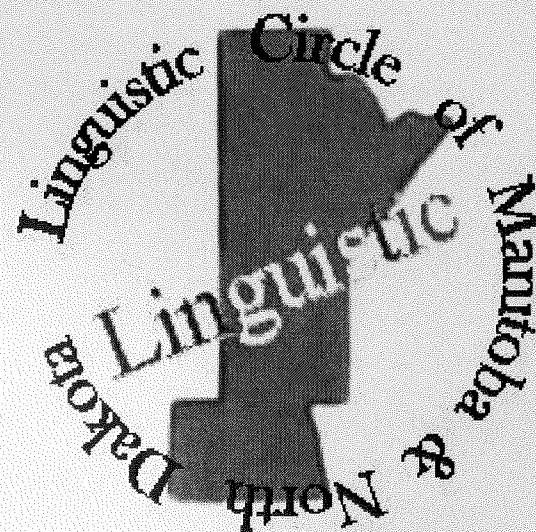




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**LINGUISTIC CIRCLE** of  
**MANITOBA** and **NORTH DAKOTA**



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#### LCMND History

The Linguistic Circle of Manitoba and North Dakota began in 1959 as a joint initiative of University of Manitoba and University of North Dakota faculty members to provide a cross-border forum for scholarly exchange. Since its founding, the LCMND, which now includes the University of Winnipeg (1980), North Dakota State University (1985), and Minot State University (1988), has conducted forty-eight conferences in Canada and the United States.

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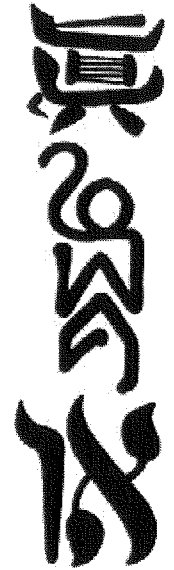
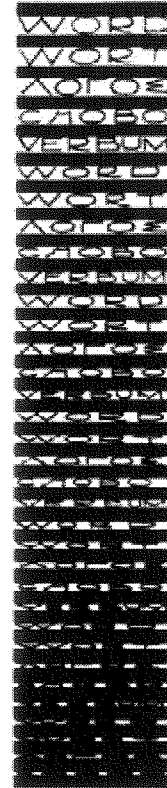
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PROCEEDINGS OF  
THE  
LINGUISTIC  
CIRCLE  
OF MANITOBA  
AND NORTH DAKOTA

**The Forty-Ninth Conference  
of the  
Linguistic Circle of Manitoba  
and  
North Dakota**

**October 12-14, 2006**

**“(One’s) History in Fiction”**

**University of Winnipeg  
Winnipeg, Manitoba**

## Contents

Autobiographie, histoire et fiction dans <i>Le grand voyage de Jorge Semprun, Azouz Ali Ahmed</i> .....	9
“My Mother Died at the Moment I was Born” —Jamaica Kincaid’s Autobiography from a Systemic Perspective, <i>Gustav Arnold</i> .....	11
Hermeneutics in a Time of Human Tragedy: Bibliomancy, British Israelism, and Millenarianism in Daniel Defoe’s <i>Journal of the Plague Year</i> , <i>Carolyn D. Baker</i> .....	13
“Such Pelmanism”: Theme and Narrative Technique in <i>The English Patient</i> , <i>Mark William Brown</i> .....	13
Gender and British Working-Class Life Writing: <i>The Case of The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists</i> , <i>Julie Cairnie</i> .....	15
“All that can happen to me here has happened”: Michael Winter, Gabriel English, and Canonicity in <i>Brenna</i> , <i>Clarke Gray</i> .....	17
Reflections of the French Revolution in Two Plays by German Women, <i>Linda Dietrick</i> .....	18
Ironic Self-Quotation and Parodic Program Music: Richard Strauss’s Autobiographical “Fiction,” <i>Kimberly Fairbrother Canton</i> .....	20
<i>The Colony of Unrequited Dreams</i> : Joey Smallwood’s Secular Spiritual Autobiography, <i>Kevin Flynn</i> .....	21
Daguerreotype as Artifact and Myth, <i>Julie Gard</i> .....	22
“That Part of the Story Is My Own”: Facts, Fictions, and Repetitions in the Work of Tim O’Brien, <i>David A. Godfrey</i> .....	24

The Uses of Literature: Crime Fiction as Supplemental Reading, <i>Chandice M. Johnson, Jr.</i> .....	25	Toward Immigrant Words: Claiming a Linguistic “Non-Space” in Régine Robin’s <i>The Wanderer</i> , <i>Michèle Rackham</i> .....	43
From a Watcher to a Translator: A Biographer’s Self-Realization in <i>Small Ceremonies</i> , <i>Ying Kong</i> .....	27	De la rue à la route : la fiction autobiographique de Gabrielle Roy, <i>Louise Renee</i> .....	45
Murakami Haruki and the I-Novel Tradition in Modern Japanese Literature, <i>William Lee</i> .....	29	Modern (Re)Constructions of Christine Carpenter, The anchoress of Shere, <i>Michelle M. Sauer</i> .....	45
Semper Eadem? Representations of a Historical Figure across Bio- graphical Texts, <i>Bryony J. Lewicki</i> .....	30	Franco-Américanisme et triomphalisme messianique dans le roman de la fidélité du XIXe siècle, <i>Vincent L. Schonberger</i> .....	46
A Young Man’s History in a Time of Trouble—The Bildungs- roman of Su Tong, <i>Hua Li</i> .....	31	Diederich Hessling, c’est moi!: Autobiographical Elements in Heinrich Mann’s <i>Untertan</i> , <i>Katherine Stevenson</i> .....	48
Pleasure and Danger in the Pot au noir: Adèle Toussaint-Samson and the Hypersexualization of Brazil, <i>Christopher Lozensky</i> .....	33	<i>Till We Have Faces</i> : C. S. Lewis’ Fictional Autobiography, <i>Dale L. Sullivan</i> .....	49
Postcards from the Past, <i>Karen Malcolm &amp; Barbara Becker</i> .....	35	Au-delà du récit autobiographique : Tassadit Imache et le flou identitaire, <i>Anissa Talahite-Moodley</i> .....	50
Vicente Huidobro’s <i>Finis Britannia</i> [sic]: Fiction and Affairs of State, <i>Debra Maury</i> .....	36	Image des marginaux dans les romans de Gary/Ajar, <i>Vina Tirven</i> ....	51
Histoire, identité migrante et (auto)biographie : le cas de La mémoire de l’eau de Ying Chen, <i>Kenneth Meadwell</i> .....	37	The World, the Text and the Transcultured Writer: Religiosity and the Imaginary in Novels of the 1990s, <i>Marie Vautier</i> .....	52
Un bateau en enfer: la fiction autobiographique de Rimbaud, <i>Glenn Moulaison</i> .....	39	L’Italien à trois têtes dans <i>Candide</i> de Voltaire, <i>Sante A. Viselli</i> .....	54
Dans une galerie des glaces : André Gide et sa première fiction, <i>Linda Ness</i> .....	39	<i>Ego Eimi</i> : The Voice Becomes the Story, <i>Rick Watson</i> .....	56
Autobiographie et féminisme dans le roman sénégalais, <i>Joseph Nnadi</i> .....	41	Index .....	59
Weaving Identity: <i>White Lies (for my mother)</i> and Liza Potvin’s Autobiographical Strategies, <i>Jason Phillips</i> .....	42		



**Autobiographie, histoire et fiction dans  
*Le grand voyage* de Jorge Semprun**

*Azouz Ali Ahmed*

L'œuvre romanesque de Jorge Semprun est l'une des rares œuvres, à l'instar de celles de Primo Lévi, Robert Antelme, Tadeusz Borowski, Imre Kertész et de quelques autres, à avoir échappé au récit-témoignage sur les camps de la mort. *Le grand voyage*, représentation de la seconde guerre mondiale, revêt un intérêt théorique et critique particulier eu égard aux questions que soulève la transposition de l'autobiographique dans le fictionnel. Jorge Semprun, pour dépasser la forme archivistique du récit-témoignage, inscrit la trame du roman, le récit dans une structure spatio-temporelle complexe et utilise, dans un mouvement fictionnel remarquable, des procédés stylistiques et esthétiques constituant d'une « littérarité » à même de recomposer poétiquement le monde. L'entrecroisement d'une autobiographie aux formes hybrides, confrontée aux résistances avouées ou non de l'auteur-narrateur, de l'histoire et de la fiction est un enjeu majeur que nous analyserons, en une tentative de lecture socio-critique, dans *Le grand voyage*, œuvre incontournable pour l'appréhension de l'univers concentrationnaire, des horreurs de la guerre et de la folie meurtrière engendrée par l'idéologie fasciste, éclairés par un effort soutenu d'esthétisation. Dans *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli*, Paul Ricoeur observe que « le témoignage constitue la structure fondamentale entre la mémoire et l'histoire » Ceci s'explique quand on sait l'importance des témoignages pour la constitution d'une mémoire historique, pour l'écriture de l'histoire. S'agissant des écrivains des camps, des rescapés des vastes chantiers de la mort, le problème du témoignage s'est posé sur le plan littéraire dans les termes suivants : que faire pour échapper (justement) au récit-témoignage, à cette définition qui fixe et fige des archives dans le temps mort ? Ce type de récit s'apparente toujours à quelque chose d'inerte, qui appartiendrait à des événements passés, condamnés à l'oubli du lourd silence de l'histoire et au froid des monuments commémoratifs. Jorge Semprun, écrivain, par contre, pour donner à son témoignage la force nécessaire qui l'inscrira dans la durée de la fiction, met en œuvre des savoirs à même de transmettre une vision du monde, s'appuie sur la puissance du langage poétique pour recomposer le monde, transforme son récit, invente des personnages et reconfigure totalement la structure spatio-temporelle de

son récit. Il a travaillé sur la notion de temps de manière à faire ressortir ses différents mouvements, leurs rythmes et leur inscription dans et en dehors de l'ordre du temps historique. En effet, le temps de Gérard dans le roman est un temps qui se dilate au gré des événements, un temps avec lequel la mémoire joue au gré des souvenirs qui surgissent. Il commence dans le train qui descend la vallée de la Moselle en route vers l'Allemagne, se projette par analepse dans un mouvement autobiographique prospectif au lieu dit le «Tabou» pour se mêler au temps des maquisards, puis glisse vers la maison d'arrêt d'Auxerre où la mort habite déjà les corps des camarades. Le temps de Gérard c'est celui qui bouleverse l'ordre du récit et se gausse du temps de l'histoire passée ou à venir. C'est le temps que rattrape le temps de l'Histoire sur les routes d'Espagne sous le feu des avions allemands ou italiens. La mise en forme littéraire, selon Semprun, accroît quelquefois en l'altérant la vérité du témoignage parce qu'elle le réorganise de manière dynamique, le rend plus vivant, actuel au présent et au futur. Semprun dans *Le Grand voyage* a utilisé comme hypotexte *La Recherche du temps perdu* de Marcel Proust pour le travail sur la mémoire involontaire, les réminiscences, le rapport de la mémoire avec les sens, mais peut-être aussi perçu dans l'art (Gérard, personnage principal du roman, a essayé, durant le voyage, de se remémorer une partie de *Du Côté de chez Swann*) une sorte de rempart, de refuge contre la non-maîtrise du temps, mais aussi la déchéance du monde. Semprun, à propos du mouvement de construction fictionnelle nécessaire pour dire les choses en frappant l'imaginaire du lecteur, pour susciter en lui des réactions écrit dans *L'Écriture ou la vie* : « Raconter bien, ça veut dire : de façon à être entendu. On n'y parviendra pas sans un peu d'artifice. Suffisamment d'artifice pour que ça devienne de l'art! ».

