, as well as those of their transcription. The third approaches the interview as a performance, the roles of decor, the interviewer, and the body in this performance, the different roles available for authors to play, and the gendering of authorial performance (including an extended discussion of Christine Angot). The fourth sets out to define the 'littérarité' of the interview, while the fifth is interested in the functions of (written or visual) interview archives. The final chapter considers the ways in which interviews are represented in fictional works (including Jean Echenoz's *Envoyée spéciale* (2016)) to expose both the constraints and possibilities of the practice. This final aspect is developed further in Galia Yanoshevsky, 'The Interviewer Speaks Back: Turning the Tables of the Literary Interview in Contemporary French Novels', *Biography*, 41:287–309, through readings of Amélie Nothomb's *Hygiène de l'assassin* (1992), Christine Angot's *Interview* (1995), and Julia Kerninon's *Buvar* (2014), as well as novels by French literary reviewers themselves: Alain Veinstein's *L'Intervieweur* (2002) and Bernard Pivot's *Oui, mais quelle est la question?* (2012). *L'Écrivain vu par la photographie: formes, usages, enjeux*, ed. David Martens, Jean-Pierre Montier and Anne Reverseau, Rennes U.P., 2017, 304 pp. + 32 pls., meanwhile, proposes a series of studies around a key element in the relationship between literature and visual culture, namely the functions, uses, forms, and effects of author photographs, from the 19<sup>th</sup> c. to today. Chapters relevant to this section include: Nathalie Froloff, 'Annie Ernaux, photos privées, photos publiques: portrait de femme en écrivaine' (69–77), which explores the place promotional photos hold in the legitimation of the (female) writer, as well as E.'s strategies for reappropriating her iconography in her written work; Martina Stemberger, 'Méta-Photo-Morphoses de l'écrivain au féminin: Darrieussecq, Delaume, Despentès' (79–89), which examines the three writers self-reflexive approach to iconography and its gendering, and the various ways photography/photographers feature in their work; Matthias De Jonghe, 'La Déconstruction de soi chez Édouard Levé: un autoportrait qui se dérobe' (171–178), which interrogates the paradoxes of L.'s attempts to capture and exhaust the self in his *Autojumeaux* (1999) and *Autoportrait* (2005); Camille Brachet, 'Ce que la photographie donne à voir de l'écrivain: la mise en scène dans la presse' (209–217), which focuses on the use of author photographs in magazines, via a semiological analysis of such images in

different kinds of publication during the 2013 *rentrée littéraire*; Véronique Montémont, 'Ma vie en images: la représentation iconographique de l'auteur dans l'autobiographie française (1975–2014)' (263–273), which first examines the covers of autobiographies from the last four decades, noting a move from classically posed portraits to more experimental forms that M. correlates with the concurrent questioning of autobiography itself, then discusses the various modes of self-presentation adopted by authors in the 'Traits et portraits' collection edited by Colette Fellous. Migration and mobility remain crucial subjects of study. Oana Sabo, *The Migrant Canon in Twenty-First-Century France*, Lincoln, Nebraska U.P., 228 pp., persuasively outlines and interrogates what she calls the canonization of migrant literature (that is, literature about migration) since 2000. S. appeals to Bourdieu's work on the bifurcation of elite and commercial literature in the 19th c. in order to update it, by demonstrating the ways in which migrant literature has come to occupy a space between these two spheres, and partake of both symbolic and economic capital. With a masterly understanding of the French and French-speaking literary fields and their transformations in the contemporary era, S. shows the institutional and reading practices that have consecrated migrant literature as a distinctive genre, and that shape its reception. S.'s framework is by no means fully deterministic, however, and her book contains some fine readings of individual works that emphasize narrative strategies and authorial agency, and unpick how these interact and sometimes grate against their conditions of production; texts discussed include works by Delphine Coulin, Mathias Énard, Michaël Ferrier, Laurent Gaudé, Gauz, Milan Kundera, Dany Laferrière, Henri Lopes, Andreï Makine, Marie Redonnet, Éric-Emmanuel Scmitt, and Alice Zeniter. Individual chapters discuss: how through marketing and editorial strategies French publishing houses create demand for migrant literature; the role of online reviewers in constructing the value of literary texts, and the place of aesthetics, authorial biography, politics, and commercial appeal in their valuations; the Prix littéraire de la Porte Dorée (established in 2010 to be awarded to a work of migrant literature), how it mediates between different forms of capital, and how it shapes the terms in which texts are read; and Laferrière's 2013 election to the Académie française. Oana Sabo, 'Orthodox Spirituality and the Boundaries of Europe in the Novels of Maria Maïlat and Liliana Lazar', *FR*, 90.3, 2017:75–86, meanwhile, focuses on themes of spatiality, temporality, spirituality, and memory in two French language works by authors of Romanian origin, M.'s *Sainte Perpétuité* (1998) and L.'s *Terre des affranchis* (2009). S. examines the ways in which these novels tread a line between, on the one hand, an exoticization of Romania appealing to the French cultural imaginary and market, and on the other, attempts to tie their narratives into broader European histories and universal themes; the latter, she suggests, take place especially by way of formal and stylistic features (allusion, rhetorical detours, irony).

*AJFS*, 55.1, 'Mobility and Migration in the French and Francophone World', ed. Natalie Edwards, Christopher Hogarth and Ben McCann, born of the 2016 conference of the Australian Journal of French Studies, contains the following articles relevant to this section: Natalie Edwards, 'Mobile Women in Virginie Despentes's *Apocalypse Bébé*' (6–16), which reads D.'s 2010 novel with reference to her earlier *Baise-moi* and Julia Kristeva's work on foreignness, as a road trip novel that re-genders the traditionally male literary representation of mobility, and that presents mobility as a catalyst for recognizing and tolerating otherness and for transforming female subject positions; Kathryn Kleppinger, 'Mobility, Migration and Mystery in Maurice Gouiran's *Marseille Polars*' (17–27), which shows how G. uses the *polar* to unearth Marseille's historical relationship to the French empire and the persistence of past injustices in shaping the present, and demonstrates that the *polar* is indeed a particularly propitious genre for such an exercise of reconsidering and reconciling the present with its history; Alexandra Kurmann, '*Aller-retour-détour*: Transdiasporic Nomadism and the Navigation of Literary Prescription in the Work of Kim Thúy and Thanh-Van Tran-Nhut' (65–78), which finds in the

two authors' work a literary form of transdiasporic nomadism that goes beyond the trope of exile writing, one she examines with reference to Édouard Glissant's work on *le detour*.

This interest in mobility also resonates with contemporary literary criticism's interest in journeys and travel writing, reflected in a number of publications relevant to this section. Jean-Xavier Ridon, *L'Étrangement du voyageur*, Kimé, 148 pp., a book interested in the dynamics of strangeness involved in travelling, contains a chapter on Georges Picard's account of walking in the Eure-et-Loir, *Le Vagabond approximatif* (2001). R. is interested in particular in the *étrangeté* of the traveller in the places she visits, more than the strangeness of those places to the traveller. His reading of P.'s work offers a subtle analysis of the author's *entre-deux* between familiarity and strangeness, and his strategies for distinguishing himself both from locals and other sorts of visitors. These strategies include slowness (travelling on foot) and wandering (travelling without a precise destination), which also function as critiques of the modern world, and are supposed to offer a new way of relating to the real. R.'s careful reading also unpacks the risks of an outsider speaking on behalf of a supposedly unknown place, and situates the work within 20th- and 21st-c. traditions of literary urban exploration and *l'ethnologie du proche*. *WIFS*, special issue 7, 'Les Femmes et le voyage/Women and Traveling', ed. Catherine R. Montfort and Christine McCall Probes, includes a couple of pieces relevant to his section: Sonja Stojanovic, 'Voyages endeuillés dans l'œuvre de Marie Darrieussecq' (325–343) which ranges across D.'s œuvre to discuss various characters' attempts (and failures) to escape grief through travel, pinpoints resonances between the experiences of travel and mourning, and finds the bereaved protagonists less achieving self-discovery than confirming their sense of exile; Natalie Edwards, 'The Journey Home: Annie Ernaux's *Retour à Yvetot*' (344–361), which examines the changing place of her childhood home in E.'s work, and reads the 2013 book born of her return to Yvetot as a plurivocal and multimedial work that multiplies points of intimacy and forms a collective representation of the town. Warren Motte, 'Mourning in *Savannah*', *FR*, 92.2:55–68, treats a rather different conjuncture of travel, mourning, and writing: Jean Rolin's 2015 account of his attempt to replicate a trip previously made with a since deceased friend. Addressing the relationship between the past and the present, between memory and representation, and matters of fidelity, communicability, solitude, and presence, M.'s careful close reading of R.'s text casts it as, in part, a parable of mourning, in which bereavement productively enables a 'legible displacement'. Warren Motte, 'Bernard Noël's Trips', *RoN*, 58 :39–48, meanwhile, presents an equally heedful reading of *Un trajet en hiver* (2004), N.'s diaristic notes on train trips. M. classes the book as a 'loiterly' text (a term borrowed from Ross Chambers), and finds in it a sense of travelling, writing, and reading as each states of suspension. This suspension affords reflection, and here N. and M. reflect on matters of temporal and spatial perception, specularity, habit, interpersonal proximity, and the relation between words and things.

*RCFFC*, 16, 'L'Ailleurs par temps de mondialisation', ed. Charles Forsdick, Anna-Louise Milne and Jean-Marc Moura, contains the following pieces relevant to this section (many of which, again, pertain to matters of migration, mobility, and travel writing): Véronique Porra, 'Épuisement de l'exotisme et voyage en creux: sur une redéfinition de l'ailleurs et de l'altérité dans les années 2010' (7–16), on texts by Michel Houellebecq, Jean Echenoz, Jean-Christophe Bailly, and Sylvain Tesson; Jean-Xavier Ridon, 'De la mystique contre-culturelle à un ailleurs écologique' (17–28), on travel texts by Tesson, Blanche de Richemont, and David Lefèvre; Isabelle Rabadi, '(Auto)portraits à l'étranger: dépaysements et postures autofictionnelles dans le roman contemporain' (29–40), on works by Jean-Philippe Toussaint, Patrick Deville, Mathias Énard, and Echenoz; Ninon Chavoz, 'L'Afrique des carnets: mondialisations et moleskines' (41–50), on works by Éric Chevillard, Abdourahman Waberi, and Sylvain Prudhomme; Alain Ausoni, 'L'écriture translingue et la question de l'ailleurs. Réflexions à

partir de la pratique littéraire d'Andreï Makine' (51–61); Martina Stemberger, 'Voyages-palimpsestes: (inter-)textualités de l'ailleurs dans l'extrême contemporain' (62–78), which focuses on a range of travel texts on Russia; William Cloonan, 'Terre retrouvée: The Rediscovery of l'Amérique in French Fiction' (79–87); Justine Huppé and Frédéric Claisse, 'Zones blanches et lieux communs: Bruce Bégout, Éric Chauvier et Philippe Vasset, explorateurs périurbains' (88–98); Timo Obergöker, 'Si proche, si loin: la France périphérique comme ailleurs de la littérature française contemporaine' (99–109), on works by Chauvier and Édouard Louis; Alex G. Hargreaves, 'Writing Back from the banlieues: In Search of Refamiliarization' (101–110); Martin Munro, 'The Elsewhere and the Overseas in Michaël Ferrier's *Mémoires d'outre-mer*' (111–119). The issue also contains fascinating interviews/exchanges with Bertrand Westphal, Anna-Louise Milne, and Charles Forsdick, and an essay on defamiliarization by writer Christian Garcin.

Oana Panaïté, *The Colonial Fortune in Contemporary Fiction in French*, Liverpool U.P., 2017, 216 pp., offers a wide-ranging analysis of the persistence of colonial matters in contemporary French-language literature, bridging between texts of Hexagonal and postcolonial provenance. P. does so through the rich if slippery notion of the 'colonial fortune', her name for a series of tropes pertaining to colonial fates, economic relations, legacies, and debts. The introduction surveys and intervenes in contemporary postcolonial theory, and throughout P. argues for a 'paracolonial' approach to aesthetics that reads transversally across generic, national, and temporal boundaries, and through colonial and postcolonial lenses, while remaining attentive to fault lines and points of transition. At the heart of the book is a conviction in literature's importance for addressing historical lacunae, notably by making sense 'sensorially and sensibly' of colonial matters; nonetheless, P. remains sensitive to literature's historical role in colonial oppression, and the persistence of colonialist and exoticizing tropes in literature of today. Texts discussed relevant to this section include: J. M. G. Le Clézio's *Révolutions* (2003), in a chapter that draws on ecocriticism to discuss landscapes, colonial land cultivation, and postcolonial collective memory; Works by Le Clézio, Marie Darrieussecq, Laurent Gaudé, Stéphane Audeguy, and Marie NDiaye, in a chapter dedicated to interpretations of colonial encounters and their effects by French-born writers and to matters of empathy; and Régis Jauffret's *Microfictions* (2007), in a chapter dealing with the notion of unpayable colonial debts. Stephanie Posthumus, *French 'Écocritique': Reading Contemporary French Theory and Fiction Ecologically*, Toronto U.P., 2017, 264 pp., is one of a number of relevant publications with an ecocritical focus seeking to extend the field beyond the dominance of English-language literary works. P. puts into conversation and often conflict French theory/fiction and existing (predominantly Anglo-American) work in ecocriticism; this is done with impressive carefulness, avoiding a narrow or reductive conception of either side. If, on the one hand, the book demonstrates the usefulness of ecocritical thinking in reading French texts, P.'s deeper interest seems to move in the other direction: arguing for ecocriticism's need to pay greater attention to cultural specificities, and the matter of how to negotiate between such specificities and urgent cross-cultural concerns. This care for the particular is evinced too in the work's respective positioning of theory and fiction. Each chapter examines the works of one theorist and one literary writer to explore ecological ways of thinking about various notions (namely subjectivity, 'dwelling', politics, and 'ends'); but rather than using theory to read literature, P. highlights as much points of divergence as of contact – an endeavour much aided by her privileging of close reading. Throughout, P. picks out and disrupts tensions between ideas of nature/culture, human/animal/object, mind/body, material/immaterial, rural/urban, and privileges the relational roles of the senses, bodies, languages, and stories. The four chapters explore: Félix Guattari alongside Marie Darrieussecq's *Bref séjour chez les vivants* (2001) and *Le Pays* (2005); Michel Serres alongside Marie-Hélène Lafon's *Les Derniers Indiens* (2008), *L'Annonce* (2009), and *Le Pays* (2012); Bruno Latour alongside Jean-Christophe Rufin's *Globalia*

(2004) and *Le Parfum d'Adam* (2007); Jean-Marie Schaeffer alongside Michel Houellebecq's *Les Particules élémentaires* (1998) and *La Possibilité d'une île* – a diverse and provocative corpus, encompassing both works set largely in rural settings (Darrieussecq, Latour) and those explicitly critical of environmental politics (Rufin, Houellebecq). *French Ecocriticism: From the Early Modern Period to the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Daniel A. Finch-Race and Stephanie Posthumus, Frankfurt, Lang, 2017, 296 pp., includes three chapters relevant to this section: Jonathan Krell, 'Ecoerotica in Stéphane Audeguy's *La Théorie des nuages*' (175–193), which reads A.'s 2005 novel with comparisons to Michel Tournier, Lucretius, and Gustave Courbet, to discuss an erotic relation to nature based on analogies between the macrocosm of the world and the microcosm of the human body, and contrasted to a destructive human desire to master nature; Anaïs Boulard, 'Writing (on) Environmental Catastrophes: The End of the World in Éric Chevillard's *Sans l'orang-outan* and Michel Houellebecq's *La Possibilité d'une île*' (215–229), which reads these two novels as characteristic of French (post)apocalyptic fiction in contrast to their American analogues, from which she argues they are distinct owing to formal/stylistic features (narrative alternation/unreliability; parody; generic hybridity) and a greater investment in the literary possibilities of the genre rather than its environmental stakes; Hannes De Vriese, 'On the Meaning of Being Alone in Nature: Sylvain Tesson's Ecocritical Sincerity and Eco-poetical Sensuality in *Dans les forêts de Sibérie*' (231–249), which compares T.'s book to Henry David Thoreau's *Walden* to draw out the contradictory dynamics of transcendence and disillusionment, solitariness and commitment, and hedonistic exoticism and autonomy in the work. *EsC*, 57.1, 2017, 'French Ecocriticism', ed. Daniel A. Finch-Race and Julien Weber, contains two articles relevant to this section: Anne-Rachel Hermetet, 'Vincent, Joseph, Paul et les autres: voix et figures de paysans dans la fiction française contemporaine' (58–70), which examines novels by Lafon, Jean-Loup Trassard, and Stéphanie Chaillou that deal – without, H. argues, nostalgia or miserabilism – the contemporary condition of French *paysans*; Lucile Desblache, 'Bernard Werber's Poetics of Ecological Reconstruction: "In Praise of Amnesia"?' (71–82), which positions W. in the past and present of ecofiction in France, and focuses especially on the utopian possibility of encounters with nonhuman others suggested by his work.

