The Uses of Brevity:
Valuing the “No More to Be Said” in Jean Echenoz’s

*Plan of Occupancy* and the Transcontinental

“Critical Novel”

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Abstract
This paper examines the value of brevity in contemporary French novels, particularly Jean Echenoz’s *Plan of Occupancy*, in relation to the broader context of transcontinental fiction. Its central claim is that the stylistic minimalism of such fiction informs a “minoritarian” subjectivity that has both aesthetic and political implications. Additionally, I discuss, in brief, other texts that are central to this issue including Don DeLillo’s *The Body Artist*, an example of an American novel that not only limits itself to a page count far below the average in American fiction, but presents a style that is indicative of precisely the kind of minimalism that is accepted and, indeed, celebrated by DeLillo’s French contemporaries.

Keywords
transcontinental, literature, minimalism, subjectivity