Queen's University

**“My Mother Died at the Moment I was Born”  
—Jamaica Kincaid’s Autobiography  
from a Systemic Perspective  
Gustav Arnold**

In *How Our Lives Become Stories: Making Selves*, Eakin drastically expands his previous attempts at conceptualizing the self, predicated upon psychodynamic models, by drawing on other sciences, notably neuropsychology. With its emphasis on the interplay of sensory inputs and mental processes, neuropsychology enlarges the notion of selfhood by the placing its origin in the body from which, through a series of neurological stimuli, the subject gains a sense of identity. In line with Edelman’s *Neural Darwinism*, distinguishing between primary and higher order consciousness, which translates roughly into the mind-body split, Eakin investigates autobiographies, Sack’s *A Leg to Stand On* and Grealy’s *The Autobiography of My Face*, to indicate that primary processes are of crucial importance when it comes to defining identity. They not only define the contours and borders of this identity, but also, through proprioception, allow the self to be perceived through the body.

Kincaid’s autobiography, *The Autobiography of My Mother*, is an interesting case in point, because it is tightly structured around an absence, that of a body, which the death of her grandmother has caused in the life of her own mother. This absence has constituted the site of intense emotional investments and has become the screen onto which fantasies, wishful thinking and feelings of anger, are perpetually projected. The author’s mother reports to dream of her mother, seeing only parts of her body, and writes fictional letters to her in which she chides her for abandoning her. What happens here is nothing but a reversed order of neuropsychological processes, that is, a shift, conditioned by existential necessity, from secondary consciousness, which accounts for cognitive processes, to primary one based upon sensory perceptions of oneself and the other. In reconstructing the ways the mother might have been, the author forces herself to create something which she has never experienced, to the point of it being a tangible reality in her life and, most importantly, in her body. At the same time, the return of the mother in the form of fantasies and images can be glossed as a reworking of a traumatic event which has not been duly processed by the system and, as a result, constantly returns to haunt the

living. Schutzenberger's *Ancestor Syndrome* investigates the mechanisms and impact of traumatic occurrences in several generations and argues that the past can affect the present in ways which are entirely unconscious to the subject, who not only falls prey to its effects, but also comes to enact, cognitively, affectively or behaviorally, that which has not been processed. I will go one step further by arguing that the link in the chain of traumatic events, is not the grand-mother who had died, and around whose absence the narrative is tightly organized, but the grandfather himself, who, through the phenomenon of a cross-generational transfer, activates in the daughter the fate of loss, intimately associated with motherhood and sexuality. As he had lost his own mother, and refused to attend her funeral—an occurrence already indicative of his unprocessed and unsymbolized involvement with her—he lives by the family myth, created as a result of it, that intimate associates can be potentially lost: he loses his wife, who dies in childbirth, his own daughter (the author's mother), who, at one point, refuses to acknowledge him as her father, and his other daughter (with another wife), who, after being impregnated by a stranger, then has an accident which leaves her crippled. The series of traumatic events arise from an unprocessed past in which the great-grandmother has played a decisive part, activated, over many generations, as a non-metabolized psychic trauma, haunting the ascendants in various forms and under different guises.

Kincaid's writing of an autobiography, not entirely her own, but dedicated to her mother, who, as we remember, is dead, signals the intertwining of identities experienced, first and foremost, through the body. It also describes the enactment of traumatic events, assimilated into the family myth with its cardinal markers associated with motherhood and sexuality, and causes the emergence of phantasmatic substitutes (higher order consciousness) arising from somatic processes (primary order consciousness).

*University of North Dakota*

**Hermeneutics in a Time of Human Tragedy:  
Bibliomancy, British Israelism, and  
Millenarianism in *Daniel Defoe's  
Journal of the Plague Year*  
Carolyn D. Baker**

A textual analysis of religious responses to abounding human tragedy in Daniel Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year* (an historical fiction written concerning London's Black Plague of 1665) reveals a hermeneutic sourced in bibliomancy, incipient British Israelism, and millenarianism. Defoe himself responds to the preacher's hermeneutics by recording a personal disenchantment and corrective.

*Mayville State University*

**"Such Pelmanism": Theme and Narrative Technique in *The  
English Patient*  
Mark William Brown**

In his 1980 study of Joyce's *Ulysses* Hugh Kenner notes, "That different observers will see different phenomena is guaranteed by *parallax*, a principle Joyce explicitly installed by name in the book itself, where the word is used six times."<sup>1</sup> Kenner is speaking here of differing critical perspectives on the novel, though later the same point is urged concerning observations made by the characters themselves:

Two different versions at least, that is Joyce's normal way; and the uncanny sense of reality that grows in readers of *Ulysses* page after page is fostered by the neatness with which versions of the same event, versions different in wording and often in constituent facts—separated moreover by tens or hundreds of pages—reliably render one another substantial. . . .

[T]he two do something, minute, incremental, to make Bloomsday cohere in any mind that chances to unite them, if only by confirming that as the foxes have their holes and the birds their nests, so each speck in this book has somewhere its complementary speck, in a cosmos we can trust.



Indeed, Kenner's chief point concerns neither critics nor characters, but rather readers of the novel: namely, that much of our comprehension of *Ulysses*, both as narrative and as commentary upon human experience, depends upon our ability to remember and pair off various details, and that by mentioning parallax by name Joyce teaches us how to read his book.

In Michael Ondaatje's novel *The English Patient* the word *pelmanism* occurs only once, when the title character recalls how Bedouin tribesmen who rescued him from the burning wreckage of his plane later put him to work matching cartridges with firearms, a task that reminds him of a card game (known variously as pelmanism, pairs, memory, and concentration) he learned to play as a child. But just as Leopold Bloom, glancing at the timeball on the ballast office, noting the difference between Greenwich Time and Dunsink Time, and trying (without success) to understand the meaning of *parallax*, "let[s] slip through his mind unnoticed a homely example of parallax,"<sup>4</sup> so the English patient, associating one matching activity with another, brings together as by pelmanism discrete but complementary particulars of his experience. And just as readers, prompted by Joyce's mention of parallax, negotiate the complicated narrative of *Ulysses* by remembering "[t]hat different observers will see different phenomena," so readers of *The English Patient*, prompted by Ondaatje's explicit reference to pelmanism, piece together the fragmentary and overlapping narratives of Almásy, Hana, Caravaggio, and Kirpal Singh, pairing off corresponding experiences both within and between the lives of the characters and ultimately, by matching "cards" of identical "ranks" but different "suits," collaborating in the creation of what the patient refers to in a critical passage as "communal histories, communal books," "an earth that ha[s] no maps."<sup>5</sup>

Jamestown College

### Gender and British Working-Class Life Writing: The Case of *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists*

Julie Cairnie

Robert Tressell's *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* (1914) is the British socialist novel that has been embraced by generations of British working-class men as an accurate and even truthful representation of the author's life and, indeed, their own lives. The novel was composed by an Irish housepainter, Robert Noonan (his nom de plume was Robert Tressell), who had recently moved from South Africa to the Sussex town of Hastings with his daughter, Kathleen. Struck by the conditions and complacency of southern English building workers, he wrote his novel in order to record, but also to change conditions; his solution was Socialism. It took him almost five years to complete the novel, a task which he undertook in the evenings after working at his full-time job. Noonan tried to secure a publisher for his 1700-page handwritten manuscript, but without success. With plans to immigrate with his daughter to Canada, he gave Kathleen the manuscript before he left for Liverpool in 1910 to try and secure their passage; Noonan died early in 1911 and was buried\*with 12 others\*in a pauper's grave. He was forty years old.

Kathleen moved to London to work as a governess. There she met Jessie Pope, the Punch contributor and sentimental war poet. Pope read Noonan's manuscript, was impressed, but insisted that it was too unwieldy to be published in its current form. She secured a publisher, the adventurous Grant Richards, and was employed to "edit" the novel; the book was published in heavily expurgated form, first in 1914, and then in a further expurgated form in 1918. In the 1940s a gas meter reader from Hastings, Fred Ball, convinced Grant Richards to help him locate and purchase the original manuscript. Ball purchased the manuscript and brought it home to his wife, Jacqueline. The story goes that they pieced it together on their kitchen table and created file folders out of Corn Flake packages; the full edition of *The Ragged Trousered Philanthropists* was published in 1955. In the meantime, Fred Ball had written a biography of Noonan, Tressell of Mugsborough (1952). In the late 1960s, Kathleen and her daughter, Joan, presumed dead, were found to be living in the South of England. Kathleen's reappearance meant that Fred Ball would have to rewrite the biography; based largely on

interviews with a recalcitrant Kathleen, he published a revised biography, *One of the Damned*, in 1973.

Having established the context surrounding the text, I will argue that it elicits a dominant reading of its truthfulness, accuracy, and fidelity to British working-class masculinity. In his preface, Noonan claims that his novel is truthful: "the work possesses at least one merit\*that of being true. I have invented nothing." Fred Ball, male critics, and general readers all concur that the text is a truthful and accurate portrayal of Edwardian Sussex, but also (somehow presciently) of subsequent periods' labour conditions.

Granted, the novel is largely about men, but women play significant roles: the main character, Frank Owen, has difficulty articulating the problem of capitalism and the benefits of socialism but, as Marion Walls has pointed out, his wife Nora presents the most comprehensive and accessible speech in the novel. Moreover, the text displays significant sensitivity to the plight of women workers, and even acknowledges domestic work as work, and as a site of both capitalist and patriarchal exploitation. Yet, very, very few critics have truly considered the gendered dimensions of the text's context and content. For a start, what is it about the text that produces unproblematic "identification" on the part of male readers? While I will begin by addressing this question, primarily I want to consider the ways in which two women, Kathleen Noonan and Jacqueline Ball, contribute to a more complex understanding of the text as "autobiographical fiction." I will present my current research on the writing (all private) of Kathleen and Jacqueline\*both of whom offer feminine, indeed feminist, perspectives on the text and its contexts by writing or telling their own life stories as a kind of overlay to the text. I don't want to overstate these feminine interventions: Jacqueline has been reluctant to talk about her role in the production of the text and tries to keep the focus on Fred; similarly, Kathleen exhibits a lot more independence, but still returns, over and over again, to her famous father. Women, I should mention, are a "problem" in "the world of Tressell" and (I might add) for feminist researchers.

*University of Guelph*

**"All that can happen to me here has happened":**

**Michael Winter, Gabriel English,  
and Canonicity in Brenna**

*Clarke Gray*

Atlantic Canadian literature, and specifically island literatures like those of Cape Breton and Newfoundland, are perhaps best known thematically for a willingness to tackle issues of nostalgia, history and preconceptions. These issues are in full force in Michael Winter's novel *This All Happened*. Equal parts Dave Eggers and *Great Big Sea*, works to cast aside assumptions about place and legacy and creates for itself something new. Indeed, when we consider issues of form, language, and the character of Gabriel English, as well as the friends he surrounds himself with, it becomes apparent that Michael Winter uses his novel, as a means of debating the issue of canonicity and seeking to carve out a space for contemporary Newfoundland literature in such a canon. This debate seems to waver between eschewing the canon fully, and seeking to make a place within it, as Michael Winter tries different "ins" to the realm of accepted literature. The form of the novel itself continues with this theme through the choice of the diary motif, the mechanics of Winter's writing style, the stream-of-consciousness narrative, and the role of the forward and acknowledgements.