The literary representation of contemporary work and workplaces has been another important object of study. *MCF*, 26.3, 'Work in Crisis', ed. Jeremy Lane and Sarah Waters, opens with an introduction to the history of post-Fordism and neoliberalism in France, and concomitant developments in technology, work practices, ideology, and mental health management. It contains three articles relevant to this section: Jackie Clarke, 'The *récit de filiation ouvrière* and the Unfinished Business of Fordism in Twenty-First-Century France' (261–273), which reads works by Aurélie Filipetti, Martine Sonnet, and Franck Magloire dealing with the closure of industrial workplaces, to problematize the narrative of the death of the working class and suggest instead ways in which such literary texts might figure a decline of social optimism, binding their historical narratives to contemporary concerns; Anne M. Mulhall, 'Bodies in Crisis in the French Literature of The Office: Lydie Salvayre's *La Vie commune* and Delphine de Vigan's *Les Heures souterraines*' (291–306), which finds in these two office novels forms of corporeal and affective excess that enact resistance to the demands of the neoliberal workplace, updating the 'Bartlebyan' model of the refusal to work for today's cognitive labour culture; Thierry Beinstingel, 'Écrire sur le travail: être dedans et dehors – œuvres emblématiques et histoires singulières' (323–333), which offers a historical panorama of French workplace fiction from Zola through 1930s proletarian literature to developments in the genre from the 1980s to today, focusing especially on the latter through a substantial number of representative examples. John Marks, 'Le roman d'entreprise: Breaking the Silence', *FrCS*, 28, 2017:371–386, meanwhile, begins by situating this post-2000 genre within a broader literary interest in work since the 1980s, as well as the general context of post-Fordism, financialization, and

globalization. M. then examines three novels (Pierre Mari's *Résolution* (2005), Nathalie Kuperman's *Nous étions des êtres vivants* (2010), Thierry Beinstingel's *Retour aux mots sauvages* (2010)) with reference to concepts of 'capitalist realism', 'organisational miasma', and 'virtuality'. Attention is paid especially to the ways in which these novels frame the relationship between language and affect. M. suggests (drawing on Gilles Deleuze) that these novels play a 'clinical' role in diagnosing this environment's new forms of alienation, and reconstructing their meaning.

*Balzac contemporain*, ed. Chantal Massol, Garnier, 248 pp., identifies and interrogates a revived interest in Balzac on the part of contemporary writers and filmmakers, and explores the diverse relations of affinity, haunting, appropriation, adaptation, reinvention, and *détournement* linking them to their 19<sup>th</sup>-c. forebear. The editor's extended introduction situates this revival within the context of a broader return of interest in matters of filiation, narrative, transmission, the real, and the social, and finds in it an index of the gap separating contemporary writers from those of the 1950s–1970s, some of whose clichés regarding B. writers today are here seen to deconstruct. As well as chapters on filmmakers and writers of other cultures, the volume contains five devoted to contemporary French writers: Joëlle Gleize on B. and Pierre Michon (35–48); Anne Roche on B. and François Bon (49–64); Christèle Couleau on B. and Michel Houellebecq (65–90); Hélène Baty-Delalande on B. and Jean Rouaud (91–105); Marion Mas on B. and Richard Millet (107–125). (This corpus contains a notable lack of women writers: see Maxime Goergen's article detailed in the Desportes subsection for a discussion of B. and D.)

Julia Holter, *Le Clair-obscur "extrême contemporain": Pierre Bergounioux, Pierre Michon, Patrick Modiano et Pascal Quignard*, Leiden, Brill, 2017, 198 pp., posits and mobilizes the concept of the 'clair-obscur' to interrogate these four writers' common endeavour to shed light on a reality and on personal or historical origins that resist such enlightenment. The central metaphor is of course borrowed from visual art, and H. makes frequent reference to art history and theory in developing it, as well as exploring these writers' own links to art and artists, and their use of imagery. The first three chapters deal with the thematic, aesthetic, and cognitive resonances of the *clair-obscur*, respectively, while the final chapter offers readings of a single work by each author: Quignard's *Les Solidarités mystérieuses* (2011), Michon's *Les Onze* (2009), Bergounioux's *Une Chambre en Hollande* (2009), and Modiano's *Dans le café de la jeunesse perdue* (2007).

*CFFS*, 21.1, 2017, 'France-Asia', ed. Roger Célestin et al., includes two articles relevant to this section: Ileana D. Chirila, 'Writing in a Cosmopolitan Age: Considerations of Ethnicity and Transculturalism in Sino-French Literature' (36–44), which considers the process of institutionalization of this literature in France, its authors' narrative focus on Chinese history, how their mother tongue leads them to a particularly harmonious melody in written French, and contrasts Sino-French and Beur literatures' different modes of destabilizing the French canon; Feng Lan, 'Rewriting the Individual in Revolutionary China' (45–52), which focuses on François Cheng's *Le Dit de Tianyi* (1998), examining how it offers a corrective to French representations of China that obscure the existence and agency of the Chinese subject, via a ternaristic approach to the entangled relation between the individual and the nation informed by Daoism and Confucianism.

*CFFS*, 22.1, 'Interrogating Scandal', ed. Natalie Edwards et al., contains the following articles relevant to this section: Natalie Edwards, 'Autofiction and the Law: Legal Scandals in Contemporary French Literature' (6–14), which interrogates the relationship between the law and life writing through the examples of two writers of autofiction, Camille Laurens and Christine Angot, tried for *atteinte à la vie privée*; Dawn M. Cornelio, 'Activism and Autofiction: Chloé Delaume's Response to the Patrick Le



Lay Affair' (15–22), which reads D.'s *J'habite dans la television* (2006) as a form of attention-attracting activism (compared to Morgan Spurlock's film *Super Size Me* (2004)), and as an example of D.'s autofiction that lives writing as much as it writes life; Eftihia Mihelakis and Ania Wroblewski, 'Questioning Accountability in Contemporary Writing: Marcela Iacub's Investigative Journalism and Its Backlash' (23–31), which interrogates notions of (legal and literary) credibility and accountability through a critique of I.'s *Une société de violeurs?* (2012) and *Belle et Bête* (2013) as well as Christine Angot's critical response to the latter, and finds both writers complicit in the silencing of Nafissatou Diallo, the woman who in 2011 accused Dominique Strauss-Kahn of rape; Katia Gottin, 'Lectrices et lecteurs scandalisés: *La Vie sexuelle de Catherine M.* de Catherine Millet devant nous' (32–39), which considers the paratextual scandal that surrounded the publication of M.'s 2001 work, and its consequences for the author-reader relationship and the act of reading; Leslie Barnes, 'Exposed: The Scandalous Story of Sex Work in Cambodia' (40–48), which focuses on matters of silence and voice in Somaly Mam's *Le Silence de l'innocence* (accused of fabricating stories of abduction and sex work), and its reception, to consider the appeal and limitations of testimonial narrative, and notions of narrative and evidentiary truth; Françoise Grauby, 'Posture et performance d'auteur: mises en scène de Houellebecq dans *La Carte et le territoire*' (76–84), which reads H.'s decadent literary posture as a canny incarnation of literary crisis; Karin Schwerdtner, 'Délivrance, danger et scandale chez Camille Laurens et Chantal Chawaf' (96–103), on the scandals surrounding the two writers' textual accounts of giving birth (*Philippe* (1995) and *Délivrance brisée* (2013)), and the dangers of literary and biological creation.

*CFFS*, 22.3, 'Unknowing the World: Between Sense and the Senses', ed. Roger Célestin, Eliane DalMolin and Oana Panaité, includes the following relevant articles: Jean-Louis Pautrot, "'Nolite Judicare": le sens de Jésus chez Pascal Quignard' (318–326), on the diverse references to and functions of Christian Scripture and the figure of Jesus in Q.'s work; Emmanuel Buzay, 'Le Golem: généalogie et postérité d'une figure paradigmatique du post-humanisme' (353–361), on reification, corporeal knowledge, and the relationship between humanity and writing, with reference to Pierre Assouline's 2016 roman d'anticipation *Golem*; Emmanuel Bouju, 'Pygmalion Balthasar Arcimboldo (sur l'écriture de l'histoire)' (371–379), on the relationship between literature and history, and the rejection of the figure of the witness in favour of a 'judicial paradigm' in the contemporary historical novel, with reference to Yannick Haenel's *Jan Karski* (2009) and Lola Lafon's *La Petite Communiste qui ne souriait pas* (2014); Alexandre Gefen, 'La Littérature est-elle morte au vingtième siècle?' (380–389), which argues for a broadened conception of what constitutes literature in light of contemporary writing practices and the return to transitivity.

*RCFFC*, 14, 2017, 'Époque épique', ed. Dominique Combe and Thomas Conrad, contains the following articles relevant to this section: Margaret E. Gray, 'Darrieusseccq's *Truismes*: A Feminist "Elle-iade de notre temps"' (4–12); Déborah Lévy-Bertherat, 'La petite fille épique chez Léonora Miano, Kim Thúy et Laura Alcoba' (13–23); Morgane Cadieu, 'L'Épopée ferroviaire: migrations et mémoire de la colonisation dans le récit contemporain' (49–60), on texts by, among others, Didier Daeninckx and Maylis de Kerangal; Thomas Bleton, 'L'Épique à la croisée des mondes' (61–69), on works by Charif Majdalani and Mathias Énard; Cécile Chatelet, "'Aussi défait qu'on peut l'être par une Victoire": métamorphoses de l'épique dans l'œuvre de Céline Minard' (70–81); Simon Bréan, 'Le travail épique de la science-fiction: les histoires du futur de Laurent Genefort' (82–94); Isabelle Périer, 'Lorsque meurent les souverains: contours de l'épicisme de Laurent Gaudé dans *La mort du roi Tsongor et Pour seul cortège*' (95–105); Élodie Coutier, 'Un mémorial romanesque pour l'épopée: fonctions de la référence homérique dans *Zone* de Mathias Énard' (106–115); Isabelle Rabadi, '*Sic transit*: un cycle épique de Patrick Deville' (116–123); Corentin Lahouste, 'Une épopée sensible: *Cercle* de Yannick

Haenel' (124–139); Chiara Nifosi, 'Ponctuer le texte de sa présence: lyrisme et épopée dans la prose romanesque de Maylis de Kerangal' (140–150); Pierre Vinclair, 'Le cycle des Hélène' (151–163), on Emmanuel Carrère. The issue also includes an interview with Éric Vuillard.

*RCFFC*, 15, 2017, 'Le Best-Seller', ed. Michel Murat, Marie-Ève Thérenty and Adeline Wrona, contains the following articles pertaining particularly to contemporary French literature: Lyette Lacôte-Gabrysiak, '1984–2016: 32 ans de best-sellers en France' (18–39); Amélie Chambers, 'L'Été est-il la "saison des best-sellers"?' (40–54); Sylvie Ducas 'Prix littéraires, du meilleur livre aux meilleures ventes: mutations prescriptives d'une usine à best-sellers' (55–66); Cécile Rabot, 'Des best-sellers en tête de gondole des bibliothèques? Valeur littéraire et stratégie professionnelle' (67–78); Olivier Bessard-Banquy, 'Du best-seller aujourd'hui' (79–86); Alexandre Gefen, "'On ne sait jamais rien du sort d'un livre": théorie et pratique des best-sellers' (87–98); Pierre-Carl Langlais, 'Les algorithmes rêvent-ils de best-sellers? Essai de cartographie poétique automatisée de romans francophones à succès' (99–117); Oriane Deseilligny, 'Reformuler les processus éditoriaux, déplacer l'imaginaire du best-seller? Formes, conditions et mythologies du succès en contexte numérique' (118–129); Marine Siguier, 'Littérature populaire et sociabilités numériques: le best-seller sur YouTube' (130–142); Jérôme Meizoz, 'Paroles de vendeur: Joël Dicker' (157–174).

*RCFFC*, 17, 'Enfances', ed. Déborah Lévy-Bertherat and Mathilde Lévêque, contains the following articles relevant to this section: Alexandre Seurat, 'Entendre la voix de l'enfant: à propos d'un moment ferenczien de la littérature française (Quignard, Sarraute, Bergounioux)' (5–16); Marie-Odile Ogier-Fares, 'L'enfant comme voix de la terre et de la beauté, ou la figure énonciative de la réconciliation dans *Petit Pays* et *En attendant Bojangles*' (17–25), on works by Gaël Faye and Olivier Bourdeaut; Bérengère Moricheau-Airaud, 'La Représentation des discours de l'enfance dans les textes d'Annie Ernaux' (26–35); Éléonore Hamaide-Jager, 'Fillette et communiste, une fiction à triple fond' (46–56), on texts by Lola Lafon and Elitza Gueorguieva; Christiane Connan-Pintado, 'L'Enfance dans l'œuvre Romanesque de Marie NDiaye' (57–65); Florence Gaiotti, '*Blue Book* et *Eben ou les yeux de la nuit*: un double dispositif d'Elise Fontenaille-N'Diaye pour dire les traumatismes de l'Histoire' (66–75); Michel Bertrand, 'La Scène traumatique: fermeture de l'enfance, ouverture du récit d'enfance dans *La Honte* d'Annie Ernaux et *Le cri du sablier* de Chloé Delaume' (76–86). It also includes texts by writers Antoine Wauters and Anne Larue.

Phoebe Weston-Evans and Colin Nettelbeck, 'Changing Perspectives: France's Post-War Laureates and the Nobel Prize for Literature', *FrCS*, 28, 2017:399–414, analyses the presentation and acceptance speeches for/of post-1945 French Nobel laureates, with a focus on what they reveal about literature's evolving relations to notions of national, international, and transnational belonging. Contemporary laureates J. M. G. Le Clézio and Patrick Modiano are grouped with Claude Simon as writers who, in a postcolonial context, shift away from a self-confident sense of national and literary identity towards various more nuanced and ambiguous positionings.