The self-conscious way Michael Winter engages in the writerly arts is made clear by the role of the foreword and the acknowledgments as frames for the narrative. In the foreword, Winter warns us that what we are reading is fictional, yet "any resemblance to people living or dead is intentional and encouraged." Here we see Winter thumbing his nose at the dichotomy of fiction versus non-fiction. There can be no such thing as pure fiction, he argues, as "new experience is always a comparison to the known." By shirking convention, Winter positions his text as an alternative to traditional fiction, and again places his work within a context whereby it offers something new to an existing literary canon, and deals with the very real issue of seeking a place for good writing, be that within or without a formal literary canon. While the issue seems to resolve itself differently for each character and fully for none of them, the reader is left with the sense of an active debate surrounding a place for Atlantic Canadian literature that is not about the sea and the fish. Michael Winter seems to suggest that each writer must find their own

way to write forward, without writing their culture out of existence. In the end, though, all the characters in the novel seem to agree that, canonical or no, the young literature of Newfoundland really does require a room of its own in which to flourish.

*University of New Brunswick*

### Reflections of the French Revolution in Two Plays by German Women

*Linda Dietrick*

In France and England, the French Revolution inspired feminist thinkers like Olympe de Gouges (*Le Droits de la Femme et de la Citoyenne*, 1791) and Mary Wollstonecraft (*A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*, 1792) to claim equal rights for women on the basis of natural law. In Germany, Theodor Gottlieb von Hippel made similar arguments on behalf of women (*Ueber die bürgerliche Verbesserung der Weiber* [On Improving the Status of Women], 1792). As is well known, however, in each case the dominant public culture rejected their ideas as too radical: Olympe de Gouges was guillotined in 1793, Wollstonecraft was attacked as immoral, and Hippel was simply ignored. Their ideas were superceded by the bourgeois ideology of intrinsic character difference between the sexes, separate spheres, and women's threefold 'destiny' as wife, mother, and housewife. One way or the other, women writers of the time had to negotiate a space within these boundaries for literary expression and their own professional activity.

The paper examines in this light two recently re-published women's plays, Wilhelmine von Gersdorf's domestic drama *Die Zwillingsschwwestern oder die Verschiedenheit des Glücks* (The Twin Sisters or Differing Forms of Happiness, 1797) and Charlotte von Stein's comedy *Neues Freiheits-System oder die Verschwörung gegen die Liebe* (New System of Liberty or the Conspiracy against Love, 1798-99). In both plays, characters draw a parallel between the fashionable political concept of liberty and women's freedom of choice in that crucial arena of domestic drama, marriage. In Gersdorf's play, a conniving maidservant tries to talk her wealthy young mistress into eloping with an unscrupulous,

fortune-hunting suitor by appealing to the fashionable 'systems of liberty' from Paris:

Whoever is rich, is independent, and whoever is independent needn't ask anyone for advice, ergo if Grandpapa won't give you to your lover, it's clear as day, you're justified in letting him abduct you and marrying him by your own choice. Judge for yourself: don't these brand new systems of liberty, now arriving everywhere as the latest fashion from Paris, prove you right?

In the end, the young woman is rescued by various twists from the 'temptations' of independence, and the patriarchal order is restored. In her comedy, Charlotte von Stein appears to borrow this motif from Gersdorf, but here its implications are less clear cut and more interesting. The 'new system of liberty' of the title is the philosophical scheme of an eccentric French gentleman to stamp out love as an error or illusion. Stein (like most Germans after the Terror) was no friend of the Revolution, and the ridiculousness of this character, and the fact that his manipulations almost destroy his sister's happiness, cast a negative light on the excesses of 'liberty' emanating from Paris. Nevertheless, the play is full of spirited female characters – two self-employed actresses, two mistakenly kidnapped but unfazed noble ladies, and their cross-dressing maid – who revel in the freedom to choose their lovers without interference from the rather bumbling males who are their ostensible guardians and defenders. One of the young ladies is reproached by her admirer for having another man in their room. Though it's actually their maid dressed in a soldier's uniform, she teases him by saying, "In these times of liberty, a girl can elope if she gets the notion." And in the end, one of the actresses turns the tables on the eccentric philosopher and ensnares him with her erotic charms. So much for freeing himself from the error of love.

In late 18th-century Germany, the term *Freiheitssystem* or system of liberty was not only used to refer to the new regime in France. It could also refer to Adam Smith's well-known concept in *The Wealth of Nations* of a 'system of natural liberty,' in which the State gets out of the way of a man's free pursuit of his economic interests. Just as for Smith, men's freedom meant their economic independence from a paternalistic State, for these playwrights, women's freedom means

economic independence from their male guardians in the domestic sphere of marriage and family.

*University of Winnipeg*

**Ironic Self-Quotation and Parodic Program Music:  
Richard Strauss's Autobiographical "Fiction"**

*Kimberly Fairbrother Canton*

"I do not see why I should not compose a symphony about myself; I find myself quite as interesting as Napoleon or Alexander. (Richard Strauss, in a letter to Romain Rolland)

One of the most important composers of the twentieth century, Richard Strauss had an incredibly rich career that spanned not only the fall of an empire and two world wars, but also the complete breakdown of the tonal system. From the early tone poems that established him as a "modern" composer to the ground-breaking, risqué operas, *Salome* and *Elektra*, that shocked (and continue to shock) their audiences; from the "traditional" but beloved *Der Rosenkavalier*, to the sublime *Vier Letzte Lieder*, which capped off his extraordinarily productive life, Strauss was an artist who continually re-invented himself. But even in works as diverse as the ones mentioned above, one thing always remained the same—Strauss's predominant use of self-quotation as a compositional strategy. Though Strauss never wrote a literary autobiography, I argue that we can read these instances of authorial intrusion, together with his well-documented self-identification with the "heroes" of his works (*Ein Heldenleben*, *Don Juan*), and especially, the actual works that take aspects of his life as their written program or libretto (*Sinfonia Domestica*, *Intermezzo*, respectively), as a musical autobiography—a conscious and sustained cataloguing of his life by way of his life's work.

Interestingly, it is the banal everyday events of Strauss's life, and not the more momentous historical events through which he lived, that

so often make appearances in his work. For that reason, discussions of "Strauss the artist" are necessarily conditioned by discussions of "Strauss the man"—particularly, by the troubling and ironic incongruence of the self-professed heir to Wagner's throne repeatedly parodying his own life vis-à-vis seemingly tasteless musical programs and sly musical self-quotations. As my analysis of the autobiographical elements in *Intermezzo*, *Sinfonia Domestica*, and *Ein Heldenleben* reveals, the personal narrative he develops in such works and continually reiterates, when he later quotes *these* works, is affectionately parodic—indicating a self-awareness that many biographers, eager to rehabilitate a life tainted by Nazi associations, deny him. The resulting inconclusive, fragmented "musical autobiography" is thus a testament to the problems inherent in the narrative drive of most biographies, whose ultimately aim is to define a subject, but in so doing, necessarily repress and/or distort those aspects of the subject that do not "fit" with the ideological agenda of the biography.

*University of Toronto*

***The Colony of Unrequited Dreams: Joey Smallwood's  
Secular Spiritual Autobiography***

*Kevin Flynn*

*The Colony of Unrequited Dreams*, Wayne Johnston's fictive memoir of Joey Smallwood, addresses the theme of a conversion from a number of angles: his mother converts to Pentecostalism in the novel, Smallwood converts from socialist reporter to Liberal politician, and Newfoundland itself converts from colonial outpost to Canadian province. Although he is surrounded (and threatened) by religious converts, it is Smallwood's political conversion that lies at the heart of the novel. But Johnston enriches his account of this secular conversion by employing the conventions of spiritual autobiography—and of the Puritan conversion narrative in particular—to construct his novel.

During a moment of doubt in the novel, Johnston's Smallwood thinks the following: "It seemed to me that unless I did something that historians thought was worth recording, it would be as though I had never lived, that all the histories in the world together formed one book,

not to warrant inclusion in which was to have wasted one's life. It terrified me that if it were possible to extrapolate [D.W. Prowse's *A History of Newfoundland*] past 1895 to the present, I would not be in it" (454). At this climactic point, Smallwood does the three things that all Puritans must do to become converts: he professes his faith (in confederation with Canada), he acknowledges his own debasement (in his feelings of insignificance), and he submits to a higher power—history itself—in order to assure his salvation. From the fictional Smallwood's perspective, confederation is vital less because it allows Newfoundland to join Canada than because it provides him with a chance to leave his mark in the annals of history.

Whereas a Puritan treated the Bible as a sacred text and believed that his or her entrance into Heaven was predestined, Johnston's Smallwood treats Prowse's *History* as his sacred text, and he believes that it is his entrance into History, rather than Heaven, that is predestined. And whereas a Puritan's conversion narrative served a public function by revealing its deliverer to have been spiritually transformed and affirming his or her membership in the church, Smallwood's fictive conversion narrative—the bulk of the novel itself—is less a record of his own transformation than an attempt by him to transform history into autobiography. For him, every telling of Newfoundland's history must be a recitation of his own life story. His conversion narrative thus serves a quite different public function from that of its Puritan model, and the novel as a whole constitutes a powerful rethinking of the relationship between history and autobiography that is enabled by Johnston's use of the conventions of spiritual autobiography to tell his secular tale.

*University of Saskatchewan*

### Daguerreotype as Artifact and Myth

*Julie Gard*

*Obscura: The Daguerreotype Series* is a collection of prose poems based on antique family photographs given to me by my paternal grandmother. Each numbered poem describes and interacts with a different image; there are thirty such pieces altogether. The remaining

ten prose poems, interspersed throughout, are reflections on the project. This work is not autobiographical, although I am present as writer, detective, examiner, intuitor and storyteller. These pieces are not quite fiction in that the blocked poems don't tell stories. Rather, they are snippets of consciousness that I've intuited from close examination of daguerreotypes boxed away for one hundred years.

There has been much talk lately of deception in memoir and nonfiction. I attempt to be honest by describing what I have written as one version of family history, knit of my own consciousness, desires and inner conflicts. I fictionalize what is true to fill in gaps and patch up holes, although sometimes the spaces are left gaping. Made story and embellished character help to create a family mythology that is sustaining, ongoing, and changeable. This project is not altogether ethical, given that my forebears may or may not appreciate the words I put in their mouths. Yet by making my own process of invention transparent, I hope to lend honor to the endeavor of intuiting the past.

The physical presence of the frames and the ongoing chemical processes within the images are part of this inquiry as well. The project concerns what is destroyed and revealed by the damage done to these early photographs over time, as the daguerreotypes fade, decompose, and undergo further chemical changes. Themes that emerge from this work include transience, linkage, family tensions and transgenerational memory. The pieces explore the intersection of art and science, progress and deep history, memory and fiction, illusion and transparency.

The presentation will include a short paper reflecting on this project and its implications, followed by a reading of several prose poems from *Obscura: The Daguerreotype Series*. Visuals will include slides of the corresponding photographs.

*Bismarck State College*

**“That Part of the Story Is My Own”: Facts, Fictions,  
and Repetitions in the Work of Tim O’Brien**

*David A. Godfrey*

In a sense, Tim O’Brien has made a career out of blurring the line between fact and fiction, real and imaginary. He has particularly blurred the line between the autobiographical and the fictive. Most famously, the narrator of *The Things They Carried* just happens to be named Tim O’Brien, and has written a nonfiction work called *If I Die in a Combat Zone* and is at work on a novel called *Going After Cacciato* (O’Brien’s first two books about Viet Nam). Yet, as he told Michael Coffey, “My own experience has virtually nothing to do with the content of the book. [. . .] My goal was to write something that was utterly convincing but without any rules as to what’s real and what’s made up.”