## [H2]2. The Novel

Michèle A. Schaal, *Une troisième vague féministe et littéraire: les femmes de lettres de la nouvelle génération*, Leiden, Brill, 2017, 344 pp., demonstrates the links between French women writers that appeared on the literary scene in the 1990s and the themes and concerns of third-wave feminism. Reading Marie Darrieussecq's *Truismes* (1996), Virginie Despentes's *Les Jolies Choses* (1998), Claire Legendre's *Viande* (1999), and Nina Bouraoui's *Garçon manqué* (2000), S. shows, as Gill Rye puts it in her foreword, 'les multiples manières dont ces écrivaines reflètent les pensées féministes', and how

‘elles se révèlent à la fois en rupture et en continuité des theories féministes qui les précèdent’ (xi–xii). The work impresses in its sensitivity to the sociohistorical context of French third-wave feminism, its connections to and differences from its anglophone analogues, the critiques and challenges it has faced, and its own critiques of preceding generations – critiques, on both sides, that S. does not shy away from herself challenging. There is a great amount of historical and citational detail here, as is evident from its exhaustive (sometimes exhausting) footnotes. This detail is interwoven with theoretical approaches to gender and close literary analysis; the key concerns identified in her chosen novels (identity, performance, hybridity) are indeed explored both as gender-theoretical and aesthetic matters. S. concludes with a discussion of more recent developments in French feminism and writing by women (developments she argues constitute a fourth wave), and the ways in which these too are in continuity and rupture with preceding generations.

Warren Motte, *French Fiction Today*, Victoria TX, Dalkey Archive Press, 2017, 272 pp., offers lively and engaging readings of a number of contemporary writers. M. returns to the notion of the contemporary ‘critical novel’ explored in previous work, to characterize his primary texts as works that encourage at once immersion and critical engagement, not least with the question of what the novel is and might be. The brief introduction does this with a lightness of touch that leaves space for the works’ diversity, fully embraced and demonstrated in the chapters that follow. These discuss, respectively: opacity, alterity, and undecidability in Marie NDiaye’s *Autoportrait en vert* (2005); unpredictability, digression, and instability in Jean Rolin’s *L’Explosion de la durité* (2007); principles of narrative authority and collaboration in Christine Montalbetti’s fiction; ideas of crossing, alternation, and uncertainty in Antoine Volodine’s *Songes de Mevlido* (2007); imprecision, disaster, and the relation between words and images in Marie Cosnay’s *Villa Chagrin* (2006); history, innovation, and resistance in Patrick Deville’s *Kampuchéa* (2011); ceremony, (im)mobility and mourning in Gérard Gavarry’s *Allada* (1993); the poetics of voice and oppositional force of Lydie Salvayre’s writing; eventfulness, anticlimax, and metacommentary in Tanguy Viel’s *La Disparition de Jim Sullivan* (2013); and a comparison between Pierre Bayard’s literary critical work and aspects of the ‘critical novel’, through notions of incompleteness, the mutual permeability of reality and fiction, and the drama of interpretation.

Frédéric Martin-Achard, *Voix intimes, voix sociales: usages du monologue romanesque aujourd’hui*, Garnier, 2017, 465 pp., gives a compelling account of the reemergence and reinvention of the interior monologue in the contemporary period, and the ways in which this formal shift connects to social concerns. M.-A. argues the principal originality of the monologue in the contemporary novel lies in the social categories to which its protagonists belong (*dominés, délinquants, déclassés*), subjects to which the contemporary novel ambitions to give voice. M.-A. offers a keen analysis of the tension between this intimate form and its social scope; he further argues that a new mentalism and interest in the cerebral processes at work in perception typifies the contemporary novelistic monologue. His primary authors are François Bon, Laurent Mauvignier, and Jacques Serena, and he privileges those works which are composed entirely of the interior monologues of a single or several characters (a form he sees as characteristic of the contemporary period, in its effacement of any form of narratorial authority or overview); his interdisciplinary methodology is rooted in narrative theory but also work in the philosophy of mind, hermeneutics, and the social sciences. The first part of the book gives a thorough overview of the interior monologue’s fortune and developments between 1880 and 2010; the second focuses on M.-A.’s analysis of the social dimension of the contemporary interior monologue; the third, drawing extensively on Paul Ricœur, examines the kinds of subjectivity on display in his chosen works, which he reads as ‘fictions de la perte d’identité’.

Overall, the book offers an innovative analysis of the interweaving of formal matters and social and ethical questions in the contemporary period.

Hannah Thompson, *Reviewing Blindness in French Fiction, 1789–2013*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2017, 199 pp., offers a thought-provoking analysis of fictional representations of blindness. T. foregrounds works that challenge myths or (borrowing David Bolt's term) 'metanarratives of blindness', and celebrate the creative potential afforded by visual impairment; at the same time, she remains throughout scrupulously attentive to the sometimes double-edged implications of her chosen texts. Methodologically, T.'s focus is on close reading, and her careful readings attend to a number of texts relevant to this section. Didier van Cauwelaert's *Jules* (2015) is found to explore the complicated relationship between blindness, gender, and sexuality, the ambivalence of blind subjects to notions of 'curing' their disability, and the ways in which blindness might afford a critique of superficiality in postmodernity. A chapter on contemporary *romans noirs* highlights the emphasis on seeing and sight typical of crime fiction, before reading Fred Vargas's *L'Homme aux cercles bleus* (1996) and Brigitte Aubert's *La Mort des bois* (1996) and *La Mort des neiges* (2000) as works that destabilize this emphasis, foreground the fallibility of sight, and challenge characters' and readers' preconceptions about blind subjects and 'ocularcentric' language habits. Romain Villet's *Look* (2014) is discussed in several chapters, as a work that reveals what can be gained by decentring the visual, decouples eroticism and sight to emphasize the multisensorial pleasure enabled by blindness, and demonstrates the culturally constructed nature of our conceptions of disability. The book thus offers an important contribution both in bringing the perspective of critical disability studies to bear on French culture, and in offering readings of mostly neglected texts.

*Engagement in Twenty-First Century French and Francophone Culture: Countering Crises*, ed. Helena Chadderton and Angela Kimyongür, Cardiff, Univ. of Wales Press, 2017, 272 pp., interrogates the valence of *engagement* in contemporary French-language cultural production, and the ways in which cultural works have responded to various contemporary crises. The editors' introduction provides a useful panorama of debates surrounding literary *engagement* from Zola through Sartre to the aftermath of 1968 and the *retour au récit*, with useful reference to Jacques Rancière and Dominique Rabaté to think about the contemporary context. The volume's scope is by no means limited to literature, encompassing also popular music, small-press nonfiction publishing, television, political cartoons, photography, and philosophy. It contains four pieces relevant to this section: Helena Chadderton (13–27) on Thierry Beinstingel and François Bon's *fiction d'affaires*, which she argues overcome a distinction between *engagement* of content and form through their interrogation of the language of neoliberal work practices; Angela Kimyongür (107–125) on the social critique of contemporary French crime writing, and in particular Dominique Manotti's use of the crime novel form to expose corruption; Andrea Hynynen (129–151) on another crime writer, Dominique Sylvain, and her comic use of the genre to promote multiculturalism and globalization in reaction to divisive post-9/11 rhetoric; Clive Hunter (152–170) on Michel Houellebecq, who he argues depicts the contemporary crisis of masculinity in such a way that dominant masculinity is recentred by way of its strategic decentring.

*RoS*, 36.1–2, 'Banlieue Narratives: Voicing the French Urban Periphery', ed. Christina Horvath, contains the following relevant articles: Isabelle Galichon, 'Pour une approche "décoloniale" des récits de banlieue' (5–17), which explores matters of memory and hybridity with reference to works by Azouz Begag, Abd Al Malik, Rachid Djaidani, and Faïza Guène, as well as theories borrowed from Édouard Glissant, Michel Foucault, South American decolonial thought, and Québécois studies of migrant poetics; Séverine Rebourcet, 'La postcolonialité de la littérature urbaine: vers une

francophonie de l'intérieur?' (18–31), which proposes the notion of *francophonie de l'intérieur* to explore *banlieue* narratives and trouble distinctions between francophone literature, as well as highlight aesthetic continuities (realism, social criticism) in francophone writing within and outside metropolitan France; Bettina Ghio, 'Rap et récits "banlieusards": enjeux de la représentation fictionnelle des espaces urbains périphériques' (32–45), which offers a comparative analysis of the representation of suburban housing estates in *banlieue* literature and rap; Christina Horvath, 'Conceptualizing Peripheral Urban Literature in France and Brazil' (46–62), which compares and contrasts Brazilian *favela* writing to its French equivalent, highlighting the many aesthetic continuities between the two, but also the different pressures and responses to those pressures faced by each; Rebecca Blanchard, 'Carceral States in Kaoutar Harchi's *Zone cinglée*' (63–75), which reads H.'s novel with reference to Giorgio Agamben's conception of the 'state of exception', and as part of a development in *banlieue* narrative away from first-person, semi-autobiographical writing towards genres such as dystopian fiction and the *roman d'anticipation*. Christina Horvath, 'Riots or Revolts? The Legacy of the 2005 Uprising in French Banlieue Narratives', *MCF*, 26:193–206, compares and contrasts depictions of the uprisings in novels by Mabrouch Rachedi, Wilfried N'Sondé, and Rachid Santaki to interpretations by social scientists and the media. She finds the novels confirm much scholarly analysis, while challenging public discourse that paints the rioters as troublemakers, instead finding in the upheavals collective demands for justice, equality, and social mobility.

Sura Qadiri, 'Policing Postsecular Paris: Karim Miské's *Arab Jazz* and Sabri Louatah's *Les Sauvages I-IV*', *Essays in French Literature and Culture*, 55:83–97, reads the two texts with reference to work on the history of detective fiction, as a genre that reflects and inflects perceptions of intercultural encounters. Q. suggests the multicultural detective teams in both works suggest the possibility for social cohesion in diverse contemporary France, but that while in M.'s novel this cohesion is figured in secular terms (in which religion is endorsed as an aesthetic, rather than spiritual, practice), L.'s is 'postsecular', basing cohesion on a spirit of religious compromise.

William Cloonan, 'Not My Brother's Keeper: The Novel in 2016', *FR*, 91.1, 2017:13–29, reviews 2016's novelistic output, noting a preoccupation with violence and distrust in French writing, which C. relates to recent political and social events and trends. William Cloonan, 'Prizing French Literature: The Novel in 2017', *FR*, 92.1:13–28, surveys the novels of 2017, alongside a discussion of the *Prix Wepler Fondation de la Poste*.

Gary D. Mole, 'La Seconde Guerre mondiale et le roman français contemporain', *Essays in French Literature and Culture*, 55:151–167, discusses developments in contemporary French historiography, and surveys French novelistic engagements with WWII since 2000, before focusing on Laurent Binet's *HHhH* (2009), Fabrice Humbert's *L'Origine de la violence* (2009), et Dominique Jamet's *Un traître* (2008). M. highlights the narrative strategies each work employs to deal with the ambiguities and paradoxes of history.

Morgane Cadieu, 'Stratification of the Urban Space in Contemporary Paris: Modiano, Vasset, and the Data Centers of Memory', *CFFS*, 21, 2017:133–141, compares the works of the two writers by focusing on their shared interest in transpersonal memory, the topography of Paris, and the relationship between technology and the imagination. C. suggests that where M. approaches digital technology as a means of updating the palimpsest as a metaphor for memory, V. is more interested in the literal, material ways in which this technology functions as a palimpsest.

Thierry Durand, 'Faillite transcendantale chez Philippe Claudel et Philippe Raymond-Thimonga', *FR*,

91.1, 2017:147–158, offers a reading of R.-T.'s *Ressemblances* (1997) and C.'s *L'Enquête* (2010), two novels that in different ways stage a God that, D. explains, appears not dead but rather decommissioned. D. discusses the question of spiritual anxiety in these texts through notions of agony, night/light, and originary contingency/meaninglessness.

Brian Sudlow, 'Infant Voices: Embryonic and Neonatal Personhood in Two Recent French Catholic Novels', *LTh*, 31, 2017:47–63, reads Claire Daudin's *Le Sourire* (2010) and Antoine Beauquier's *Pavillon 7: la révolte des embryons* (2009), centred on a disabled newborn and embryonic protagonists, respectively. Situating the works in relation to theological debates about the ethics of abortion and stem cell research as well as to French Catholic literary predecessors, S. examines how through personification these works differently attribute voice and agency to their protagonists, via a theological imagination that associates individual human dignity with its divine origins.

### [H2]3. Life Writing and Literary Nonfiction

Michèle Bacholle, *Récits contemporains d'endeuillés après suicide: les cas Fottorino, Vigan, Grimbert, Rahmani, Charneux et Delaume*, Leiden, Brill, 284 pp., examines autobiographical narrative accounts of mourning following the death by suicide of a family member. If grief has long been an important area of focus for contemporary French literary studies, this is the first work to explore the particularly complex forms mourning takes in these cases, and the complex texts these can engender. B. tackles this difficult subject with tact and rigour, carefully considering the affects involved (anger, shame, guilt), and the role narration might play in what she calls the bereaved's psychic 'restructuration'. With reference to psychologist Michel Hanus, B. demonstrates how the form mourning takes depends on the specific nature of the relationship that existed between the bereaved and the departed, a relationship inflected by both family circumstances/secrets and historical events. The first two sections of the book pick up, through single-author chapters, the roles played by filiation and history respectively: in the first, B. focuses on the work of Éric Fottorino and Delphine de Vigan's *Rien ne s'oppose à la nuit* (2011); in the second, she shows how mourning a loved one lost to suicide might become tangled into the weight of history, be it that of WWII and the Holocaust (Philippe Grimbert, *Un secret* (2004)), or the Algerian War and the massacres of Harkis (Zahia Rahmani, *Moze* (2003)). The final chapter interrogates the extra complexities involved when the bereaved are children, reading Olivier Charneux's *L'Enfant de la pluie* (1999) and the work of Chloé Delaume. The book also contains a bibliography of relevant contemporary texts, several of which are discussed in some detail in the introduction (works by Jacques Roubaud, François Bon, Danièle Rousselier, Noëlle Châtelet, and Édouard Levé).

Joshua Armstrong, 'Annie Ernaux and Sophie Calle: Agency and the Ambient Language of Everyday Life', *FR*, 90.4, 2017:132–144, deals with matters of alienation and agency in urban environments. Reading E.'s *Regarde les lumières mon amour* (2014) and C.'s *Où et quand: Lourdes* (2009), A. examines the ways in which the two writers/artists reproduce, translate, and typographically redistribute ambient language (signs, conversations, graffiti, etc.) as a means of exposing and resisting coercion in everyday life.

Jean Anderson, 'Women's Stories from *Le mouvoir*: Recent French Depictions of the End-of-Life Stage in Retirement Homes', *JRS*, 17, 2017:345–360, surveys a number of contemporary (auto)biographical and (auto)fictional, as well as sociological and psychological, works dealing with life in retirement homes; her discussion focuses on matters of exclusion and forgetting, the feminization of *maisons de retraite*, and intergenerational communication.

Éric Trudel, 'Passions du réel (sur Philippe Vasset, Olivia Rosenthal et Thomas Clerc)', *AJFS*, 54, 2017:113–128, explores V.'s *Un Livre blanc* (2007) and, at lesser length, R.'s *Viande froide* (2007) and C.'s *Paris, musée du XXIe siècle* (2008). T. discusses their diverse formal strategies for documenting urban spaces and for giving shape to what he describes as a precarious real that resists representation.

#### [H2]4. Poetry

Nathalie Wourm, *Poètes français du 21e siècle: entretiens*, Leiden, Brill, 2017, 149 pp., is an invaluable resource for those working on contemporary experimental poetry. It comprises interviews with 14 contemporary poets and two publishers: Anne-James Chaton, Anne Portugal, Olivier Cadiot, Pierre Alferi, Éric Sadin, Jean-Michel Espitallier, Christophe Hanna, Nathalie Quintane, Christian Prigent, Charles Pennequin, Vannina Maestri, Jacques Sivan, Jérôme Game, Jean-Marie Gleize, Paul Otchakovsky-Laurens, and Laurent Cauwet. W. explores in her introduction the same question with which she leads each interview, whether (and if so, how) such contemporary poets might be conceived as constituting a movement. Other recurring concerns in the interviews include the influence of Derrida, Deleuze, and Guattari on contemporary poetics; the poets' relationship to notions of the avant-garde and the experimental; the political dimensions of their work; the recent history of literary *revues* in France, and the influence of Alferi and Cadiot's 'La Mécanique lyrique'; the relationship between print and performance, poetry and prose, and texts and other media; and the poets' literary and philosophical influences.

Michael Sheringham, *Perpetual Motion: Studies in French Poetry from Surrealism to the Present*, Cambridge, Legenda, 2017, 398 pp., collects texts from across S.'s career on French poetry and poetic thought, and manifests throughout the critic's immense talent, tact, enthusiasm, and flair. Five pieces are particularly relevant to this section. 'Baudelaire, Bonnefoy, Jeanne Duval: Poetry and Ethical Lucidity' (143–156) examines Bonnefoy's writings on Baudelaire – essays as well as poems 'Le Tombeau de Charles Baudelaire' (2008) and 'L'Heure présente' (2011) – for the reflections they offer on the latter's relationship to his lover Jeanne Duval, the place and practice of 'ethical lucidity' in poetry, and allegory as a vehicle for existential concerns. The book closes with four pieces on Pierre Alferi: 'Survival and Resurgence of the Avant-Garde, or the Influence of Pierre Alferi on André Breton' (314–330), which, thinking through the continuities, dynamic interconnections, and family resemblances between the avant-gardes, modernism, and postmodernism, presents a reasoned refusal of historicism through an extraordinary comparative reading of A.'s 'Allegria' (1997) and B.'s 'Nœud des miroirs' (1932); 'Pierre Alferi, "Une défense de la poésie"' (331–340), which offers a meticulous commentary on A.'s 1997 poem, to display its effects of flux and defamiliarization and the ways in which A.'s poetry spurs perceptual processes proffering new encounters with the real; 'Pierre Alferi and Jakob von Uexküll: Experience and Experiment in *Le Chemin familial du poisson combattif*' (341–363), a masterly close analysis of A.'s 1997 collection which illuminates how the poet intertextually engages with the biologist's work to explore the spatiality and temporality of perception, the ontology of vision, and the relationship between mind and world; 'Pierre Alferi and the Poetics of the Dissolve: Film and Visual Media in *Sentimentale Journée*' (364–375), on the coagulation and dissolution of meaning, 'dissolved subjectivity', and A.'s engagement with cinema and other audiovisual technologies in his 1997 collection.

*EsC*, 58.3, 'Poetry's Forms and Transformations', ed. Nina Parish and Emma Wagstaff, interrogates contemporary French poetry's engagements with other media and disciplines. In addition to an

excellent introduction to the subject, the issue contains the following articles: Geneviève Guétemme, 'Jacques Jouet: poésie et monotype' (12–27), which reads J. and artist Tito Honnegger's 2012 *Montagneux* (2012), with a focus on matters of perception and embodiment; Luigi Magno, 'Denis Roche ou de l'écriture "comme activité torsatoire"' (28–37), on R.'s mobile definitions of his literary practice, the significance of photography therein, and the logic of formal repetition and torsion in his work; Anne-Christine Royère and Gaëlle Théval, 'Le Texte, le son, l'action, dans les "litanies du banal" d'Anne-James Chaton' (58–70), on the relationship between text, technology, and music in the poet's collaborations with musicians Andy Moor and Alva Noto, and matters of voice, gesture, and disjuncture; Eric Lynch, 'Mediums of Intermedia: Spiritism and Poetic Form in Suzanne Doppelt, Sandra Moussempès, and Nathalie Quintane' (71–85), on the role of spiritism in the three poets' intermedial experiments, and its usage as a means of figuring the spectral presence of other media in poetry; Jeff Barda, 'Forensic Poetics: Legal Documents Transformed into Strange Poems' (86–102), on ethical, political, and formal aspects of Frank Smith and Franck Leibovici's poetic 'republication' of legal documents; Nathalie Wourm, 'Architects and Poets: Vannina Maestri, Nathalie Quintane, Jean-Michel Espitallier, and the Poetry of Buildings' (103–113), on these three poets' engagements with architecture and architects, and interdisciplinarity in contemporary poetry, discussed through the Deleuzian concept of deterritorialization; Abigail Lang, 'La Réception française des objectivistes: politique de la traduction' (114–130), which examines the shifting interpretations of the American Objectivists by successive generations of French poets, and the role of translation in shaping reception. The volume also contains interviews with poets Sandra Moussempès and Jérôme Game, and an essay by Alessandro De Francesco on his own poetic theory and practice.

*IrJFS*, 18, 'Présences du poème aujourd'hui', ed. Michael Brophy, explores the diverse ways contemporary poets approach, evoke and render presence in their work. It contains a large number of reflections on the subject by poets themselves (Michel Deguy, Jean-Claude Pinson, Jean-Paul Michel, Philippe Delaveau, Jean-Michel Maulpoix, Marie-Claire Bancquart, Lousie Dupré, Philippe Beck, Hervé Carn, Jacques Jouet, Jacques Réda), in the form of essays, notes, and diary extracts, as well as a piece by Philippe Forest on his relationship *qua prosateur* to poetry's presence. It also includes the following relevant articles: Michael Bishop, 'Improbables présences: Yves Bonnefoy, Tahar Ben Jelloun, Vénus Khoury-Ghata' (75–92), which brings together readings of these three poets around a sense of the improbability of our *presence-au-monde*, discussed through notions of consciousness, intuition, infinity, totality, and love; Béatrice Bonhomme, 'La Présence du poème de James Sacré' (93–108), which explores poetry as a force of presence in the world and to others, with reference to notions of intimacy, desire, memory, discretion, and obscenity; Évelyne Lloze, 'La Part d'humanité du poème aujourd'hui' (109–128), which also focuses on Sacré to discuss the ethical dimension of contemporary poetry as a mode of relating to others and the world, and, with reference to his work with poet and photographer Lorand Gaspar, the relationship between text and image; Catherine Mayaux, 'De la quête de soi à la présence du monde dans l'œuvre d'Henry Bauchau' (129–142), which tracks and examines the evolution of B.'s poetic work, from its early focus on the exploration and construction of the self to an openness towards the world and others; Emma Wagstaff and Nina Parish, 'Translating Contemporary French Poetry' (163–194), which reflects on the authors' experience of translating and anthologizing contemporary French poetry with reference to notions of inference and cognitive stylistics, and, focusing on Anne-James Chaton and Philippe Beck, how the translation process affects poetic systems both in the anglophone world and in France.

John C. Stout, 'The Year in Poetry 2016: Milestones', *FR*, 91.1, 2017:30–42, reviews the poetry of 2016, a year he suggests was marked by a series of milestones: the death of Yves Bonnefoy, and the publication of two of his works; major publications by major poets; and innovative experiments with



narrative and with hybrid textualities. John C. Stout, 'The Year in Poetry: Mapping Time and Space', *FR*, 92.1, 29–44, surveys poetry published in 2017, through the lens of historical and geographic cartographies.

Daisy Sainsbury, 'Refiguring Baudelaire's "poète chiffonnier" in Contemporary French Poetry', *FrCS*, 28, 2017:303–313, offers a wide-ranging discussion of the continued and evolved salience of Baudelaire's ragpicker poetics, with reference to Dominique Fourcade, Pierre Alferi, Valérie Rouzeau, Anne-James Chaton, Olivier Cadiot, and Jacques Roubaud; like Baudelaire, these poets are found to draw on trash as a resource for poetic innovation. In their work, bits of rubbish are said to feature not only as content, but as metaphors and models for poetic techniques and practices; S. examines at length what she calls a move to 'linguistic ragpicking', through collage and cut ups of 'ready-made' material, and the heteroglottic incorporation of various forms of 'trash language'.

Eric Robertson, 'Writing in Tongues: Multilingual Poetry and Self-Translation in France from Dada to the Present', *NFS*, 56, 2017:119–138, elegantly interweaves analysis of a number of multilingual literary projects from across the last century. Projects relevant to this section include Ryoko Sakiguchi's *Calque* (2001), a self-translation from Japanese here examined through notions of opacity, transparency, and translucency; Anne Portugal's *voyer en l'air* (2001) which, by fragmenting French words such that English words appear, R. suggests reveals the underlying strangeness of a familiar language; Caroline Bergvall's multilingual poetry, discussed here through ideas of interference, familiarity, and otherness; and Anne Tardos's work, which R. shows to move between clarity and sonic abstraction. R. concludes projects of this sort, while frustrating our need for clarity, might also sensitize us to the startling capacity of words.

Andrea Jonsson, 'Slam ô Féminin's Collective Relationship to Print, the Spoken Word, and Marginalia', *FR*, 90.3, 2017:100–114, discusses the poetic practice of marginalized writers/performers in an already marginalized form (slam poetry). Focusing on the work of women's association Slam ô Féminin, J. examines the ways in which they recentre the shared experience of marginality as the basis for collectivity. Discussing the relationship between orality and textuality in the association's performances, workshops, and 2009 print anthology, J. studies their reappropriation of the journalistic *fait divers* as a means of fostering collective affect, and inspects the ways in which they bring everyday experience to writing, and writing to everyday experience.

## [H2]5. Individual Authors

### [H4]Abécassis.

Adi S. Bharat, 'Next Year in Jerusalem? "La nouvelle judéophobie", neo-crypto-Judaism and the future of French Jews in Éliette Abécassis's *Alyah*', *FrCS*, 29:228–243, examines the representation of Jewish life in A.'s 2015 novel. Situating the novel in its sociohistorical context, B. focuses on matters concerning past and present Jewish-Muslim relations in France and North Africa, anti-Semitism and anti-Zionism, the Israel-Palestine conflict, terrorism, and plural identities. B. concludes that though A.'s novel points to the possibility of Jewish-Muslim solidarity, it ultimately reproduces a conflictual understanding of the relation between Jews and Muslims. Nancy Arenberg, 'Silence and Anguish: Muting the Feminine Voice in Éliette Abécassis's *La Répudiée*', *FrCS*, 29:244–253, focuses on the representation of the condition of Hasidic women in Jerusalem in A.'s 2000 novel. In particular, Arenberg discusses Hassidic women's oppression through the privileging of fertility and the imposition of silence, and draws out the latter's textual implications. Relatedly, she examines A.'s

recasting of the biblical Rachel as a figure of suffering and self-sacrifice.

[H4]Al Malik.

Séverine Rebourcet, 'Can Post-Religious France Exist? Abd Al Malik, Frenchness and Islam', *FrCS*, 28, 2017:28–41, explores matters of social exclusion, universalism, and national and religious identity in A.M.'s autobiography, novel, and essays. Situating his work in relation to the recent and not so recent history of religion in France, R. discusses M.'s alternative conception of *laïcité* as a form of inclusive secularism. Mary Poteau-Tralie and Cameron Cook, 'Palimpsest in the Rap Lyrics of Abd Al Malik: Rejuvenating the Study of Poetry', *FR*, 90.4, 2017:159–170, meanwhile, focuses more on formal aspects of A.M.'s poems and lyrics. P.-T. and C. suggest ways in which A.M.'s palimpsestic engagement with canonical intertextual references might prove germane for renewing interest in poetry in the classroom. The authors also discuss the *engagement* of A.M.'s work, as well as controversies surrounding his legitimation by French national institutions.

[H4]Angot.

Étienne Achille, 'Un regard blanc sur la France noire: le "facteur racial" dans *Les Petits* de Christine Angot', *DFS*, 112:87–97, is the first of a series of pieces by the author on literary representations of race in postcolonial France by white writers, based on the premise that while scholars have rightly privileged the perspectives of black writers in approaching the subject of race, a fuller understanding of the racial dynamics of French culture requires also interrogating the position of white authors. Achille's careful close reading of A.'s controversial 2011 work identifies a hesitation with regards to race: while the first half explicitly points to systemic racial discrimination, this directness falls away in the second half, allowing ambiguity and doubt to set in as to racism's role in the characters' lives. Achille ties his analysis into the resurgence of *engagement* in the contemporary period, asking what role race plays in shaping the forms of ethical responsibility writers accept.

[H4]Baron Supervielle.

Kate Averis, 'At Home Abroad: Transnational Ageing in Silvia Baron Supervielle', *JRS*, 17, 2017:327–343, explores the intersection of ageing, gender, and migration in Argentine-born B.S.'s nonfiction works, especially *La Ligne et l'ombre* (1999) and *Le Pays de l'écriture* (2002). With helpful reference to histories of migration and to gerontological scholarship, and comparisons with several other transnational writers and representations of transnational ageing, A. argues B.S.'s works challenge the association of migrant writing with arrival/adaptation, and of old age with stasis, nostalgia, and tradition, and that they present forms of postmonolingual identity and multidirectional belonging.

[H4]Beinstingel.

Étienne Achille, "'Entendez-vous dans nos campagnes": Écrivains blancs et France postcoloniale', *Francospères*, 7:15–28, begins by further developing methodological matters from the author's article on Angot (see above). A. then reads B.'s *Faux nègres* (2014) as work that extends postcolonial reflection into rural France, and examines the depiction of race, racism, and colonial history in the work. The article focuses in particular on the ways in which the novel points to the persistence of colonial ideology in the French collective imaginary, while at the same time situating rural racism in longer histories of invasion and migration in a way that relativizes the specificity of postcolonial racism. A. argues that while this tendency towards a longer view perspective on xenophobia might

reflect B.'s privilege as a white author not urgently implicated in postcolonial debates, his work might nonetheless prove useful to those debates in stimulating reflection on the relationship between postcolonial and other forms of racism.

[H4]Bonhomme.

Clémence O'Connor, 'Colour, Desire, and Destruction in Béatrice Bonhomme's *La Maison abandonnée*', *FS*, 71, 2017:374–387, discusses the phenomenological experience of colour in the poet's 2006 *livre d'artiste* (a collaboration with pastel artist Christine Charles). With reference to Ludwig Wittgenstein and Maurice Merleau-Ponty, O. gives a close reading of B.'s text that explores the roles of embodiment, the haptic, spatiality, desire, and transience in the experience of viewing colour.

[H4]Cadiot.

Dominic Glynn, 'The Shipwrecking of Literature: All at Sea with Olivier Cadiot', *JRS*, 17, 2017:37–51, presents C.'s literary project as a continuously reinventive engagement with previous works. Discussing contemporary notions of the decline of (French) literature, and drawing on C.'s six-part 'robinsonnade' cycle, G. frames C.'s literary heritage as a 'shipwreck', which provides resources for the author's (often humorous) use of intertextual methods to reinvest the past in the present.

[H4]Carrère.

Élise Huguény-Léger, 'Faire entrer le réel en collision avec le romanesque: l'art du montage dans *Retour à Kotelnich* et *Un Roman russe* d'Emmanuel Carrère', *AJFS*, 54:146–159, explores the real, the fictional, and the autofictional in the situation of postmemory through her analysis of C.'s 2003 film and 2007 novel. H.-L. charts the trajectory which led to the creation of the two works, before analysing C.'s formal choices. Here, she appeals to Sergei Eisenstein's conception of montage to demonstrate the ways in which C. juxtaposes and collides the real with the imaginary, and to make a forceful case for the role of the *romanesque* in writing history.