Apparently this has been O’Brien’s intention throughout his career, as numerous “events” are told and retold, with the “real” Tim O’Brien saying in his own voice, “This really happened to me,” and then various characters do the same. Some of the more obvious examples of retold events would be O’Brien’s friend Chip stepping on an IED and blowing himself into smithereens in *If I Die in a Combat Zone*, an event retold several times in that book, and then re-configured in *The Things They Carried* with Kurt Lemon stepping on a mine with the same result, an event retold six times, with variations. In retaliation for the death of a friend and platoon member, a soldier blows a water buffalo apart, bit by bit, with an M-16 in *If I Die*, *Going after Cacciato*, and *The Things They Carried*. His insistence that he went to war because he was a coward is also explored in each of those three works, most masterfully in “On the Rainy River” in *Things*. In 1998, in a reading at Ann Arbor, MI, O’Brien related the word “Pontiac” to his sexual initiation, but in Chapter 13 of *Tomcat in Love*, Thomas Chippering describes the same relationship, claiming it *really* happened to him. In *If I Die*, O’Brien mentions changing from fatigues to civies in the toilet on the airplane on the flight home from Nam, something John Wade of *In the Lake of the Woods* also does. No doubt considerably more important are highly similar passages in “The Vietnam in Me,” which O’Brien first published in 1994 in *The New York Times*, and *In the Lake of the Woods* concerning the My Lai massacre (in which O’Brien did *not* take part).

The only scholar that I’m yet aware of to address O’Brien’s “recycling” of material is Mark A. Heberle, who, in his excellent *A Trauma Artist: Tim O’Brien and the Fiction of Vietnam*, says O’Brien’s “readings and the works are characterized by repetition, the primary feature of posttraumatic survivorhood [. . .] O’Brien’s works rewrite the same primal scenes and experiences, and the repetitions are so numerous and recurrent that the works have become an endless reconfiguration of trauma writing that constantly revises itself – or a symptom of a trauma that is never healed” (xxiii).

Now, I don’t think there’s any doubt Heberle is right, but I also don’t find his comment in this regard very helpful. What I propose is a paper dealing with the *literary* consequences of O’Brien’s retelling of events and conflating the autobiographical and the fictive. What patterns, themes, motifs, criticisms or evaluations emerge? O’Brien may very well be suffering Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome, but my own reading of his works leads me to believe the compulsions, if there are any, behind the tellings and retellings are *literary*. I personally believe him implicitly and entirely when he says, “My goal was to write something that was utterly convincing but without any rules as to what’s real and what’s made up.”

*Jamestown College*

**The Uses of Literature: Crime Fiction  
as Supplemental Reading**

*Chandice M. Johnson, Jr.*

In a broad range of disciplines, it is not uncommon to find works of fiction in supplemental reading lists. What may not be found is a smattering of crime fiction, which is often dismissed as non-literature—something to read on the beach or while waiting in an airport terminal. But many “whodunits” feature complicated, sometimes autobiographical plots that provide useful supplemental reading because of their exploration of the convoluted workings or weird malfunctionings of the human brain or psyche. In Howard Engel’s *Memory Book*, for example, detective Benny Cooperman must solve a crime while suffering from *alexia sine graphia*, a condition that leaves its victims able to write,



but unable to read. When working on the novel, Engel—like his fictional character—suffered from *alexia* and was unable to read what he was writing.

Another writer whose complicated, sometimes autobiographical, “whodunits” could be useful supplemental reading is hard-boiled crime fiction writer Jim Thompson, who wrote from a personal background almost as harsh and complex as the novels he produced.

Describing the publications that followed Thompson’s *Nothing More Than Murder* (1949), Thompson biographer Robert Polito says, “His [most] notorious novels . . . spotlight edgy, disturbed, insidiously engrossing criminals who often unravel into psychopathic killers. . . . [His] boldest writing . . . [turns the formulaic] and thematic resolutions of the crime novel [on their head] for a more disruptive, devastating ambiguity [instead of the tidy resolutions common to the classic whodunit]. In novel after novel, a demonic impulse is unleashed rather than quelled, with the result that at the books’ conclusions “both Thompson’s [heroes] and Thompson’s [societies] achieve, not a new life [as in the satisfying conclusions of classical whodunits], but a terrifying nothingness.” This “terrifying nothingness” often leaves readers wrung out at the conclusion of a Thompson novel—a little unsure of their own sanity or the sanity of a presenter recommending Thompson as supplemental reading. So consider *The Alcoholics*, one of Thompson’s less violent books

Published in 1953, *The Alcoholics* covers a single day in the life of El Healtho, a run-down Southern California sanatorium operated by Dr. Peter S. Murphy, who specializes in a rehabilitation program called “Modern Treatment for Alcoholics.” Despite some obvious oversimplifications, Thompson’s depiction of sanitarium life has a tone of authenticity because it is founded on his own experience as a patient at various drying-out clinics. And while Thompson’s analyses often reflect the alcoholic’s self-deceiving rationalizations, Thompson—apparently to show the reader he knows whereof he speaks—gives himself a cameo appearance on the last page of *The Alcoholics*. After a taxi driver dumps a drunk, unquestionably Thompson, on El Healtho’s doorstep, Dr. Murphy observes: “A grade-A nut. A double-distilled screwball. Just the man to write a book about this place.”

As “just the man” to write *The Alcoholics*, Thompson’s insights and observations can be useful in alcoholism studies, while his other novels provide glimpses inside a twisted mind. As Polito observes, “It

became Thompson’s dismaying gift to recreate his monsters from the inside out . . . to roost deep within their snaky psyches, and to embody through imaginative art their terrifying yet beguiling voices on the page.” Another, more profound, justification for adding crime fiction to a supplemental reading list comes from Thompson himself, who quipped: “I suppose [*The Nothing Man* will] baffle the hell out of the average whodunit reader, but perhaps he needs to be baffled. Perhaps his thirst for entertainment will impel him to the dread chore of thinking.”

What better use of literature than impelling students to think?

*North Dakota State University*

### From a Watcher to a Translator: A Biographer’s Self-Realization in *Small Ceremonies*

*Ying Kong*

This paper explores Carol Shields’s first novel, *Small Ceremonies*, as a meta-narrative of life writing that demonstrates how biography is necessarily a form of autobiography, a “translation” of one’s life into another form which carries inevitable traces of fiction; but also raises moral questions about the propriety of life writing.

*Small Ceremonies* is a fictional autobiography of a biographer, Judith Gill, who has already published two “moderately well received” biographies and now is working on her third one, the biography of Susanna Moodie (Shields 5). While “searching, prying into the small seams” of Susanna Moodie’s life, she realizes that she has been invading “an area of existence where [she has] no real rights” (34). From the outset, she has been aware of one of the fundamental problems of writing biography—the violation of individual privacy. But now, reflecting on herself, she has to confront the problem of being a watcher, and hence a voyeur, in her own life.

As a biographer, Judith has been struggling to answer the question, “Why am I always the one who watches” (22)? She watches her son, her daughter, and her husband; in hospital, she watches patients; in a restaurant, she observes a party of deaf people. Watching has become her instinctive action. As she admits, “I became a full-time voyeur”

(54). While she fears "lust," it is really not a lust for other people's secrets.

As Judith realizes, "I am from a bleak non-storytelling family" (45). It is "out of simple malnutrition" that Judith has acquired her lust for other people's stories so that she can satisfy her "girlhood hunger for an expanded existence" (46). This reflection helps her to understand why both she and her sister turn to literature, because "Our own lives just weren't enough, .... We were underfed, undernourished; we were desperate" (47). Judith also defends her watching and observing other people's lives as a compensation for her loss of narrative identity in her childhood.

Only through writing about Susanna Moodie's life, does Judith come to understand the effects of her watching upon the subjects she observes: "I'm stuck with the dangers that go along with it" (179). When they live in John Spalding's house in Birmingham, England, her "lust for the lives of others" drives her to explore John's private life by reading his diaries and the manuscript of his rejected novel. She also enjoys exposing Furlong's mysteries in revenge for his taking over the plot which she steals from John Spalding. These acts of "watching" and "stealing" not only raise questions of sources, but also of truth in her work, since she never reveals her theft of John Spalding's plot, not even to her husband.

Again Judith turns to Susanna Moodie for an answer to her moral dilemma. From her subject, she begins to acknowledge that other people also have private existences; they have much the same right as she does to their own privacy. Another sense she gains through writing about Moodie is that the life lived would be never the same as the life written because biography is always a version of autobiography.

In his *Fictions in Autobiography*, Paul John Eakin points out that "any autobiography has some fiction in it," and so we need "to recognize that all fiction is in some sense necessarily autobiographical" (10). The "translated" stories in each novel further prove the need of translation. Each subject has to be translated by the writer from different points of view. The writer has to negotiate the distance between the public appearance and the private reality. How, then, can she negotiate that distance between her watching and her writing?

What Carol Shields illustrates in *Small Ceremonies* is that life writing is necessarily a process of translation in which facts are transmuted into stories because "our lives are steamed and shaped into

stories" (51). Judith's autobiography is finally about her own transmutation from a watcher to a translator. Her moral dilemma of being a watcher of other lives is overcome by her new way of seeing her role as a watcher and a translator. She also feels "cleansed" of her guilt for stealing John Spalding's plot because "writers don't steal ideas. They abstract them wherever they can" (131). So "the crime within a crime" has turned out to be a fiction within a fiction: Furlong's *Graven Images* and Spalding's *Alien Interlude* are all cradled in the text of Judith's autobiography, *Small Ceremonies*.

*University of Manitoba*

### Murakami Haruki and the I-Novel Tradition in Modern Japanese Literature

*William Lee*

Murakami Haruki (b. 1949) has not only been the most popular writer in Japan since the mid 1980s, he has become the most well known Japanese writer in the world today. His fifth novel, the 1987 *Noruei no mori* (*Norwegian Wood*), sold an incredible four million copies in Japan, while others have sold hundreds of thousands each. And since the publication of the translation of his *Hitsuji o meguru boken* (*A Wild Sheep Chase*) in 1989, his works have become increasingly popular in the rest of the world. His stories have been published in prestigious magazines such as *The New Yorker*, and translations of his works have appeared in some 15 languages.

While in the West Murakami is often heralded as a "postmodern" writer, his success in Japan is due in large measure to his writing squarely within the Japanese literary tradition of the *shishosetsu* or "I-novel." The term *shishosetsu* originally referred only to a novel written in the first person, but it soon came to mean a novel about the author's own life or at least based largely on material from the author's own life, whether written in the first person or not. Developing out of the attempt by Japanese writers in the early twentieth century to reform literature according to Western models, the I-novel evolved into a distinctly Japanese literary form that became the new convention. Unlike Western novels, which critics began to see as artful fabrication, the I-novel came

to be highly regarded precisely because of its ostensive sincerity and lack of artifice. Although certain postwar Japanese writers such as Abe Kobo and Nobel laureate Oe Kenzaburo made renewed attempts to steer Japanese fiction in the direction of the modern Western novel, the *shishosetsu* arguably remains the convention in Japanese literature to this day.

In this paper, I aim to show not only that Murakami's work can be considered to belong to the autobiographical *shishosetsu* tradition, but also that the success of his work in Japan stems from his ability to exploit the appeal of the tradition for the native audience. Although I will touch on several of his works, the main focus will be on his most popular novel, *Norwegian Wood*.

*University of Manitoba*

### Semper Eadem? Representations of a Historical Figure across Biographical Texts

*Bryony J. Lewicki*

Biography's play across the border of history and fiction is the source of its magic and its contentious position in generic hierarchies. While biography originally came under suspicion for a focus on private lives and the use of fictional characteristics, the advent of postmodernism brought the whole basis of biography into question. Postmodern thinking throws the existence of an essential self in to uncertainty, distrusts the sources from which biographers create their texts and makes the "truthful" telling of a life story unobtainable. The methods by which texts create an identity, such as structure and interpretation, are under scrutiny. However, Linda Hutcheon argues that truth has not been lost but falsity, forwarding the possibility of multiple truths rather than one Truth. Applying this concept to biographical texts, John Keener argues for an expanded definition of biography that crosses generic and media boundaries and claims that historical identity disturbs the border between factual and fictional narratives. Another genre that plays across the border of history and fiction is historical fiction. Historical fiction is judged by an author's ability to reflect a factually sound atmosphere and accurately portray historical figures. However, as fiction the genre

has greater freedom to adapt to postmodern interests and concerns about textual representations of an identity.

In order to see the ways in which structure and interpretation contribute to the construction of an identity across narrative modes, this paper will compare two texts that address the same historical subject but are written in different genres. *The First Elizabeth*, a biography, and *I, Elizabeth*, a historical fiction, both trace the life of Queen Elizabeth I. Carolly Erickson's, *The First Elizabeth*, was originally published in 1983 and then reissued in 1997 with a new preface. Though Erickson holds a PhD, *The First Elizabeth* is not limited to an academic audience but is meant to be approachable by anyone with an interest in the queen. Rosalind Miles's historical fiction, *I, Elizabeth*, takes the form of an autobiography penned by the queen in 1601 on the eve of the execution of the Earl of Essex and is as much an exploration of the challenges of biography as it is a novel about the life of Elizabeth. *The First Elizabeth* uses biography's structural form and historiographic techniques to produce a biography of decline that challenges the legendary image of Elizabeth as a strong, forceful queen. *I, Elizabeth*, on the other hand, presents Elizabeth's life from a postmodern perspective, highlighting the limits of textual representations by inscribing and contesting the structural and literary techniques that create a coherent identity.

*Carleton University*

### A Young Man's History in A Time of Trouble—The *Bildungsroman* of Su Tong

*Hua Li*

The focus of this study is the Chinese *Bildungsroman* story, *Northern Zone of the City*, written by a contemporary Chinese writer, Su Tong. "The story is treated as a cultural metaphor that reflects the growth and future of Chinese youth in an abnormal era – the Cultural Revolution in the 1970s – and how it deviates from the utopian vision perpetuated by Mao Zedong's promotion of the "morning sun at eight or nine o'clock" and "the socialist new men."

Su Tong has experienced one of the most violent and chaotic eras in human history in his childhood; the Cultural Revolution is part of

his memories. Therefore his coming-of-age story is a fictional history of his childhood. As an adult now, he has a more sober attitude to examine the life of young people in the China of the 1960s and 1970s. He has a profound tragic sense of the unleashed, energetic and chaotic life youth lead in a time of trouble.

In Su Tong's story with the Cultural Revolution as its historical background, the teenagers, representing the hope of society, grow up in a morally degenerate and politically suppressed society. They are dissatisfied, restless and unable to find meaning in their lives. Despite being confronted with the trials and ordeals that in another setting would have led them to maturity, their goals remain unclear and their lives meaningless. They wait in vain for their future to arrive.

The methodology of this paper is a combination of close readings of original Chinese literary texts and literary analysis informed by scholarship on the *Bildungsroman* genre, and psychological and sociological theories of adolescence.

It is useful to examine Su Tong's work in the context of *Bildungsroman*, not because the western theoretical corps are indispensable to understand these Chinese literary experience, but because by placing the Chinese texts in comparative perspective the "Chineseness" of these texts is historicized and becomes relational to the outside world." (Yingjin Zhang, 7) The interaction between the literary genre and the individual literary work is one of my concerns in this study.

By linking Su's work to the *Bildungsroman* tradition, I intend to demonstrate that Su Tong's story enriches this literary genre through parody.

The parody is obvious. First: though his story contains the main elements of the traditional *Bildungsroman* novel, these experiences don't help the characters to achieve maturity as the traditional *Bildungsroman* does, but instead lead the young heroes to destruction. Second: the real social world, which is supposed to guide the protagonist and eventually accommodate him, is chaotic and violent. This world does not allow them to see their way clear to a fulfilling relationship with human society. Third: the educative environment of the protagonist is not the world of parents and teachers, but rather the vulnerable and innocent sibling world.

Most importantly, Su Tong's *Bildungsromane* is a parody of the coming-of-age stories written by Chinese writers in Mao era, such as

Yang Mo, Wang Meng, and Hao Ran. He subverts the formulaic writing perpetuated by Mao Zedong, which portrays Chinese young people who grow up into "the socialist new men" under the guidance and cultivation of the CCP. Su Tong embraces an essentially pessimistic view of the future of the Chinese young people in the 1970s. Therefore, writing coming-of-age stories is not only his lyrical way of exploring the disastrous effects of historical events upon Chinese people in general and young people in particular, but also his reminder to the world that history cannot be forgotten.

*University of Manitoba*

**Pleasure and Danger in the *Pot au noir*:  
Adèle Toussaint-Samson and the  
Hypersexualization of Brazil**

*Christopher Lozensky*

In keeping with the autobiographical aspect of this year's LCMND conference, my paper offers a queerly feminist consideration of *A Parisian in Brazil: The Travel Account of Frenchwoman in Nineteenth-Century Rio de Janeiro*, written by Adèle Toussaint-Samson. Published first in French in 1883, Adèle's daughter, Emma Toussant, translated her mother's account into English for the 1891 edition. Though neither the exact dates of Adèle's voyage to and through Brazil nor of the precise time she committed her "sketches" and "souvenirs" to paper can be known for certain, it is clear that Adèle journeyed from Paris to Brazil with her husband and infant son around 1850 and remained in the country for about twelve years.

Beginning with a "Preface" in which she describes the tribulations she endured as a nineteenth-century French woman trying to publish in a male-dominated field, Adèle continues with four chapters, detailing the sea-voyage to Brazil aboard "La Normandie," her experiences in Rio de Janeiro, and her return to France. In her "Editor's Introduction" to a 2001 edition of *A Parisian in Brazil*, historian June E. Hahner notes that "[a]lthough Adèle tells us much about the Brazil of the 1850s, she says relatively little about herself and less about her family" (xiii).

Indeed, Adèle never informs her readers of her husband's occupation—in fact, she does not even give him a name—and “[s]he never explains precisely when or why they traveled to Brazil or how they supported themselves there for a dozen years” (Hahner xiii). Reconsidered in the light of recent feminist and queer theories, however, I suggest that Adèle's account has far more to tell us about gender and sexuality than has hereto been appreciated.

From either side of the Atlantic, stereotypical perceptions have for centuries perpetuated the image of Brazil as *the* land of hypersexuality. “For many U.S. media consumers,” writes Patrick Larvie in a recent essay, “Brazil recurs as a fantasyland of minimalist beach attire and carnival, offering forbidden pleasures and untold dangers to privileged white visitors.” However, as Larvie further observes, “Such representations are not new and historically have not been limited to U.S. media products” (“Nation, Science, and Sex: AIDS and the New Brazilian Sexuality,” *Disease in the History of Modern Latin America from Malaria to AIDS*, ed. Diego Armus [Durham and London: Duke UP, 2003], 290). Written by a presumably white (and, therefore, presumably privileged) Frenchwoman “from the artistic centre of Paris,” Adèle's *A Parisian in Brazil* stands as a case-in-point. “Throughout its history,” Larvie observes, “the territory now known as Brazil has been described as having a persistent and troubled relationship to sex”—and, intriguingly enough, one can describe Adèle's relationship to sex in the same way.

At least since the early 1990s, “pleasure and danger” has been a rich trope for feminist explorations of female sexuality (see Carol S. Vance, ed. *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality* [London: Pandora, 1992]), and given the “forbidden pleasures and untold dangers” stereotypically associated with tropical regions in general and with Brazil in particular, the pleasure and danger motif remains an indispensable tool for a queerly feminist re-reading of Adèle's account. Written about Brazil by a woman in a time when female writers did not and could not usually have such material published, Adèle's account provides an invaluable opportunity for a queerly feminist investigation of how, by exploring—in life and in writing—the pleasures and dangers of Brazilian hypersexuality, one nineteenth-century Frenchwoman was able to explore the pleasures and dangers of her own sexuality, as well.

Though one may not immediately think of nineteenth-century travel accounts as examples of erotic writing, the narrative of Adèle Toussaint-

Samson provides an invaluable opportunity for further queer and feminist explorations of Brazilian hypersexuality and female sexuality—pleasure and danger.

*Minot State University*

### Postcards from the Past

*Karen Malcolm & Barbara Becker*

One of the family heirloom's bequeathed to Barb Becker is a collection of postcards addressed to her maternal grandmother Miss. C. Campbell of Edinburg at the turn of the twentieth century. Christina Campbell was born in Wick, Scotland March 17, 1878. In 1904, when she collected the postcards, she would have been 26 years old. She immigrated to Canada circa 1909, and lived in Winnipeg until her death in October 1948. The collection includes three hundred and fifty postcards sent mostly by eight women from various locations throughout Britain between 1904 and 1906. Apparently these postcard collections were a fad amongst the working class at the time. Christina Campbell was the cook of an upper class Mrs. Morrison who owned a nine room Victorian Mansion. On their days off staff would hop a train to a nearby destination, and then purchase a few postcards to send to friends and acquaintances who shared their hobby. Their adventures were a form of inexpensive entertainment for the working class. However, some of the postcards were sent to Miss Campbell by Mrs. Morrison's friends and relatives.

Although *experiential* content, using Halliday's term for the function of language which encodes representations of this world (1985) is clearly not the reason these missives were sent, they remain important cultural documents of that historical period. In this paper Malcolm and Becker analyze several postcards from the collection linguistically and visually using Malcolm's phasal analysis and Kress and Van Leeuwen's visual grammar, in order to unravel the cultural attitudes, belief systems and values held by interlocutors of turn of the century Britain. In contrast with the emails and blogs of our contemporary world, one of the interesting features that becomes apparent in these texts is the relationship between the registers of postcards and personal letters to

interlocutors who share a close, albeit not intimate, interpersonal relationship.

*University of Winnipeg*

**Vicente Huidobro's *Finis Britannia* [sic]:  
Fiction and Affairs of State**

*Debra Maury*

While the Chilean poet Vicente Huidobro is well known as the principal figure in Hispanic vanguardista poetry of the 1920s, his relatively unstudied prose writings such as *Finis Britannia* provide revealing insights into the world of spectacle and innovation that constituted the avant-garde era. The dramatic and sometimes ostentatious nature of his life as well as his art, were the result of an infamous ego and a constant urge for finding new realms of creative expression. *Finis Britannia*, while fictional, is a scarcely disguised imaginary autobiography set against a background of international politics. It is not by coincidence that *Finis Britannia*'s English protagonist, Victor Haldan, has the initials V.H. The author had even hinted to others that he himself was a member of a secret revolutionary society much like the one Haldan belongs to in the novel.

Although this slim volume is a novel of sorts, it is more of a collage containing little in the way of plot. It has been described as a "political tract" or "pamphlet" integrating Huidobro's aesthetics and his own romanticized political aspirations. *Finis Britannia*'s vague narrative framework serves as a preface to six speeches on the evils of British imperialism delivered by the protagonist before multinational audiences in 1922. Structurally, the variations in perspective and narrative voice throughout the work reveal Huidobro's close artistic ties to cubism.