[H4]Cheng.

Véronique Brient, *François Cheng: entre l'orient et l'occident*, Champion, 374 pp., based on the first French doctoral thesis on C., offers a thorough overview and analysis of the writer's work. While refusing to reduce C. to a sum of his Eastern and Western influences, B. illuminates his work through her knowledge of the aesthetic, philosophical, and spiritual traditions of each. The work is divided into three sections, the first dealing with C.'s aesthetics, the second with his relation to philosophy and spiritual thought, and the third offering a detailed reading of his *œuvre*; the volume also includes a comprehensive bibliography of his writings. Throughout, B. emphasizes the principles of dialogue and openness to alterity embodied by the author's work, principles on which B. too founds her own literary-critical approach.

Rosalind Silvester, 'Lessons from East and West in François Cheng's *Le Dit de Tianyi*', *AJFS*, 54, 2017:202–217, explores matters of ethnic and cultural identity, cross-cultural learning, and cultural mediation in C.'s novel. Persuasively drawing on various theories associated with the educational sciences, as well as circular conceptions of learning in Chinese philosophy, S. also interrogates how

the narrative resists both Western conceptions of pedagogy and the application of theory to literature. Shuangyi Li, 'Transcultural Novels and Translating Cultures: François Cheng's *Le Dit de Tianyi* and *L'Éternité n'est pas de trop*', *FMLS*, 53, 2017:179–199, meanwhile, focuses on matters of cultural translation (as theorized by Homi Bhabha) in C.'s two novels. With meticulous attention to C.'s style, L. reads the two texts as offering distinct but complementary models of cultural translation: one based on principles of analogy and dialogue between Eastern and Western traditions, the other on principles of faithfulness and authenticity.

[H4]Chevillard.

*Critique*, 855–856, 'Éric Chevillard: angles d'attaque', ed. Raphaël Piguet and Philippe Roger, focuses broadly on the critical dimensions of C.'s work. It contains the following articles: Tiphaine Samoyault, 'La Blague de l'éléphant' (683–691), on matters of time, distance, empathy, humour, violence, and death in *L'Autofictif ultraconfidentiel: journal 2007–2017*, compared to Pierre Bergounioux's *Carnets*; Pierre Jourde, 'Chevillard en vaillant petit tailleur de costards' (692–703), on the consonance between C.'s work as a critic and as a novelist; Denis Saint-Amand, 'Démolir Jardin' (704–715), on imposture as a theme and object of critique in C.'s work; Gaspard Turin, 'La Valeur absolue: Chevillard et la mauvaise littérature' (716–731), on C.'s axiological principles for literary value and the matter of autonomy; Raphaël Piguet, 'Chevillard à fleur de peau' (732–746), on time, indeterminacy, allegory, falling, and the inanity of hope; Thangam Ravindranathan, 'L'Absent de tous troupeaux' (747–762), on ontology and the question and critique of the real in C.; Bruno Blanckeman, 'Trésor de flibustier' (763–777), on the figure of the author in *Juste Ciel* (2015) and *Ronce-Rose* (2017). The issue also includes an interview with C. by Piguet and Julien Zanetta, and essays on C. by publisher and critic Blanche Cerquiglini and writer Lydie Salvayre.

Raphaël Piguet, 'Les Projets du hérisson oreillard: l'écriture anti-référentielle d'Éric Chevillard', *FS*, 71, 2017:228–242, reads especially *Oreille Rouge* (2005) as well as *Démolir Nisard* (2006) and *L'Auteur et moi* (2012) to discuss the 'debauched' signifying economy of C.'s work. Inspecting the tensions between this economy and that of the literary market, P. discusses the strategies and use of irony through which C.'s refusal of referentiality proceeds.

[H4]Curioi.

Andrea Jonsson, 'Acousmatic, Atmospheric, in Transit: The Authority of Anonymous Women's Voices in Contemporary French Literature and Culture', *Essays in French Literature and Culture*, 55:27–43, engages with interdisciplinary voice studies and the history of anonymous women's voices in the SNCF, to read C.'s *Voix sans issue* (2005) as a text that problematizes the gendering of urban space. Thinking about voice as an acoustic, literary, and atmospheric phenomenon, J. argues the female voice in C.'s novel counters the visual focus of the male *flâneur*, and indicates the voice's potential for performing female anonymity.

[H4]Darrieussecq.

Simon Kemp, *Writing the Mind: Representing Consciousness from Proust to the Present*, New York, Routledge, 202 pp., contains one chapter on D., focused especially on *Bref séjour chez les vivants* (2001) but with reference to her other work, including an extended discussion of *Truismes* (1996). K. offers an elegant exploration of consciousness as it is represented in D.'s work, drawing deftly on psychoanalytic, cognitive and neuroscientific, neo-Darwinian, and folk-psychological conceptions of

the mind, and making effective comparisons with literary forebears. Neither psychoanalytic nor cognitive theory are 'applied' to D.'s texts; with an assured sensitivity to the points of contention between the two sides of the 'guerre des psys', K. instead demonstrates how both Freudian and more recent ideas are reflected in her work. Particular attention is paid to the way in which D.'s style renders the subjective experience of consciousness.

David Platten, 'Questions of Empathy and Understanding: Monsters in Modern French Fiction', *AJFS*, 55:184–201, also engages with cognitive research, here into the role of empathy in reading, as well as posthumanist theory. P.'s thesis is that monsters in fiction index the intermittent return of fundamental human questions. He discusses characters in D.'s *Truismes* as posthuman hybrids that challenge the limitations of human knowledge, and matters of language and interspecies relations in *Zoo* (2006).

[H4]Delaume.

Marie-Chantal Killeen, "'Tout vu, rien inventé": *Hiroshima mon amour* dans l'œuvre de Chloé Delaume', *FrF*, 42, 2017:265–279, examines the functions of D.'s variations on the phrase 'Tout vu, rien inventé', borrowed from Alain Resnais and Marguerite Duras's film. Through fine close readings that range across Delaume's oeuvre, K. shows the expression to be critically and creatively catalytic for D.'s work, as a prism for thinking through her autofictional poetics, her traumatic past, and, in *J'Habite dans la télévision* (2006), the sedative effects of the society of the spectacle.

[H4]Desbiolles.

Karin Schwerdtner, 'Écrire (à) vous: l'adresse au lecteur chez Maryline Desbiolles', *WIFS*, 26:158–168, inspects D.'s endeavour to establish a particular relation with her reader in *Vous* (2004), a relation of just the right distance for the reader to neither vanish nor be consumed, and for the reader to be coppersatively engaged in the text's production. This relation is cast as a form of epistolary 'correspondance', and S. also explores other forms of correspondence in the text that associate writing with sewing, speaking, tuning instruments, travelling, and walking.

[H4]Despentes.

The last couple of years have seen a spike in scholarly interest in D., no doubt at least in part owing to (and much of it dealing with) the *Vernon Subutex* trilogy (2015–2017). *RMR*, 72.1, 'Special Issue on Virginie Despentes', ed. Arline Cravens and Michèle A. Schaal, the first special issue to be devoted to D, opens with an introduction to the author, including a thorough overview of work by and on D. It comprises the following articles: Léonore Brassard, 'Les Damnées de Virginie Despentes' (36–58), which discusses violence and the political possibilities of the body and identity in *Baise-Moi* (1993) and *King Kong Théorie* (2006), through comparison with Frantz Fanon's decolonial thought; Mercédès Baillargeon, 'Zones de tension: (dé)construction et subversion des genres dans *Les Chiennes savantes* de Virginie Despentes' (59–76), on the social construction of gender and D.'s subversive use of irony in her 1996 novel; Michèle A. Schaal, '*Les Chiennes savantes* de Virginie Despentes ou l'hétéropatriarcat triomphant' (77–104), on gendered violence and the interiorization of patriarchal oppression, with reference to especially French materialist and Beauvoirian feminism; Colette Trout, '*Mordre au travers: un traité au féminin sur la violence*' (105–124), which examines violence and social inequality in D.'s 1999 short story collection through an intersectional lens; Nadia Louar, "'Deux cents mots et un gros marteau": Virginie Despentes's Skillful Construction of an

Authorial Posture' (125–145), which, reading *King King Théorie* as a *Künstlerroman*, examines D.'s authorial postures of authenticity, abjection, and transgression as strategies of legitimation; Leah E. Wilson, 'Collapsing Boundaries to Expose Censorship and Expand Feminism in Virginie Despentes's *Apocalypse Baby*' (146–164), on censorship and the troubling of generic, gendered, and sexual boundaries in her 2010 novel; Maxime Goergen, '*Vernon Subutex* et le roman "balzacien"' (165–182), which sets out to interpret what is meant by the common description of D.'s trilogy as 'Balzacian', and identifies the formal and thematic parallels and shared vision that link D. and B.; Colin Nettelbeck, 'The Novelist as DJ: *Vernon Subutex* and The Music of Our Times' (183–202), on the metaphorical and structural functions of music in especially the trilogy, as well as some earlier works.

Michèle A. Schaal, 'Whatever Became of 'Génération Mitterrand'? Virginie Despentes's *Vernon Subutex*', *FR*, 90.3, 2017:87–99, published prior to the publication of the trilogy's final instalment, reads the first two volumes as interrogating the impact of neoliberalism on personal identities, aspirations, and social experiences. With a focus on notions of precarity, social exclusion, individualism, and *déclassement social*, and attention to the style and form of D.'s work, S. discusses how a range of characters from different social classes have been affected by this socioeconomic shift, and the place and limits of agency under neoliberalism. Michèle A. Schaal, 'L'Univers affectif féminin dans *Vernon Subutex* de Virginie Despentes', *CFFS*, 22:475–483, meanwhile, focuses on the depiction of the affective life of women in the trilogy. Engaging with work in the history of emotion and affect theory, S. argues that D.'s work lays bare the persistence and interiorization of gendered norms, with women's affective lives in the novels being dominated by private concerns and romantic and sexual matters, and those who deviate being punished through gendered violence. She further suggests D.'s use of free indirect discourse to show this affective life constitutes a form of feminist consciousness raising.

Matt Phillips, 'Empathic Static: Empathy and Conflict, with Simon Baron-Cohen and Virginie Despentes', in *Parasites: Exploitation and Interference in French Thought and Culture*, ed. Matt Phillips and Tomas Weber, Oxford, Peter Lang, 229–251, puts pressure on understandings of empathy as a tool for conflict resolution and peaceful relations, as exemplified in the work of psychologist Baron-Cohen. P. suggests empathy might instead perpetuate and stake in conflict, and demonstrates the ways in which empathy might be both conflicted (torn in opposing directions) and conflictual (willing on conflict) through a first-person close reading of a chapter in the second volume of D.'s *Vernon Subutex*, a work itself praised by many on its publication for its 'empathetic' quality.

[H4]Dustan.

Joshua Rivas, 'The Prosthetic Pleasures of Guillaume Dustan', *Mosaic*, 50.4, 2017:33–49, offers an insightful and engaging reading of D.'s *Dans ma chambre* (1996). In sympathetic opposition to mainstream French HIV/AIDS and LGBT activists' view of Dustan as a nihilistic, irresponsible individualist, R. finds an alternative conception of wellbeing in D.'s text, one based on a capacious logic of prosthesis (explored with reference to Jacques Derrida and neuroscience) encompassing the self, others, their bodies, sex toys, pornography, drugs medicinal and recreational, and food, that is geared towards pleasure and survival. Gilles Jacinto, 'Autofiction littéraire, pornographie *queer* et culture *trash*: politique du corps et du sexe dans l'œuvre de Guillaume Dustan', *FrCS*, 28, 2017:282–290, also focuses especially on *Dans ma chambre*. In dialogue with queer and gender studies, J. argues that the "trashiness" of D.'s work, both in its unabashedly pornographic content and its transgressive relation to norms of literary style/form, is not just a matter of provocation, but rather

has a serious political function: namely, making visible marginal identities and constructing a pedagogical space beyond heteronormativity.

[H4]Énard.

Claudia Jünke, 'Trauma and Memory in Mathias Énard's *Zone*', *JRS*, 17, 2017:71–88, persuasively demonstrates how E.'s novel might shift the foci of contemporary scholarship on trauma. Focusing on issues of narrative temporalization and spatialization, and the perpetrator-narrator's strategies of displacement and dissociation, J. analyses the novel's interweaving of the individual and collective dimensions of trauma, and draws out its vision of the Mediterranean as a cultural-historical space dense with the dialectical forces of civilization and barbarism.

[H4]Ernaux.

Élise Huguény-Léger, 'État present: Annie Ernaux', *FS*, 2:256–269, an invaluable study for those working on E., offers a critical overview of developments in her writing and its academic and journalistic reception. Highlighting that literary-critical interest in E. began in the anglophone world, where scholars most often adopted feminist and/or sociological perspectives on her work, H.-L. finds French scholarly interest precipitating following the 2008 publication of *Les Années*, which began a process of consecration. H.-L. also traces the shifting thematic interests of academic work on E., towards matters of intertextuality, photography, memory, style, shame, transgression, political engagement, and religion. She lays out, too, the media's increasingly eulogistic treatment of E., while emphasizing its avoidance of certain 'uncomfortable' subjects – subjects E. herself does not skirt in her own texts and mediatic interventions, thereby maintaining, H.-L. argues, a relationship to the margins.

Cathy Jellenik, 'Annie Ernaux and *L'Autre Fille*: Chasing Absence', *WIFS*, 25, 2017:160–171, is one of two articles devoted to E.'s 2011 text written as a letter to her deceased sister. J. suggests the work elaborates a stylistics of writing nothing, through a narrative of negation focused on points of ignorance, inability, and inaction. She situates *L'Autre fille* within E.'s broader oeuvre in discussing its use of photographs and what E. herself calls 'transpersonal' pronouns, and argues that as well as reflecting features typical of E.'s work, the 2011 text clarifies how and why E. developed her characteristic aesthetic. Ruth Lipman, 'Seeking the Shadow Sister in Annie Ernaux's *L'Autre Fille*', *FR*, 90.3:50–62, meanwhile, explores the subjects of doubling and trauma, the latter discussed with reference to the work of Cathy Caruth and Marianne Hirsch. L. examines E.'s text as an attempt to integrate trauma, and argues that photographs and intertextual references (notably to *Jane Eyre*) here provide means for facilitating this narrative work of integration.

[H4]Falkner.

William Cloonan, *Frères Ennemis: The French in American Literature, Americans in French Literature*, Liverpool U.P., 320 pp., which interrogates the ways in which writers in France and the US have represented one another from the late 19th c. onwards, contains a chapter on contemporary literature and especially F.'s *Ça n'existe pas l'Amérique* (2010). F.'s work is read as reflecting a broader revival of interest in America amongst French writers, one that undoes existing clichés and assumes a less vehemently critical tone; F. in particular is seen to avoid generalizations and to focus

on the plurality of individual American lives.

[H4]Ferrari.

*Chutes, ruptures et philosophie: Les Romans de Jérôme Ferrari*, ed. Sarah Burnautzki and Cornelia Ruhe, Garnier, 268 pp., is the first book-length study devoted to F., and is based on a 2016 conference in Mannheim. Following a thorough introduction to F., the style and themes of his work, and their place in contemporary French literature more broadly, chapters include: Marine Miquel (19–34) on the narratology of catastrophe in F.'s œuvre; Mathilde Zbaeren (35–50) on 'the world' as a thematic feature and formal principle in his works; Claudia Jünke (51–62) on history, violence, and ethics; Lena Seauve (63–79) on *Où j'ai laissé mon âme* (2010) and readerly emotions in perpetrator fiction; Florence Lhote (81–95) on narrative amorality in the same text; Virginie Serrai (97–111) on Christianity, faith, and its decline in F.'s 2010 work; Marion Kühn (113–131) on violence and (pseudo-)dialogues with absent interlocutors; Timo Obergöker (133–147) on palimpsestic memory in *Le Sermon sur la chute de Rome* (2012); Daniela Kuschel (149–164) on the symbolic significance of bars in F.'s work; Sarah Burnautzki (165–181) on the narrative reinterpretation of Francis Ford Coppola's *Apocalypse Now* in *Un Dieu un animal* (2009); André-Alain Morello (183–195) on memory, transmission, and redemption in *Où j'ai laissé mon âme* and Alexis Jenni's *L'Art français de la guerre* (2011); Ursula Hennigfeld (197–214) on quantum mechanics and poetic language in works by F., Michel Houellebecq, and Jorge Volpi; Cornelia Ruhe (215–232) on the theme of the end of the world and of meaning systems in *Aleph zero* (2002) and *Le Principe* (2015). The volume closes with an interview with and unedited text by F.

[H4]Foenkinos.

Nathan Bracher, 'Ethics and Aesthetics of World War II Memory: The Case of David Foenkinos, *Charlotte*', *JES*, examines matters of memory, ethics, aesthetics, and the existential in F.'s 2014 novel. Situating the work within the broader popularity of WWII narratives in contemporary France, and with judicious reference to Nietzsche, Benjamin, and Todorov, B. interrogates the interpenetration of these various concerns in the text, and evenhandedly scrutinizes the ethics of F.'s projection of his own aesthetic and existential quest onto the life of German Jewish artist Charlotte Salomon, murdered at Auschwitz.

[H4]Forest.

*Philippe Forest: une vie à écrire*, ed. Aurélie Foglia et al., Gallimard, 344 pp., is the proceedings of an international conference dedicated to F. at Duke University in 2016. It contains a number of illuminating essays grouped into three sections on key themes/concerns of his work: the experience and poetics of mourning (Maïté Snauwaert, Alexandre Gefen, Sophie Jaussi, Michael Brophy), biography/autobiography/autofiction (Tiphaine Samoyault, Marie-José Latour, Jean-Claude Pinson, Héléne Baty-Delalande), and Japan (Dominique Rabaté, Fabien Arribert-Narce, Emmanuel Lozerand, Éric Marty). A fourth section deals with influences and intertextuality (Geneviève Henrot Sostero on F. and Proust, Olivier Belin on F. and Nobuyoshi Araki, Aude Leblond on F.'s intertextuality), while a fifth collects reflections by three of F.'s translators (Gabiella Bosco, Huang Hong, Nao Sawada) on their experience of translating his work and its reception in Italy, China, and Japan respectively. The volume concludes with an interview with the author.

[H4]Garréta.



Annabel L. Kim, *Unbecoming Language: Anti-Identitarian French Feminist Fictions*, Columbus, Ohio State U.P., discusses G. alongside Nathalie Sarraute and Monique Wittig. The three are read very much together, as constituting a literary tradition of anti-identitarian feminism, contrasted here to the better-known grouping of Hélène Cixous, Julia Kristeva, and Luce Irigaray. In so doing, K. deliberately eschews reading the three through the lens of the groups with which they are associated (i.e. Oulipo for G.), and likewise eschews post-structuralist and queer-theoretical analytic frameworks, fruitfully preferring to foreground what theorizing their fiction itself might do. Sarraute, Wittig, and Garréta are seen to refute any identity-based politics, and to use language in such a way as to forge an experience of subjectivity devoid of identitarian categorization. K. thereby makes a powerful case for literature as the space in which language might playfully dissolve difference, rather than entrenching it. The chapter devoted to G. reads first *Sphinx* (1986) as denaturalizing the language of sexual difference, but also more subtly constructing a 'Trojan horse' (a concept borrowed from W.) that problematizes racial difference; it then reads *La Décomposition* (1999) as a work that implicates the reader in its liquefaction of identity by way of an inconsistent and troubling usage of second-person pronouns. The final chapter sets out to formulate an antidifferentialist poetics, and includes readings of *Ciels liquides* (1990) and *Pas un jour* (2002) as works bearing a melancholy desire for language itself, conceived as an autonomous, nonhuman body. The reading of *Sphinx* was previously published as Annabel L. Kim, 'The Riddle of Racial Difference in Anne Garréta's *Sphinx*', *Diacritics*, 45.1, 2017:4–22.

Annabel L. Kim, 'Autofiction Infiltrated: Anne Garréta's *Pas un jour*', *PMLA*, 133:559–574, reads the novel as (again drawing on Wittig) a trojan horse smuggled into the genre of autofiction, so as to thwart the conception of subjecthood on which G. finds the genre to be based. Understanding autofiction as a form of writing anchored in notions of subjecthood and the unconscious and in an economy of readerly appropriative desires, K. argues that through argumentation, second-person narration, and other narrative strategies, G. turns her text and her readers against these to instead fully embrace the liberatory potential of fiction. Anna Kemp, 'Oulibertinage: Play and *Pudeur* in Anne Garréta's *Pas un jour*', *NFS*, 57, 33–48, meanwhile, offers a reading that emphasizes G.'s Oulipian games as a means of breaking with contemporary norms surrounding sex and seduction, and the gendered injunction for women writers to expose their sexual lives. K.'s excellent analysis of the text unpicks the dynamics of control in both eroticism and writing, and finds G. aligning intimacy and the erotic not with confession but with discretion, play, and potentiality. Her work is also deftly situated within a broader reaction against the commodification of intimacy and sexual confession, with particular reference to autofictional/autobiographical works by Marie Nimier, Sophie Fontanel, Nelly Arcan, Sophie Calle, and Chloé Delaume.

Chris Andrews, 'Intertextuality and Murder: Anne F. Garréta's *La Décomposition* and *A la recherche du temps perdu*', *AJFS*, 54, 2017:71–83, draws out the shifty, thoroughly unreliable nature of the novel's narrator, who repeatedly fails to live up to his claims to follow a strictly nonsubjective constraint to decide his murder victims. Against Gérard Genette and Tiphaine Samoyault, who have discussed Oulipian intertextuality as mechanistic and without memory, respectively, A. suggests G.'s manipulations and recompositions of Proust harbour a strong semantic intention, and that the novel serves as a parable of the risks of a desire for wholly disembodied thinking.

[H4] Houellebecq.

Agathe Novak-Lechevalier, *Houellebecq, l'art de la consolation*, Stock, 305 pp., makes a bold case for

reading H.'s œuvre not as *déprimiste*, cynical, or nihilistic, but as offering a form of consolation. The latter is discussed in dialogue with both Stoic and Christian conceptions, as well as Schopenhauer and contemporary philosopher Michaël Foessel. The Houellebecqian version of consolation described by N.-L. is one that does not downplay the world's misery, but details it fully in order to circumscribe it. N.-L. argues this act of circumscription is itself consolatory, as knowing and theorizing suffering and its causes affords some distance from it. Consolation is also connected here with the act of reading as a form of companionship between writer and reader, and with poetry: N.-L. makes a compelling case for the centrality of poetry even in H.'s novels, and describes his poetic vision as one that tends towards a quasi-mystical 'illimitation', suspending and surpassing contradiction and rationality. The (long) first chapter is dedicated to surveying Houellebecq's reception in France, and challenging many of the ideological and literary critiques made of his work. Succeeding chapters deal with: the concept of consolation and its history; H.'s vision of contemporary 'désolation'; consolation and knowledge; consolation and human presence; poetry and consolation (including an excellent reading of the endings of H.'s novels). Along the way, N.-L. offers illuminative discussion of the relations between emotion, critique, pathos, form, and humour in Houellebecq. The decision to emphasize consolation over some of the less consensual dimensions of H.'s writing does perhaps risk obscuring some of the specificity and interest of his work; while N.-L. downplays any connection between Houellebecqian consolation and the 'reparative turn' described by Alexandre Gefen, her reading might suggest more continuity between H. and other contemporary writers than is acknowledged. Nonetheless, original in both overall argument and individual insights, this work makes a refreshing contribution to scholarship on H.

*Michel Houellebecq*, ed. Agathe Novak-Lechevalier, L'Herne, 2017, 384 pp. + 8 pls., offers a diverse range of materials pertaining to the author and his work, together constituting what N.-L. in her introduction calls a 'portrait diffracté' (14). These materials include rare and unpublished texts by H., artistic depictions of the author, articles by and interviews with those personally and/or professionally close to the writer, contemporary reviews of his works, as well as contributions from other contemporary French writers (notably Thomas Clerc and Yasmine Réza). Individual sections are dedicated to the H.'s early, pre-fame life and work; his literary trajectory; his relations to other artistic media; and a series of articles by academics/literary scholars. The latter include Michel Bourdeau (343–348) on H.'s relation to Auguste Comte; Marc Atallah (349–353) on H. and science fiction; Bruno Viard (354–359) on H.'s politics; Martin Crowley (360–363) on H., idealism, irony, and failure; Raphael Baroni (364–368) on H. as a 'créature transmédiatique'; Christèle Couleau (369–372) on H., commonplaces, and human contact; and Alain Vaillant (373–378) on H., Baudelaire, sincerity, and the comic.

*Lectures croisées de l'œuvre de Michel Houellebecq*, ed. Antoine Jurga and Sabine van Wesemael, Garnier, 2017, 301 pp., comprises diverse approaches to the reception of H.'s works. Following an introduction which announces the editors' hope that studying his reception might allow us to 'mieux lire' Houellebecq and to 'réduire la défiance envers lui' (10), and a first chapter by J. on H.'s relationship to the 'classic' and the 'contemporary', topics discussed by individual chapters include: H.'s reception by readers, journalists, and academics worldwide (Canada, Argentina, Spain, Colombia, Mexico, Italy, Russia, Norway, USA); his appearance as a figure in, and influence on, other writers' works; pastiches of his writing and his place in dictionaries of citations; economist Bernard Maris's work on H; the influence of H.'s reception in shaping his own novels; H. and Huysmans; and a noteworthy discussion of nationalism and national identity in the debates surrounding *Soumission*. A number of articles have focussed on H.'s 2015 *Soumission*, and the tragic events and controversy that accompanied its publication. Murray Pratt, 'Michel Houellebecq's *Soumission*: Adventures in

Space, Time, Possibilities and French Studies', *AJFS*, 54, 2017:29–44, thoughtfully unpacks the text's vision of and place within the contemporary world. Elegantly weaving between attention to the novel's contents and to its contexts, P. draws on Michel Foucault's notion of heterotopia to sketch, defend, and perform a model for reading and for French Studies sensitive to the interlinking of literature and the social, of the individual and the (inter)national, and of the contemporary and its pasts and possible futures. Douglas Morrey, 'The Banality of Monstrosity: On Michel Houellebecq's *Soumission*', *AJFS*, 55:202–217, capaciously explores various aspects of the novel. The first part discusses the means through which H. makes his narrative credible, and includes an astute analysis of the writer's style, while the second examines the narrative's implications. Comparing the novel to previous works (around their treatment of women, irony, religion, and historical scale), M. discusses the work in terms of satire and the grotesque, identifies resonances between the narrator's views and other voices in contemporary France, and comments on the difficulty of attributing the narrator's views to the author. His analysis also encompasses what he calls 'hasty misreadings' of the novel, whose hastiness he links to precisely the consumer-culture short-termism he finds H. satirizing. Jean-Philippe Mathy, 'Le Terroir, l'Histoire, et la Vierge Noire: ce qui ne se passe pas (encore) dans *Soumission* de Michel Houellebecq', *CFFS*, 21, 2017:257–265, meanwhile, explores the novel's figuring of (cultural, gastronomic, literary, religious) heritage. Focusing especially on the lead protagonist's travels into provincial France, M. reads the novel's engagement with this heritage as the melancholic symptom of a supposed national/cultural loss.

[H4]Jablonka.

*French Politics, Culture & Society*, 36.3, 'Writing History and the Social Sciences with Ivan Jablonka', ed. Nathan Bracher, begins with an extended introduction that outlines J.'s theory and practice of writing, blending rigorous research with subjective investment and literary techniques. Relevant articles in the issue include: Sarah Fishman, 'Jablonka's History: Literature and the Search for Truth' (14–31), which draws on J.'s *L'Histoire est une littérature contemporaine* (2014) to discuss its relevance to contemporary America and its 'post-truth' concerns, and casts (with J.) history and the social sciences as a form of public service necessary for a properly functioning democracy; Melanie Hawthorne, 'Searching for What is Already Found: Ivan Jablonka and the Life of a Nobody' (61–75), which compares J.'s work to other (historical and literary) 'narratives of a nobody', and critically assesses narrative attempts to influence the present by considering the past through the lens of debates regarding the narrative construction of truth and causality; Donald Reid, 'To Bear Witness After the Era of the Witness: The Projects of Christophe Boltanski and Ivan Jablonka' (76–91), which reads J.'s *Histoire des grands-parents que je n'ai pas eus* (2012) alongside B.'s *La Cache* (2015), as texts that challenge cultural memory by exploring forgotten selves whose stories can illuminate our understanding of the societies to which they belonged; Nathan Bracher, 'Jablonka et la question du sujet en sciences sociales: le cas de *Laëtitia ou la fin des hommes*' (92–108), which discusses J.'s explicitly interventional approach to research and narration in his 2016 work as a response to debates about the status of the subject, and as one that promotes precision and transparency. The issue also includes an essay by J. himself on 'The Future of the Human Sciences' (109–117).

Nathan Bracher, 'De l'archive au récit, ou comment écrire le passé à l'imparfait du présent: le cas de *L'Histoire des grands-parents que je n'ai pas eus* d'Ivan Jablonka', *NFS*, 56, 2017:15–34, examines J.'s amalgam of ardent subjective investment and rigorously methodical research in his 2012 work, with reference to Jules Michelet, Annette Wieviorka, and contemporary historiography. Through a deft close reading of the text, B. argues that rather than seeking to hide or minimize the inevitable imperfections of his historical narrative – imperfections owing to temporal distance, archival paucity,

uncertainty, and his subjective position – J. embraces and narrates these imperfections, linking them to the imperfections of the human condition. Nathan Bracher, ‘Écrire la (non-)violence: le cas de *Laëtitia ou la fin des hommes* d’Ivan Jablonka’, *MCF*, 26:31–42, focuses on the ways in which J.’s 2016 work aims to expose, denounce, and offer some sort of reparation for male violence. Violence is here understood as physical, symbolic, and discursive, and discussed with reference to Emmanuel Levinas and Jacques Derrida. B.’s close reading of the text suggests that J.’s wedding of social-scientific method and self-reflexive subjective investment constitutes a poetics of nonviolence, and allows the author to restore a sense of Laëtitia’s humanity and autonomy, eclipsed by the habitual mediatic treatment of *faits divers*, while situating her story in the longer social and historical structures of gendered violence. Marie-Chantal Killeen, ‘Pastoral Womanscapes (Baudelaire, Tournier, Jablonka)’, *MLR*, 113:321–327, meanwhile, examines the trope of projecting the female body onto pastoral landscapes, and in so doing comes to a different conclusion about the ethical success of J.’s project. Reading *Laëtitia* alongside B.’s ‘La Géante’ (1857) and T.’s *Vendredi ou les limbes du Pacifique* (1967), K. offers a subtle analysis of gender, class, and allegory in J.’s text through the lens of pastoral elegy, and shows the double bind at work in J.’s project: to defend Laëtitia’s dignity from Nicolas Sarkozy’s political instrumentalization of her death, she argues he ends up resorting to analogous strategies of abstraction.

[H4]Legendre.