Thematically, the fictional Victor Haldan espouses Huidobro's own theories on individualism and heroism in contrast to a burgeoning interest on the author's part at the time in socialism and Nietzsche's ruminations on the concepts of the masses and slavery. This novel pays tribute to the idealized notions of liberty, justice, heroic exaltation and revolution, all the perfections that the author envisioned for his own life. The stylistic ambiguities of *Finis Britannia* reflect Huidobro's

political and social beliefs, continually adjusted to suit his aesthetics, his particular way of making life art and art life, the quintessential posturing of all avant-garde movements.

*University of North Dakota*

**Histoire, identité migrante et (auto)biographie :  
le cas de *La mémoire de l'eau* de Ying Chen**

*Kenneth Meadwell*

Depuis le 20<sup>e</sup> siècle, les manifestations de la quête identitaire dans le récit canadien d'expression française témoignent d'un certain idéalisme et mettent en valeur la problématique de l'identité individuelle et collective. La question identitaire est également soulevée dans l'écriture migrante, en l'occurrence par *La mémoire de l'eau* (1992) de Ying Chen, Chinoise établie au Canada depuis la fin des années 1980. Force est de noter que l'apport de l'écriture migrante à l'évolution du récit canadien d'expression française, et d'expression anglaise par ailleurs, élargit à l'époque contemporaine les frontières de l'imaginaire tout en repoussant les contraintes thématiques ou discursives qui, par le passé, ont pu influencer sur l'élaboration des univers romanesques. En effet, le cas de *La Mémoire de l'eau* en dit long sur la nature des mutations esthétiques, thématiques et discursives que subit le récit canadien contemporain d'expression française. Ce récit qui met en vedette les transformations de l'identité féminine en Chine au cours du vingtième siècle, introduit ainsi dans le paysage littéraire canadien des configurations identitaires entraînées par la marche de l'Histoire et dont la spécificité se révèle d'autant novatrice que l'ontologie demeure de toute évidence universelle.

Cette communication se donnera pour objectif – dans un premier temps et en guise de remarques préliminaires et méthodologiques – de faire état de la problématique de l'altérité issue de la migration et de la transformation identitaire dans le texte littéraire. Cette discussion s'appuiera sur une approche formulée grâce (i) à la discussion de l'identité-mêmeté, l'identité-ipséité et l'altérité chez Ricœur, (ii) à celle des stratégies identitaires de l'Autre chez Landowski, et (iii) à celle de la notion de la migration chez Ouellet. Dans un deuxième temps, cette



communication voudra élucider le rôle que joue l'Histoire dans le déploiement de la thématique identitaire féminine, présentée par *La Mémoire de l'eau*, à travers l'analyse des opérations narratives et discursives qui engendrent et véhiculent le discours de l'altérité, notamment celle de l'évolution identitaire de la Lie-Fei, grand-mère de la narratrice.

Dès le titre, *La mémoire de l'eau*, dédié à la grand-mère de Ying Chen, évoque le souvenir, le passé, la migration, bref le temps qui s'écoule comme l'eau qui passe. L'ensemble de ces thématiques énonce les transformations identitaires de l'individu devenu Autre à cause de la marche de l'Histoire. Récit sobre mais non sans élégance, *La Mémoire de l'eau* offre un questionnement sur le temps, l'exil, l'origine et la mémoire, vu à travers la subjectivité de la narratrice, créée vraisemblablement d'après certains liens autobiographiques avec Chen. La narratrice, jeune femme innommée, raconte l'évolution et les bouleversements de l'histoire et de la société chinoises modernes : à partir de 1912, année où le dernier empereur de Chine est contraint de renoncer au trône et dont l'abdication instaure définitivement la république chinoise, en passant par l'essor du communisme, l'occupation japonaise, la révolution culturelle, les années de l'occidentalisation qui suivent 1976, année où Mao Zedong est décédé, et jusqu'à la fin des années 1970, époque où elle s'envole pour New York. Au cours de cette histoire, la narratrice, qui reste sensiblement à l'arrière plan en tant que personnage, relate les paroles et les souvenirs de nombre de personnages, et singulièrement ceux de sa grand-mère.

Le titre, la dédicace « Pour grand-mère », l'incipit et l'explicit du texte se rattachent tous à la figuration de Lie-Fei, et permettent d'appréhender l'importance accordée à cette figure, à la fois structure fondamentale de la narration et personnage dont la description, les paroles et les actes influent beaucoup sur la discursivité. Tout au long du récit, la voix narrative de la jeune femme raconte la vie de Lie-Fei suivant les détails qui lui ont été transmis par son aïeule, ainsi que par d'autres membres de sa famille, et de cette façon lui redonne vie au cours de trois périodes identitaires marquantes : son enfance et le bandage des pieds; son mariage et la vie adulte; sa vieillesse et le veuvage. L'imagerie métonymique récurrente du « pied de lotus » – le pied bandé –, qui sera commentée, joue un rôle primordial dans la thématique des transformations identitaires de la femme chinoise.

Ce survol des notions de la migration et de l'altérité permettra (i) d'appréhender la spécificité de la thématique de l'identitaire et de l'(auto)biographie telle qu'elle se démarque dans *La mémoire de l'eau* et (ii) d'élucider une approche méthodologique qui saurait l'étudier.

*University of Winnipeg*

### Un bateau en enfer: la fiction autobiographique de Rimbaud

*Glenn Moulaison*

Most (if not all) critics contend that *A Season in Hell* is a work of autobiography, however 'poeticized' it may be : the 'I' who speaks is Rimbaud himself, and he tells the story of his defeat, of his ultimate coming to terms with the fact that his 'aventure' as poet has come crashing to an end. My contention is that Rimbaud's 'I' in *A Season in Hell* is an 'autobiographical fiction.' I have made this claim elsewhere by relying on internal evidence and by comparing *A Season in Hell* with other works within the same (confessional) genre. In this paper, I would like to give additional support for this claim by relying on the external evidence provided by some of Rimbaud's earlier works, which indeed show a clear propensity for 'autobiographical fiction.'

*University of Winnipeg*

### Dans une galerie des glaces : André Gide et sa première fiction

*Linda Ness*

Cette communication se propose d'analyser le rapport complexe qui existe entre André Gide, son *Journal* et son premier récit-journal, *Les Cahiers d'André Walter* (1891). Notre but est d'exposer la manière dont la fonction négative du journal intime telle qu'elle est présentée dans le texte fictif finit par se transformer en une mise en valeur du *Journal* en tant que support de la création littéraire de Gide.

Roman écrit entièrement en forme de journal intime, *Les Cahiers d'André Walter* racontent en apparence des événements ayant lieu pendant une courte période de la vie du narrateur, André Walter. Celui-ci est un jeune écrivain ambitieux qui tient un journal intime dans lequel il transcrit des passages d'un ancien journal afin de « délivr[er] [s]a pensée de ses rêveries antérieures » et d'écrire « de nouvelles [pages] sur des souvenirs anciens ». <sup>6</sup> Dans un premier temps, en nous inspirant de certains aspects des théories de l'autobiographie, de l'autofiction et du nom propre, nous établirons un lien d'identification entre Gide et Walter. Non seulement ce rapport se fonde-t-il sur l'emploi du prénom « André », mais il est renforcé par quelques passages du *Journal* de jeunesse de Gide qui sont remaniés et transposés dans le texte fictif. Ensuite, à partir d'une analyse approfondie du fonctionnement du journal intime dans l'œuvre fictive, nous examinerons la façon dont la relation entre Walter, son journal et le roman qu'il désire écrire, *Allain*, nous permet de réfléchir sur le rapport entre Gide, son *Journal* et son propre roman, c'est-à-dire *Les Cahiers d'André Walter*. Un jeu de miroirs identitaire qui repose sur la forme du journal s'instaure ainsi entre le texte fictif et le texte intime de sorte que l'un fournit un commentaire sur l'autre, comme le remarque Valérie Raoul : « Le vrai journal est l'instrument de la quête de soi d'un individu ; le journal fictif, lui, est la description de ce processus. » <sup>7</sup>

Figure qui traverse son œuvre entière, l'intimiste fictif est une manifestation poussée « jusqu'à l'absurde » <sup>8</sup> d'une des « diverses possibilités » <sup>9</sup> d'André Gide. La création d'un tel personnage permet à ce dernier, selon ses propres dires, d'exorciser ce qu'il perçoit comme étant des tendances destructrices de son propre caractère. La production des œuvres fictives permet alors à l'auteur de « se connaître ». <sup>10</sup> De la même manière, le récit écrit en forme de journal est une mise en scène exagérée d'une fonction négative (possible) du *Journal* qui empêche Gide de subir le même destin que son intimiste fictif. Les rôles que joue Walter en tant que double fictif de Gide – écrivain, lecteur, intimiste – semblent correspondre exactement à ceux de l'auteur sur le plan extratextuel. Toutefois, la différence fondamentale entre Walter et Gide repose justement sur le rapport de chacun avec son journal intime ou, plus précisément, sur la distinction entre *transcrire* et *transposer*. Transcrire n'est qu'un simple acte de recopier. Ce geste permet à Walter de relire et de « revivre » son passé ; pourtant, il finit par se révéler incapable de créer quelque chose de nouveau à partir de ces souvenirs.

En revanche, l'acte de transposer nécessite que le texte en question subisse des modifications : c'est un acte *créateur*. En transposant des extraits de son *Journal* dans son roman, Gide, à l'encontre de Walter, réussit à rédiger son roman. Autrement dit, alors que la rédaction de son journal intime empêche Walter d'écrire son roman, elle permet à Gide de composer le sien.

L'acte de transcrire dans la diégèse reflète alors l'acte de transposer sur le plan extratextuel : la structure de la relation entre ces deux actes est *chiasmatisque*. Dans ce jeu de miroirs, André Walter est ainsi un *reflet inversé* d'André Gide. Nous concluons en démontrant que le réseau complexe de liens entre Walter, son journal intime et son roman, ainsi qu'entre Gide, son *Journal* et *Les Cahiers d'André Walter*, témoigne en effet d'une valorisation du *Journal* et de son rôle crucial non seulement dans la quête de soi mais également dans la création littéraire de l'auteur.

*University of Toronto*

### Autobiographie et féminisme dans le roman sénégalais

*Joseph Nnadi*

La ville de Dakar, surnommée « le Paris de l'Afrique », capitale de l'ancienne Afrique Occidentale Française (AOF), est aussi le berceau de la littérature francophone d'Afrique noire. Cela n'a donc rien d'étonnant que la littérature africaine féministe prenne aussi son essor dans le pays de Léopold Sédar Senghor, Cheik Hamidou Kane, Birago Diop, Cheik Anta Diop... Débutant dans les années 1970 avec l'ouvrage de pionnier qu'était *Une si longue lettre* de Mariama Bâ, le discours féministe en littérature d'Afrique francophone n'a pas cessé d'accroître de vigueur et de diversité. En effet, une pléthore de romancières, de femmes-poètes et de nouvellistes sénégalaises (Annette d'Erneville, Ndèye Coumba Diakhaté, Aminata Maiga-Ka, Mariama Ndoye-Mbengue—pour n'en nommer que peu) s'engagent avec acharnement dans la lutte pour la libération de la femme africaine. Seule Aminata Sow Fall avoue ne pas écrire « du point de vue de la femme. »

Cette communication vise une étude comparative de l'œuvre de Mariama Bâ et de Mariama Ndoye-Mbengue, en s'inspirant surtout de trois romans, *Une si longue lettre*, *Un chant écarlate* et *Comme le bon*

*pain*. Elle vise avant tout à relever les techniques narratives par lesquelles les deux romancières mettent le genre (auto)biographique au service de leur discours féministe.