Michèle A. Schaal, ‘A Palimpsestuous Novel: Claire Legendre’s *La Méthode Stanislavski*’, *WIFS*, 26:143–157, reads L.’s 2006 novel with reference to Gérard Genette’s narratological framework. Unpicking various of the work’s inter- and hypertextual connections (including notably works by Marguerite Duras, Hervé Guibert, and Constantin Stanislavski himself), she argues it provides a metadiscursive reflection on fiction, autofiction, autobiography, and hypertextuality, and notions of truth, authenticity, and creativity.

[H4]Louatah.

Fraser McQueen, ‘France’s “Elites”, Islamophobia, and Communities of Friendship in Sabri Louatah’s *Les Sauvages*’, *MCF*, 26:77–90, examines the representation of Islamophobia and the role of media and political elites in forging racial divides in L.’s 2011–2016 tetralogy, a representation he finds resonates with social scientists Abdellali Hajjat and Marwan Mohammed’s account of French Islamophobia. With reference to Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Nancy and Leela Gandhi, he further argues that the novels suggest the need for a politics of friendship to counter such imposed divisions, though it leaves open the question of whether such an approach is compatible with political action through the state.

[H4]Littell.

Ned Curthoys, ‘Evaluating Risk in Perpetrator Narratives: Resituating Jonathan Littell’s *The Kindly Ones* as Historical Fiction’, *TP*, 31, 2017:457–475, offers a compelling reading of L.’s novel as a text ‘enrich[ing] and renew[ing] the politics of memory’ (473). Engaging with a panoply of recent work in narratological theory and ethical criticism, C. identifies the novel’s narrator-protagonist as a ‘mobile focaliser’, and the novel as one that facilitates (borrowing Michael Rothberg’s term) ‘multidirectional memory’, mobilizing a comparative approach to history and its relation to the present.

[H4]Makine.

Helena Duffy, *World War II in Andreï Makine's Historiographical Metafiction: 'No One Is Forgotten, Nothing Is Forgotten'*, Leiden, Brill, 328 pp., avowedly (and refreshingly) critical in perspective, examines what D. views as the uneasy relationship between M.'s postmodern poetics and the reactionary political agenda she finds embedded in his novels. Borrowing the term 'historiographical metafiction' from Linda Hutcheon, D. argues that while M.'s novels seem to evince characteristics of a postmodern approach to history (flaunting the impossibility of knowing/narrating history; challenging dominant historical discourse by focusing on the plural perspectives of individual victims), they do so only to reconstitute the metanarrative of the Great Fatherland War propagated by the USSR and, more recently, by Putin – and thereby reflect, she suggests, a reactionary nostalgia for a strong Russia. There is thus also a clear and avowed ethical commitment at work in D.'s endeavour to fill a gap in Western scholarship on novels destined for a Western readership; this endeavour is carried out with an impressive range of reference to historiography, literary theory, and French, Soviet, and post-Soviet literature and culture. The first chapter deals generally with M.'s postmodern narrative strategies, while the other four each focus on a particular victim figure in his novels (soldiers, maimed bodies, Soviet Jews, and survivors of the blockade of Leningrad). This is sure to prove an important, if perhaps contentious, work in M. scholarship, and makes a valuable contribution to the study of postmodernism and narrative ethics more broadly.

Alice Duhan, 'L'Écriture en langue étrangère comme pratique et comme poétique: le cas de deux écrivains "francographes", Nancy Huston et Andreï Makine', *NFS*, 56, 2017:212–226, reads especially M.'s *Testament français* (1995) and H.'s *Lignes de faille* (2006), with reference to Russian formalist Victor Chklovski's work on defamiliarization, to discuss the importance of strangeness and defamiliarization in the two writers' translingual work. D. suggests that for M., writing in a foreign language offers a privileged mode of moving towards a universal poetic language, while for H., more emphasis is put on the heightened awareness of language's materiality and musicality this practice affords.

[H4]Michon.

*Pierre Michon*, ed. Agnès Castiglione and Dominique Viart, L'Herne, 2017, 344 pp. + 8 pls., offers an enlightening range of perspectives on M.'s work, in addition to rare and previously unpublished pieces by the author, interviews with M., homages from friends and collaborators, personal photographs, and reproductions of archival material. As C. highlights in her foreword, part of the work's strength lies in the varied disciplinary/professional backgrounds of its contributors: historians, art specialists, a geographer, a musician, a priest, an architect, a photographer, as well as other literary writers (e.g. Jean Echenoz, Patrick Deville, Maylis de Kerangal), and of course literary scholars. With regards to articles by the latter, I would highlight in particular: Laurent Demanze (134–137) on the political dimensions of M.'s writing; Agnès Castiglione (186–189) on proper names in *La Grande Beune*; Denis Labouret (265–270) on the sea in M.; Annie Mavrakis (292–296) on bones and relics in his work; Dominique Viart (297–302) on M. and anthropology.

Yona Hanhart-Marmor, 'L'Abbé et le crocodile: autorité et auctorialité dans l'œuvre de Pierre Michon', *FR*, 91.1, 2017:169–182, focuses on *Abbés* (2002) and *Corps du roi* (2002) to discuss the author's ambivalent, conflictual relationship to his historical and literary sources. H.-M. argues such sources appear in M.'s works as both indispensable and undesirable, and that M.'s narrator ultimately treats his sources more as springboards than authorities, thereby affirming the sovereignty of the new text and its author. Yona Hanhart-Marmor, 'Détails et détours dans *Trois Auteurs* de Pierre Michon', *FrF*, 43, 33–46, meanwhile, offers a close reading of the first piece in M.'s 1997 work, on Balzac. Focusing on heterogeneity, dispersion, and the overabundance of anecdotic

detail in the text, and the tension between this form and the essential literary questions the text addresses, H.-M. examines what she calls M.'s aesthetics of obliquity.

[H4]Millet, Richard.

Étienne Achille, 'Fiction "néo-réactionnaire" avec Richard Millet', *MCF*, 26:369–379, argues for the need to extend the study of 'néo-réactionnaire' discourse in France beyond its figures' mass media interventions and pamphlets, to their literary works – works which, A. argues, play a role in legitimizing their more public pronouncements. A. focuses on M.'s 2016 novel *Province*, to show the dominant place of language in its version of the reactionary *Grand remplacement* trope, and compares, with reference to Pierre Nora, the notion of language at work here to a form of *lieu de mémoire*.

[H4]Modiano.

Two recent works have addressed the role and representation of women in Modiano. France Grenaudier-Klijn, *La Part du féminin dans l'œuvre de Patrick Modiano: fonctions et attributs des personnages féminins modianiens*, L'Harmattan, 2017, 317 pp., reads M.'s oeuvre as a whole through the prism of the feminine. 'Women' appear here less as a thematic restriction than as a springboard for thinking about the ethics and aesthetics of M.'s writing more generally. G.-K. describes the latter as a 'poetics of reticence', in which a lacunary, elliptical, fragmentary approach to form, style, and character construction serve ethical ends in respecting alterity, and demanding of M.'s readers responsibility for the text and towards its characters. This lacunary style is connected to the enigmatic and ethereal qualities of M.'s female protagonists, whom G.-K. argues are not merely incidental characters in his work, but rather play vital diegetic functions. G.-K. insists not only on the continuities between M.'s women characters, but also the singularity of each, and the evolution of their portrayal in his work over time. Chapters are focused around a series of ten traits/themes: names, blondeness, scars, voice, perfume, gesture and gait, reading, clothing, the colour green, and disappearance. Geir Uvsløkk, 'Passeurs d'ombres: les femmes de Modiano', *CFFS*, 21, 2017:241–248, meanwhile, emphasizes a similarity of plot in 12 of M.'s novels, beginning with *Villa triste* (1975) and most recently in *L'Herbe des nuits* (2012): a male narrator recollecting his adolescent years and an encounter with a young, mysterious woman. Focussing especially on the 1975 and 2012 novels, U. argues the women protagonists perform the function of a *passeur*, leading the male protagonist into the worlds of love and crime, triggering his turn to writing, and transporting to him shades of the past. Like G.-K., U. insists both on the fact that these women do not appear merely as 'types', and on the importance of naming in M.

[H4]Montalbetti.

Caroline Whiteman, 'Christine Montalbetti's "petite communauté" in *Expérience de la campagne*', *RoN*, 58:427–436, reads M.'s 2005 work as an exploration of the relationship between writer, reader, and text. Contrasting the text to M.'s own work as a literary theorist, W. examines the writer's spatial and pronominal strategies for engaging the reader in the work's construction, and for constructing a 'petite communauté' uniting the text with its writer and reader.

[H4]NDiaye.

N. has proven an especially rich subject of study in the last couple of years. Shirley Jordan, *Marie NDiaye: Inhospitable Fictions*, Cambridge, Legenda, 2017, 131 pp., gives a potent and persuasive account of N.'s work as driven by an abiding concern for the ethics, practices, and psychic and affective dynamics of hospitality. This concern, J. demonstrates, is manifested principally through the staging of inhospitality, of failures to adequately welcome the other, an other set apart by racial, class, gender, species, national, or bodily boundaries. In the introduction, she lays out the debates surrounding matters of hospitality in postcolonial France as they relate to N.'s oeuvre, and the theoretical framework through which she reads N.: this framework includes important work on hospitality by Levinas, Derrida, and Žižek, but also the lesser-known writings on the subject of Luce Irigaray. J. also discusses the significance of fantasy in N., and demonstrates the intertextual role of myth and legend (especially Homer's *Odyssey*) therein; her analysis of fantasy is ingeniously combined with an exploration of the connections between the author's work and the concerns of anthropology, as J. argues that N.'s writings constitute a 'fantastic anthropology of hospitality'. Individual chapters treat: the figure of the stranger, the host, and thresholds (this first chapter also includes a fine reading of *Un temps de saison* (1994) as anthropological parody); relations with nonhuman others, and the meaning of the human; corporeal thresholds and the (often gendered) violation of the bodily boundaries of vulnerable others; (in)hospitality and motherhood, and maternity as the beginning of both the possibility and challenges of hospitality; the (in)hospitable reception of N. by the French literary establishment, and the role of hospitality in reading and writing. Throughout J. mobilizes the core concept expansively, incisively, and innovatively, to richly demonstrate the ways in which the author engages her reader in the knotty ethics of hospitality. Shirley Jordan, 'Washes and Hues: Reading for Colour in Marie NDiaye', *FS*, 3, 2017:362–373, meanwhile, offers a vivid analysis of colour in N. as it connects to matters of emotion, perception, memory, and ethics. Reading especially *La Naufragée* (1999), *Rosie Carpe* (2001), and *Autoportrait en vert* (2006), J. demonstrates N.'s almost painterly interest in washes and hues, and the ways in which colour in her works is associated with uneasiness, indistinctness, and instability. Moreover, she emphasizes the ways in which colour in N. raises emotional and ethical problems concerning empathy and the possibility of shared perception.

Sarah Burnautzki, *Les Frontières racialisées de la littérature française: contrôle au faciès et stratégies de passage*, Champion, 2017, 443 pp., interrogates the processes of racialization at work in French literature, and the strategies by which writers negotiate these processes, focusing on N. and Yambo Oulougum. Drawing on work by W. E. B. Dubois, Toni Morrison, Edward Said, and Pierre Bourdieu, B. argues that the ideal of universalism embodied by French literature and centralized in Paris in fact serves to both reinforce and obscure the processes of domination by which a 'colour line' (Du Bois) separates 'white' from 'nonwhite' literature. Moreover, commenting on the growing enthusiasm for postcolonial texts and themes amongst French scholars and readers, B. suggests this does not challenge but perpetuates the relations of racial domination that inhere in the division between 'French' and 'Francophone' literature, and feeds into what she calls an industry of alterity. With regards to NDiaye, B. discusses: in the second chapter, N.'s reception and her authorial posture, and how the latter has evolved since her move from Minuit to Gallimard from a strategy that veiled critiques of universalist discourse in such a way that she continued to be received in universalist terms, to a more self-exoticizing position appealing to a mass readership; in the third, *En famille* as critique of Republican universalism and *Rosie Carpe* as a rejection of multiculturalist thought; and in the fourth, *Trois femmes puissantes* as a text that submits to the tacit injunction for nonwhite writers to self-exoticize, albeit in a way that might be read as a performative allegory that (B. suggests perhaps too subtly) ironizes those same processes of racialization.

*Flaubert, Beckett, NDiaye: The Aesthetics, Emotions and Politics of Failure*, ed. Andrew Asibong and Aude Campmas, Leiden, Brill, 2017, 168 pp., offers a number of lively comparative readings through its clustering of these three writers, focused on matters of aesthetic, psychic, and political failure, incompleteness, and breakdown. As the editors' explain in their introduction, 'failure' is understood here as both an unsettling and revivifying force in their works. Chapters discussing N. include: Arthur Rose, 'Echoes of Terence: "Rien d'humain" in the Friends and Neighbours of Flaubert, Beckett and NDiaye' (20–35), which deals with (failed) intersubjective relations involving two friends and a neighbour in N.'s play *Rien d'humain* (2004) and works by F. and N.; Chloé Brendlé, 'Lieux communs en héritage: de Flaubert à NDiaye, de quoi sont-ils le nom?' (49–65), which interrogates commonplaces, clichés, and their political consequences in the two authors' works, and finds N. posing a troubling mirror to social normality; Andrew Asibong, "'May I Be Alive When I Die!' Dreaming of (Re)animation in Flaubert, Beckett and NDiaye' (88–102), which examines, with reference to psychoanalyst André Green's theory of the 'dead mother', the 'undead' quality of the three authors' characters, and reads the ghostly parents in N.'s works as potentially stimulating its readers towards new forms of life; William McKenzie, 'Failure and Impure Narcissism in *Oh les beaux jours* and "Une journée de Brulard"' (118–132), which reads these texts with and against critical-theoretical and psychoanalytic interpretations of the authors' works, to suggest that narcissism might be the condition of possibility for human relations; Aude Campmas, 'L'échec comme attaque: les romans clastiques de Gustave Flaubert et Marie NDiaye' (150–166), which examines temporal and narrative dissolution in *Un temps de saison* and F.'s *Bouvard et Pécuchet*, and the radical unsettling of bourgeois urban characters in rural environments in these works.

Hannah Freed-Thall, 'The Language of French Disgust', *MLQ*, 4:421–444, provides an engaging exploration of disgust in French culture, which it concludes with a reading of N.'s *Mon cœur à l'étroit* (2007) as a narrative of unlearning social distinction. The first half offers a panorama of French theoretical and aesthetic accounts of disgust from the 19th c. onwards, as well as its vocabulary (*dégout, spleen, nausée, abjection*). The second half focuses on *écoeurement* which, through a close reading of N.'s novel alongside Jean-Luc Nancy's *Corpus* (2000), it presents as a banal sense of disgust ambient in contemporary life, born of a sense of exposure and vulnerability, that far from entrenching borders of exclusion, might offer new forms of collective attachment.

[H4]Nimier.

Lisa Connell, 'Bodies in Motion: Movement and Meaning in Marie Nimier's *Vous dansez?*', *FR*, 92.2:69–83, explores and interweaves matters of the body, mobility, cognition, narcissism, mortality, and intersubjectivity through a reading of N.'s 2005 text. Reading the work against Mallarmé's essay on dance ('Ballets'), and drawing on various theorists of dance and kinaesthetics, C. emphasizes the links between writing and dancing, dancing and other forms of movement, and the roles of each in forming and understanding identity.

[H4]Nothomb.

M. Kathleen Madigan, 'The Challenges of Childhood in a Comic Light in Amélie Nothomb's *Métaphysique des tubes*', *FR*, 90.4, 2017:64–74, discusses the comic use of exaggeration, incongruity, and surprise in N.'s text. Offering comparisons with other French literary and filmic depictions of youth, M. suggests N.'s humorous approach celebrates the candour and curiosity of childhood.



[H4]Prigent.

Peter Poiana, 'Christian Prigent's Mimological Machine: *Le Monde est marrant* and *La Vie moderne*', *IrJFS*, 17, 2017:125–141, examines these texts dealing with watching television and consuming news and current affairs media, respectively. Drawing on Jean-François Lyotard's work on modern systems of oppression that assimilate any attempt to directly critique them, Poiana argues Prigent's texts pursue a different strategy for resistance: a 'childlike' imitation of the techniques underlying the system, which maps an alternative point of entry for experiencing the present.

[H4]Quignard.

Agnès Cousin de Ravel, *Pascal Quignard: vies, œuvres*, L'Harmattan, 293 pp., will prove an exceptionally useful resource for those working on Quignard. It combines a detailed biography of the author with a thorough bibliography of his works, their translations, and adaptations into art, music, dance, and film; his performances, interviews, and collaborations with painters and musicians; as well as literary critical work on his œuvre.

[H4]Quintane.

Peter Poiana, 'Literality and Discursive Reframing in the Works of Nathalie Quintane', *Symposium*, 72:228–238, examines matters of selectivity, irony, discursive reframing, and the rejection of poetic inflation/connotation in Q.'s work. With meticulous attention to Q.'s textual techniques, and building on Jean-Marie Gleize's work on 'literality', P. argues Q. alters the (descriptive and critical) frames in which statements are apprehended in order better to highlight the process of discursive framing itself. He also highlights the affective dimensions of her writing, that dampens passion through discomfort, but also embraces a certain jubilatory 'nunucherie'.

[H4]Rolin, Jean.

Vincent Gélinas-Lemaire, 'The Narrative Lives of Places: Literature as an Architecture', *CFFS*, 4:454–462, reads the opening pages of R.'s *Les Événements* (2015) as a case study for elaborating a theory of place. Situating his work in relation to the spatial turn, and surveying French and Anglophone work on space and place, G.-L. defines place as a situated, circumscribed, and characterized space, and lays out in his reading of R. the ways in which place comes to be apprehended in narrative through a sequence of spatial fragments.

[H4]Rolin, Olivier.

Andrew Sobanet, 'Olivier Rolin's *Le Météorologue*: Vicarious Witnessing and the Gulag', *MLN*, 132, 2017:1016–1036, discusses R.'s second-hand testimonial account of the life of Stalin's chief meteorologist, falsely accused and sent to the Gulag in 1934. S. discusses the style, form, and methods of R.'s approach through reference to Froma Zeitlin's notion of the 'vicarious witness', and comparisons with Patrick Modiano's *Dora Bruder* and Georges Perec's *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*. Touching on the potential pitfalls of vicarious witnessing, notably its risk of obfuscating victims' voices, S. nevertheless concludes R.'s text successfully centres the victims of Soviet violence.

[H4]Salvayre.

José Luis Arráez, 'Les voix/es de la mémoire dans *Pas pleurer* de Lydie Salvayre', *FrCS*, 28, 2017:186–197, examines the interlacing of private and social memory in S.'s novel about the Spanish Civil War. A. offers a narratological analysis of the work's diegetic levels and voices (including a daughter and mother, identified with S. and her own, as well as Georges Bernanos). Then, with reference to Maurice Halbwachs on the stratification of memory and Régine Robin on postmemory, A. argues the novel plays an effective reparative role in presenting voices silenced by the War, and a therapeutic one in overcoming second-generation trauma.

[H4]Shan.

Shuangyi Li, 'Translingualism and Autoexotic Translation in Shan Sa's Franco-Chinese Historical Novels', *Essays in French Literature and Culture*, 55:115–131, examines S.'s three French-language novels, and their substantially revised Chinese translations. L. highlights the 'autoexotic' linguistic and cultural strategies employed by S. in the French texts, the enhanced intertextuality of the Chinese versions, and the possibilities for fabulation afforded by such transcultural movements.

[H4]Vasset.

Églantine Colon, 'Neither *Lieux de mémoire*, nor *Non-lieux*: Towards a Concept of Precarious Spaces in Philippe Vasset's *Un livre blanc*', *FS*, 71, 2017:66–83, focuses on V.'s 2007 *récit* of Paris's urban peripheries, which C. positions within a broader contemporary turn to the peripheries in French literature. Against both Pierre Nora's *lieux de mémoire* that sediment collective memory, and Marc Augé's a-relational *non-lieux*, C. persuasively develops through her careful reading of V. a concept of 'precarious spaces', sites where the postindustrial and postcolonial intersect and which C. discusses in terms of their temporal and social instabilities and potentials. She further describes V.'s text in terms of a 'poetics of precarity', intensifying through literary form the uncertain relationship to time engendered by experiences of precarity.

[H4]Volodine.

Khalil Khalsi, 'L'Espace interstitiel, lieu des possibles: le futur selon Volodine', *CFFS*, 21, 2017:329–336, reading especially *Le Port intérieur* (1995), locates in V.'s 'post-exotisme' what K. calls an 'espace interstitiel', an impersonal, neutral space in which opposition is neutralized, and which thereby affords a process of collective individuation and the gestation of possible utopian futures.

[H4]Zeniter.

Sura Qadiri, 'Writing (Post-Secular) Polyphony in London and Paris: Alice Zeniter's *L'Art de perdre* and Zadie Smith's *White Teeth*', *Francosphères*, 7:235–249, reads the two novels as 'postsecular' in tenor, challenging notions of cohesion in favour of polyphony. Q.'s reading of Z. focuses on conceptions of art, and suggests that the narrative challenges mercantile and epistemic approaches to art in favour of one founded on inclusiveness, flux, and porousness. She further suggests this latter conception enables the novel's protagonists to adopt a non-totalizing perspective on identity.

[H2]6. Unpublished Doctoral Theses

[H4]France.

- Mehdi Alizadeh, 'La Perception et la représentation des métropoles dans la fiction postmoderne: Paris, New York et Istanbul dans *Au piano* de Jean Echenoz, *Cité de verre* de Paul Auster et *Le Livre noir* d'Orhan Pamuk', Université de Limoges, 2017.
- Stéphane André, 'Le Roman français contemporain à l'épreuve du tourisme (1990–2010): (dé)jouer le stéréotype pour renouer avec le voyage', Université Sorbonne Paris Cité, 2017.
- Anabel Apap, 'La Migration et le déplacement comme manifestations de la violence dans la littérature et le cinéma méditerranéens et sub-sahariens francophones (1990–2010)', Sorbonne Université/University of Malta.
- Marie Aubelle, 'Retour à la maison: le motif de la maison dans l'œuvre romanesque de J. M. G. Le Clézio, Pascal Quignard, Sylvie Germain et Marie NDiaye', Université Sorbonne Paris Cité.
- Alexandre Battaglia, 'Poésie et intensité dans l'œuvre de Patrick Wateau', Université Paris 8.
- Mohammed Amin Boudrika, 'Jan Fabre: dialogue du corps et de la mort. Écriture, scénographie et mise en scène', Normandie université.
- Sophie Boulade, 'Qui? du roman: Henry Miller, Paul Auster, Michel Houellebecq', Université Sorbonne Paris Cité.
- Flavia Bujor, 'Une poétique de l'étrangeté: plasticité des corps et matérialité du pouvoir (Suzette Mayr, Marie NDiaye, Yoko Tawada)', Université Rennes 2.
- Guillaume Chabat, 'La Chair ou le verbe: Doubrovsky et la dialectique de l'autofiction', Université de Nantes.
- Gaëlle Debeaux, 'Multiplication des récits et stéréométrie littéraire: d'Italo Calvino aux épifictions contemporaines', Université Rennes 2, 2017.
- Eléonore Devevey, 'Terrains d'entente: anthropologues et écrivains dans la seconde moitié du XXe siècle', Université Lumière Lyon 2, 2017.
- Odile Dujon, 'De la notation à la fiction dans l'écriture de la mémoire d'une expérience concentrationnaire: récit inédit d'un ancien prisonnier français du Vietminh, *L'Élimination* de R. Panh, *Etre sans destin* d'I. Kertesz', Université Sorbonne Paris Cité.
- Rodolphe Gauthier, 'L'Usage de l'œuvre, un autre paradigme artistico-littéraire de la deuxième révolution industrielle jusqu'à nos jours: Marcel Proust, Georges Bataille, Pascal Quignard', Sorbonne Université.
- Amel Jegham, 'Maîtres et serviteurs de Pierre Michon: genèse d'un imaginaire pictural, des carnets au récit', Université Paris 8.
- Morgane Kieffer, 'Le Romanesque paradoxal: formes et usages contemporains de l'esthétique romanesque chez Leslie Kaplan, Jean-Philippe Toussaint, Tanguy Viel et Christine Montalbetti (1982–2018)', Université Paris Nanterre.
- Sylvaine Lecomte Dauthuille, 'Le motif improbable: le récit d'enquête français contemporain, Thierry Beinstingel, Emmanuel Carrère et Jean Rolin' Université Sorbonne Paris Cité.
- Jiaying Li, 'Le Langage mis en scène et en questions: étude du jeu verbal chez Alfred Jarry, Eugène Ionesco, Jean Tardieu, Valère Novarina', Université Paris Nanterre.
- Hesha Luan, 'Deux générations de femmes: une étude comparative entre les littératures et les théories féminines françaises et chinoises (1958–2005)', Aix-Marseille Université.
- Letizia Lupino, 'Bernard Noël, langue et image, en deçà de la représentation', Université Paris Saclay/University of Genoa.
- Mara Magnavaca, 'La Poétique de l'espace dans les œuvres de Sylvie Germain: quand le réel prend feu', Université Toulouse Jean Jaurès, 2017.
- Xavier Martin, 'Pascal Quignard: l'écriture, la souffrance, la différence sexuelle et la fusion amoureuse', Université Paris 8, 2017.
- Abbes Marzouki, 'La poétique du discontinu dans les romans d'Éric Chevillard', Université Paris Nanterre.

- Seyed Mohammad Nasser Nabavi, 'L'Artiste aux prises avec la société et l'histoire dans l'œuvre de Pierre Michon', Université de Strasbourg.
- Laude Ngadi Maissa, 'La littérature française contemporaine au prisme de la littérature-monde: à propos des "Étonnants voyageurs" et de l'œuvre d'Olivier Rolin', Université de Lorraine.
- Veronica Ntoumos, 'L'Esthétique de la résistance dans les œuvres des écrivaines franco-vietnamiennes contemporaines: femmes, histoire, exil', Université Paris-Sorbonne/Université libre de Bruxelles, 2017.
- Sun Nyeo Kim, 'Tomi Ungerer: l'œil et l'œuvre: poétique des albums d'un raconteur double', Université Sorbonne Paris Cité, 2017.
- Dorel Obiang Nguema, 'Poétisation de la mémoire dans le roman français contemporain', Aix-Marseille Université.
- Julien Paradis Dufour, 'Les Romans de J.-M. G. Le Clézio: rôle de l'écrivain contemporain dans la fondation d'une littérature mondiale considérée comme pratique littéraire' Université Sorbonne Paris Cité.
- Elena Quaglia, 'L'Identité juive en question: Irène Némorivsky, Patrick Modiano, Marc Weitzmann', Université Paris Nanterre/Università degli studi di Verona, 2017.
- Ioana-Catalina Rezeanu, 'Les Échos dix-neuviémistes dans l'œuvre de Michel Houellebecq', Aix-Marseille Université, 2017.
- Elaheh Salehi Rizi, 'Identités féminines et mutations sociales dans les œuvres de Zoyâ Pirzâd et Annie Ernaux', Université Côte d'Azur, 2017.
- Jean Steiner Koumba, 'Le Roman et le mouvant: essai sur l'œuvre romanesque d'Édouard Glissant et Jean-Marie Gustave Le Clézio', Université Sorbonne Paris Cité, 2017.
- Agnieszka Stobierska, 'Généalogie féminine et réécriture des mythes dans les littératures française et polonaise contemporaines', Université Côte d'Azur.
- Naghme Tarjoman Porshkoh, 'Images de la femme contemporaine au miroir des œuvres de Zoya Pirzad et Katherine Pancol', Université Sorbonne Paris Cité.
- Milène Tournier, 'Figures de l'impudeur: dire, écrire, jouer l'intime (1970–2016)', Université Sorbonne Paris Cité, 2017.
- Cyril Verlingue, 'Les fictions commentaires: spéculations référentielles au tournant du XXIe siècle (Bolaño, Danielewski, Senges)', Université Sorbonne Paris Cité.
- Guochuan Zhang, 'La Symbiose de la culture occidentale et de la culture chinoise dans la poésie de François Cheng', Université de Bretagne occidentale.

[H4]United Kingdom.

- Sarah Arens, 'Imagining Brussels: Memory, Mobility, and Space in Francophone Diasporic Writing', University of Edinburgh, 2017.
- Poppy Jayne Boyd, 'Multimodality in Contemporary French Women's Life Narratives: Anne Brochet, Monica Sabolo and Sophie Calle', Queen's University Belfast.
- Ashley Harris, 'Postures of the Author as a Multimedia Brand: Michel Houellebecq, Frédéric Beigbeder and the Decentring of the Text', Queen's University Belfast, 2017.
- Beatrice Ivey, 'Performing Gender, Performing the Past: Memories of French Colonialism in French and Algerian Literatures Post-1962', University of Leeds.
- Robert Payne, 'Reimagining the Family? Lesbian Mothering in French Literature', University of Leicester.
- Matt Phillips, 'Empathy's Messes: Genet, Barthes, Ernaux', University of Cambridge, 2017.
- Adina Stroia, 'Narratives of Loss and Mourning in Contemporary French Women's Writing: Marie Nimier, Camille Laurens and Annie Ernaux', King's College London, 2017.

Martina Williams, 'Ethics and Politics in Hélène Cixous's Theatre', University of Nottingham, 2017.  
 Antonia Wimbury, 'Exile in Francophone Women's Autobiographical Writing', University of Birmingham.

[H4]United States and Canada.

Mrinmoyee Bhattacharya, 'Legitimation Crises of the Republic', University of California, Davis, 2017.  
 Thomas M. Byron, 'Of Evolution, Information, Vitalism and Entropy: Reflections on the History of Science and Epistemology in the Works of Balzac, Zola, Queneau, and Houellebecq', Boston University, 2017.

Aubrey Ann Gabel, 'Serious Play: Formal Innovation and Politics in French Literature from the 1950s to the Present', University of California, Berkeley, 2017.

Laura Bea Jensen, 'Writing Race and Universality in Contemporary France: Marie NDiaye and Bessora', Yale University, 2017.

Stève Levillain, 'Naissance et évolution d'une mentalité populaire urbaine au XXe siècle: paysage urbain et littérature populaire', University of Iowa, 2017.

Gustavo Llarull, 'Unsettling Interpretations: Reading Practices, Memory, and Politics in Laura Alcoba's *Manèges/La casa de los conejos* (2007), Héctor Abad Faciolince's *Traiciones de la memoria* (2009), and Albertina Carri's *Los rubios* (2003), Cornell University, 2017.

Katarzyna Peric, 'La Trajectoire vers soi (et vers les autres): rapports entre le texte et les images photographiques dans les récits autobiographiques d'Anny Duperey et Annie Ernaux', University of Toronto, 2017.

Caitlyn A. Yocco-Locascio, 'Movement toward the Posthuman in Contemporary French Literature and Cinema', University of Wisconsin, Madison, 2017.