*Université de Winnipeg*

### Weaving Identity: *White Lies (for my mother)* and Liza Potvin's Autobiographical Strategies

*Jason Phillips*

This paper analyzes how Liza Potvin's *White Lies (for my mother)* embraces the strategies and purposes of "a radical reassessment of the nature of autobiography" (Sheringham 185) by women writers in the latter half of the twentieth century, and how the narrative relies on the historical relationship between text and textile to assert autonomy, agency, and identity. Specifically, Potvin uses a frame of textile metaphor to nuance the resolution of a troubled relationship with her mother.

The title of my paper is a play on the title of an essay published by Potvin in 1989. Potvin's essay is an analysis of Isabel Huggan's *The Elizabeth Stories* (1987) and is entitled "The Elizabeth Stories and Women's Autobiographical Strategies." Potvin begins that essay with the sentence, "Isabel Huggan's *The Elizabeth Stories* is not, strictly speaking, autobiography, even though the circumstantial details of Huggan's life are almost identical with those of her protagonist" (1). Potvin's opening sentence could just as effectively begin an essay about *White Lies (for my mother)*, published in 1992.

My analysis proceeds by first outlining the theoretical model of autobiography employed by Potvin, both in her analysis of Huggan's work and, as I argue, in the creation of her own novel. I then trace the use of textile metaphor and imagery throughout the text and conclude by tying together the strands of text and textile to show how autobiography is relevant to the (re)construction of identity. As Potvin herself has said of contemporary forms of autobiography, "Shifting the critical emphasis from product to process, as the postmodernist approach to self-reflexivity has done, allows us to understand the process by which women's self-identities and memories are shaped." Fictionalized autobiographies, wherein everything may indeed be "true, but not

necessarily real," provide a medium of voice to women writers seeking to take charge of their own histories; it allows women to be the authors of, the weavers of, their own identity-forming narratives.

*Wilfrid Laurier University*

### Toward Immigrant Words: Claiming a Linguistic "Non-Space" in Régine Robin's *The Wanderer*

*Michèle Rackham*

The writing of any autobiographical text represents the author's attempt at literary self-representation within a changing epistemology of the subject. In what way, however, can autobiographical fiction move beyond an expression of the individual and towards an articulation of community or culture? Régine Robin's *The Wanderer (La Québécoise)*, a "biofictional" text that embodies what Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari call "a minor literature," transgresses the defined boundaries of autobiography by communicating not only the self story, but also the im(migrant) story.

In her theoretical work, "Entre l'enfermement communautaire et le désastre individualiste," Robin writes that the "Jewish trace" can only function through the creation of a "non-space that is neither that of exile nor of uprooting." She sees this non-space located in "migrant writing," in a text that questions and displaces. In *The Wanderer*, Robin undertakes the challenge of writing a non-space for the Jewish diaspora. An analysis of the relationship between language and space in the novel reveals how Robin establishes this non-space in language for both her protagonist and diasporic culture(s).

The nameless subject of *The Wanderer*, a Jewish Parisian of Polish descent, finds herself trapped in the territorialized city of Montreal at the moment when the Québécois nation is seeking to reaffirm its homogeneity and reinforce borders separating it from the rest of Canada. Unable to find a way to express her own identity in this environment, the protagonist takes to wandering the streets of Montreal, navigating through the various "quartiers" of the city, transgressing the established isoglosses. Her wanderings through space, time, and language, though

schizophrenic, work to resist the confining structures and strictures of the cityscape.

As she maps Montreal's routes and roots, Robin's character unearths a rhizomatic model that works to deterritorialize space: the metro system(s). The ability of the rhizome to establish an infinite number of connections is expressed through the conflation of Montreal's metro system with Paris's metro system in *The Wanderer*. The protagonist's migration between the stations of each map becomes a mnemonic device, assisting her in the recovery of a collective, diasporic memory.

The collective, migrant memory is retrieved through a process of repetition and difference; historical experiences are repeated and relived throughout the novel by the protagonist, and the protagonist's own fictional character, Morton Himmelfarb, who prepares to teach a course on Sabbatai Sevi and Jewish history. Each experience that is repeated, both historical and personal, however, is marked by a slight difference which works to deterritorialize the chronology of the novel and the concept of history. The use of "mise-en-abyme," and the individual's return to historical events in the novel engenders lines of flight for the main character. Recalling Gilles Deleuze's theory of repetition and difference as it pertains to a minor literature, it is possible to consider the repetition of the past in *The Wanderer* as a means of creating a future for the immigrant and a global community.

Both the narrator and the main character express the collective memory through a constant migration between languages: German, French, English, Yiddish. The linguistic heterogeneity, combined with Robin's use of the "alternarrated" to tell history, subvert standard literary forms and transform the narrative into "immigrant words." These immigrant words move away from the story of the individual and towards a collective enunciation, a subversive voice not confined by boundaries or borders and able to move freely between cultures in the novel. Language becomes a non-space for Robin's autobiographical subject(s), and one that is neither an exile nor an uprooting.

*McGill University*

### **De la rue à la route : la fiction autobiographique de Gabrielle Roy**

*Louise Renee*

Gabrielle Roy a puisé dans son autobiographie pour écrire *La Rue Deschambault* et *La route d'Altamont*. Mais tandis que *La rue* est un roman plaisant sur l'enfance et la jeunesse de Christine, *La route* dépasse le simple souvenir et aspire à une plus grande sagesse. Les deux textes situent l'histoire de Christine dans un lieu géographique précis, mais la *rue* évoque un espace précis et délimité, tandis que la *route* s'ouvre sur un espace plus abstrait, poétique et philosophique. Comment Gabrielle Roy a-t-elle transformé une histoire réaliste en une prose à dimensions multiples? Comment est-elle passée de la *rue* à la *route*?

*University of Manitoba*

### **Modern (Re)Constructions of Christine Carpenter, *The Anchoress of Shere***

*Michelle M. Sauer*

My paper primarily explores the reconstruction of the anchoress Christine Carpenter as an archetypal modern horror movie character.

More so even than Julian of Norwich, Christine Carpenter has been modernized—she shows up in several modern venues: "star of the movie *Anchoress*," "inspiration" in Moorcock's *Anchoress of Shere*, "model" in Spalding's book-length poem "Anchoress," and the "tourist trap" of St. James' Church in Shere. Each portrayal creates a different Christine Carpenter, a woman about whom we know very little historical information. Why does today's society continue to return to Christine? What kind of modern identity is she given, and why? How is medieval society constructed in relation to Christine? These are the beginning questions of my investigation.

The various reconstructions of Christine emphasize today's perception of the Middle Ages as oppressive and superstitious, claiming to liberate the enclosed woman, but in reality serving to reinscribe patriarchal values. In particular, I believe that the "non-fiction" film *The Anchoress* and Moorcock's *Anchoress of Shere* portray Christine as

a proto-feminist figure and anchoritism as a “horrible” life. Specifically, Christine is treated in much the same manner as female protagonists in modern horror films. For instance, her character follows the “final girl” pattern as outlined by Carol Clover—she is a survivor—and is held up as being a “feminist” icon. However, the character ultimately falls victim to a modernized patriarchy, as Tony Williams has pointed out about horror films, especially in the 1980s. This critical lens is, however, rarely applied to other film genres. In this case, the modern reconstructions of Christine Carpenter, as interpreted through this approach, results in a horror movie atmosphere in a “non-fiction” setting.

*Minot State University*

### **Franco-Américanisme et triomphalisme messianique dans le roman de la fidélité du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle**

*Vincent L. Schonberger*

Pendant plus de deux siècles, l'image fascinante de l'idéal démocratique américain suscite chez les écrivains canadiens-français un tiraillement intérieur, -un déchirement profond entre l'idéalisation de l'américanité et la conservation de leur francité. Ce déchirement douloureux dépasse la pure interdépendance des relations sociales et économiques.

Tout en cherchant dans l'organisation politique et sociale des États-Unis, un adjuvant à la légitimation de leurs idées nationalistes et indépendantistes, les écrivains nationalistes

craignent que la vie intellectuelle canadienne-française ne soit submergée par la culture américaine. Au lieu d'opter en faveur de l'annexion à la république américaine, ils préfèrent former une collectivité distincte, faire triompher la foi catholique sur le crédo protestant, tout en essayant d'obliger l'Américain à reconnaître la supériorité de leur foi, à respecter leurs traditions, leur croyances, leurs aspirations nationales. Face à la menace de l'identité collective, à l'effritement d'un patrimoine commun, les écrivains nationalistes adoptent une stratégie défensive, l'équivalent d'une stratégie réparatrice

dont l'objectif est la création d'une identité forte par l'externalisation de l'Américain. L'Église catholique qui exerce un contrôle total dans les secteurs de la religion, de la morale, de l'éducation et du bien-être social prêche un discours idéalisé et mythifié de l'agriculture et plaide pour une politique de colonisation des terres inexploitées au Québec et au Manitoba, tout en résistant à l'urbanisation ainsi qu'à l'émigration aux États-Unis.

C'est la problématique majeure de la littérature québécoise du XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle qui se caractérise par un mouvement ambivalent d'acceptation et de rejet de l'autre, par les désirs contradictoires de cosmopolitisme et de nationalisme. Menacé par la différence, par la désintégration d'une identité collective, les Canadiens-français plongent dans leur propre différence, envisagée comme unité défensive. Ce repli défensif a pour objectif la perspective d'une consolidation, la constitution d'une identité forte par le refus de la différence, par le rejet de la figure de l'Américain qui représente pour eux une hétérotopie socioculturelle, la perte d'une identité clairement définie, la disparition d'une unanimité sociale bien structurée. Il faut absolument se protéger contre l'hétérogénéité par la mise en place d'une distance salutaire, géographique ou psychologique, par la création d'un discours littéraire normatif basé sur la différence. La représentation négative de la figure de l'Américain vise la consolidation d'un narcissisme défensif, la justification et la préservation d'une petite société, échappant ainsi à la menace de l'assimilation par l'autre, la transmission d'un héritage culturel ainsi que l'espoir de la survie dans un monde fermé et singulier.

*Lake Head University*

### **Diederich Hessling, c'est moi!: Autobiographical Elements in Heinrich Mann's *Untertan***

*Katherine Stevenson*

Heinrich Mann (1871-1950) became known as a writer of note during the years of Imperial Germany's rise and fall. One of his masterworks of that time period is the politically-oriented *Untertan*, which traces the life and times of Diederich Hessling, a man who molds

himself after the example of the Kaiser and reflects many common ideas of his time and culture.

*Der Untertan* can be seen as a political novel that provides a thorough critique of German culture. The novel is rife with themes such as the transformation of rational political thought to proto-fascist irrationalism; the perceived threats of modernity and democracy in an age of imperialism; and the specter of cultural despair in an empire in moral decline. A newly-published biography of Heinrich Mann presents several aspects of the young author's formative years which echo in the character of Diederich Hessling. Parallel biographical elements found in Manfred Flügge, *Heinrich Mann: Eine Biographie* (Rowolt Verlag, March, 2006) will serve as a point of departure for comparison as well as elements found in Heinrich Mann's memoir, *Ein Zeitalter wird besichtigt*.

It is the purpose of this paper to present the autobiographical elements in the novel that allow one to see Hessling as a negative parallel to young Heinrich Mann and to see the political education of Hessling as a parallel to that of many young men in the Empire. Mann himself, for example, had *völkisch* political leanings and wrote for anti-semitic magazines at the beginning of his career, yet Mann turned away from the political path taken by the protagonist of his novel – and his politics later became more closely aligned to more maligned lesser characters in the novel, most notably the elder liberal Wolfgang Buck. Heinrich Mann examines the interplay of political viewpoints as Hessling tramples his competitors and loved ones in the name of the Kaiser and shows him as a man of straw who prefers to posture and play roles rather than reveal the vulnerability of his true nature.

*Jamestown College*

### *Till We Have Faces: C. S. Lewis' Fictional Autobiography*

*Dale L. Sullivan*

In this paper, I offer a reading of C. S. Lewis' *Till We Have Faces* as a spiritual and fictional autobiography. This reading is challenged by several incongruities: Lewis was a man, whereas Orual and Psyche in *Till We Have Faces*, the characters whom I will argue stand for Lewis, are women. Lewis lived during the 20<sup>th</sup> Century; the story of *Till We Have Faces* is set in the mystic past, probably in the third or fourth century BCE. Lewis was a Christian apologist; Orual and Psyche are pagan princesses.

Despite these incongruities, I will show that Orual and Psyche constitute an allegorical single identity, a split personality. Orual, the older sister who becomes queen and veils her face, represents the soul in rebellion against the gods; indeed, the first part of *Till We Have Faces* is Orual's accusation against the gods. Psyche, conversely, represents the believing soul, who surrenders herself to her god, even though he insists that Psyche never look on his face. An important episode in the story is Orual's tempting of Psyche to look upon her god's face, a temptation that results in the destruction of Psyche's relationship with her husband-god. The second part of the book, which seems to be the ramblings of Orual in her madness, is a re-integration of the personalities of Orual and Psyche, effected through the gods' apologia intermingled with Orual's consciousness. Read in this way, *Till We Have Faces* is an allegorical autobiography depicting the pilgrimage of C. S. Lewis' soul from early childhood belief, to adolescent rebellion, to early adult atheism, to adult conversion and belief.

Because this reading posits a strong connection between Lewis' spiritual life and the characters in *Till We Have Faces*, the paper requires that parallels be drawn from Lewis' life. His life has been documented in several biographies (Vanauken, Gresham, Dorsett, Downing, Hooper and Green ) and his internal spiritual pilgrimage is described in his autobiography, *Surprised by Joy*. This paper will draw on these sources and on scholarship in Lewis studies.

*North Dakota State University*



### Au-delà du récit autobiographique : Tassadit Imache et le flou identitaire

Anissa Talahite-Moodley

Cette présentation porte sur l'écriture autobiographique dans l'œuvre de Tassadit Imache et son rapport avec les questions identitaires abordées par l'auteure, lesquelles sont liées en premier lieu à une volonté de sortir du ghetto et de proposer une écriture plurielle de l'identité. Il est à savoir que le récit autobiographique est un genre dominant dans ce que l'on a appelé communément la littérature « beur » en France et dont Tassadit Imache fait partie. Cette littérature regroupe sous un terme très général et assez contesté à l'heure actuelle des écrivains français d'origine maghrébine écrivant surtout sur l'expérience migratoire. Elle porte traditionnellement sur le vécu des générations dites issues de l'immigration maghrébine en France et souligne les difficultés d'ordre économique et social, la vie dans les cités-ghettos et les problèmes identitaires rencontrés par cette communauté. Si les auteurs de cette littérature ne se définissent plus comme « beurs » (car ce terme a surtout été utilisé et banalisé dans les années 1980), la lecture à dominante ethnographique de leurs textes de littérature tend à persister, en particulier sous la dénomination « écrivain de banlieue ». Celui-ci est souvent perçu par le public comme produisant une littérature ayant un intérêt sociologique, voire ethnographique. En d'autres termes, il devient celui qui ne peut que raconter sa propre histoire. Dans ce cas précis, la narration autobiographique devient stéréotypante car elle enferme le texte de fiction dans un contexte sociologique limitant sa portée littéraire.

A partir de ces observations générales ayant trait à la réception de ces textes et aux représentations de l'« Autre » dans l'imaginaire culturel, cette étude démontrera que les romans de Tassadit Imache peuvent à être lus comme une réaction par rapport à ces lectures de l'« Autre ». Tassadit Imache a exprimé dans ses interviews sa distance par rapport à la classification ethnique qui fait que ses romans ne sont lus et interprétés que dans le contexte de l'expérience « immigrée ». Elle a aussi exprimé (comme d'autres auteurs dits « beurs ») un refus du terme « beur » qui reflète, pour elle, une lecture unilatérale et sclérosée de ce qui est en fait une réalité multiple. Nous illustrerons cette position de l'auteure et sa mise en pratique littéraire à partir d'exemples pris de ses romans qui démontrent une volonté d'aller au-delà du particularisme

inhérent au récit « beur ». Dans *Une fille sans Histoire*, le premier onner une deuxième fois du prix Goncourt (le prix littéraire le prix convoité de France) transgressant ainsi un interdit de l'Académie Goncourt. Il avouera plus tard son malin plaisir d'avoir joué un bon tour au « parisianisme » des critiques français qu'il accuse surtout de favoriser les auteurs français de souche. Or, Romain Gary est un Français naturalisé. Né à Moscou de parents russes et juifs, toute sa vie, il aura le sentiment de vivre en marge de la société littéraire parisienne.

C'est sans doute l'une des raisons qui incitent Gary à peupler ses romans d'un défilé de personnages marginaux. Il y a tout d'abord Cousin, qui cohabite avec un python et qui tombe amoureux dudit python. Il y a aussi Momo le petit arabe, « fils de pute », qui parle un français approximatif et qui vit dans un foyer tenu clandestinement à Belleville; Mme Lola, ancien champion de boxe du Sénégal, travesti, qui exerce maintenant son métier au Bois de Boulogne et Monsieur N'Da Amédée, le proxénète, dont on retrouvera le corps poignardé dans La Seine.

À travers ces personnages Gary fait un bilan des problèmes d'actualité dans la France des années soixante-dix, telles que la ségrégation des pauvres (souteneurs, androgynes, prostituées) et la lutte perpétuelle des immigrants déshérités (Arabes, Juifs-polonais, Africains sans papiers, Vietnamiens) qui, privés de droits juridiques et en l'absence de la protection de la police, doivent vivre en marge de la société et se débrouiller tout seuls afin de survivre dans une grande métropole telle que Paris.

*Université de Toronto*

### Image des marginaux dans les romans de Gary/Ajar

Vina Tirven

En 1975 Romain Gary réussit à se faire couronner une deuxième fois du prix Goncourt (le prix littéraire le prix convoité de France) transgressant ainsi un interdit de l'Académie Goncourt. Il avouera plus tard son malin plaisir d'avoir joué un bon tour au « parisianisme » des critiques français qu'il accuse surtout de favoriser les auteurs français de souche. Or, Romain Gary est un Français naturalisé. Né à Moscou de parents russes et juifs, toute sa vie, il aura le sentiment de vivre en marge de la société littéraire parisienne.

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*Athabasca University*

**The World, the Text and the Transculturated Writer:  
Religiosity and the Imaginary in  
Novels of the 1990s**

*Marie Vautier*

This paper proposes that autobiographical postcolonial fictions are sites where we work out fundamental socio-cultural challenges of our nation(s). Autobiographical fictions by transculturated writers are particularly well-suited to investigate major and potential or actual conflictual situations, such as, for instance, the stand-off at Kanasatake during the "Oka crisis" of 1990, (Lalonde's *Sept Lacs Plus au Nord*), the alarming loss of French-Canadian culture outside Quebec after the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s (Lola Lemire Tostevin's *Frog Moon*), and the devastation caused to First Nation communities by the Catholic Residential School system (Tomson Highway's *Kiss of the Fur Queen*). These writers' work has a more direct agency upon our collective and individual "imaginary/ies" (*l'imaginaire* in Québécois) and our multiple concerns with identity issues (*l'identitaire* in Québécois). By revisiting these and similar situations that impact our identity in important ways,

these writers make use of what Françoise Lionnet calls the "double consciousness of the postcolonial, bilingual, and bicultural writer who lives and writes across the margins of different traditions and cultural universes" (*Postcolonial Representations* 26-7). These three autobiographical writers do not so much insist on their occupying "the space between," à la Homi Bhabha, or that of the "wanderer" of Edward Said's work, as they stand firmly but flexibly in a position of "side-by-sidedness," providing working examples of *la transculture* in their autobiographical fictions.

Shirley Newman and Julie Rak, among many others, join Sidonie Smith and Julia Watson in pointing to the non-static nature of contemporary studies in the field of autobiographical studies, mainly due to the blurring of genres in women's autobiographies and feminist theoretical investigations of that blurring. Indeed, current studies in autobiography, and in particular women's autobiography, challenge what Paul John Eakin calls "the Gusdorf model," "the province of the Marlboro Man" (*How Our Lives Become Stories* 47, 49), which emphasize the long tradition on individualism in masculinist autobiography. These current studies also challenge both versions of Philippe Lejeune's "autobiographical pact," which thematize the importance of progress in knowledge of the Self through autobiography. The challenges that deconstruction and feminism have offered to more traditional conceptualizations of the self allow for autobiography's usual focus to expand, to move out from the "Self" to the World.

I examine how these novels of the 1990s by Lalonde, Lemire Tostevin and Highway explore and exploit Catholic-based religiosity to produce what I call a "postcolonialism of consensus." This term indicates a shift away from the contestatory attitude that formerly characterized postcolonial fictions and a move toward transculturalism and (re)conciliation.

An examination of "la transculture"—which I translate as "transculturalism" or "the transcultural" to distinguish it from the term "transculturation" as it is used by Mary Louise Pratt in *Imperial Eyes*—allows me to examine the surprisingly strong presence of Catholic-based religiosity in contemporary fictions. This term, "la transculture," originates in Cuban, Amerindian and Québécois critical writings, and the concept it represents has been taken up by what are called, somewhat erroneously, "second generation postcolonial critics." This paper will examine how these three novels by Lalonde, Lemire Tostevin, and

Highway use various techniques, such as linguistic and cultural code-switching, the use of humour, ritual and the uncanny in their approach to religious icons and images, a strong thematization of art as a creative force and the celebratory presence of multiple belief systems in their investigations of Catholic-based religiosity.

These novels work toward the reconciliation of binary oppositions, and, in so doing, promote a cultural acceptance of constant change and fluctuation, a celebration of transculturalism. The texts use Catholic-based religiosity, I believe, to affect that acceptance at a very deep level of the *imaginaire* and *identitaire*. Their innovative investigation of Catholic-based rituals to promote flexibility of the *imaginaire* is one element of that work. Tomson Highway once remarked that "the most potent kind of art is that which is inseparable from religion" (*Adrienne Clarkson Presents*, CBC, n. p.). The unpacking of Catholicism in many contemporary fictions published after 1985 allows for an ambivalent but effective production of social change.

*University of Victoria*

### L'Italien à trois têtes dans *Candide* de Voltaire

*Sante A. Viselli*

Au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle, l'image de l'Italien est souvent engendrée à partir de signes préfabriqués que l'on retrouve en général lorsqu'on aborde l'étude du personnage de l'étranger. Portrait fragmenté, multiple et pluriel, l'Italien sera, entre autres, peintre, musicien ou poète, personnage fictif ou historique, bandit, homme de cœur ou être répugnant et vulgaire. De Hamilton (*Mémoires du comte de Grammont*) à Potoki (*Manuscrit trouvé à Saragosse*), en passant par des auteurs plus célèbres tels que Montesquieu, Voltaire, Diderot et Jean-Jacques Rousseau et Madame de Staël (*Corinne ou l'Italie*), l'on pourrait s'interroger sur ce que le stéréotype identitaire italien représente, sa relation avec la mentalité et la société de l'époque, son influence sur la création littéraire au siècle des « Lumières ». En dernière analyse, il faudrait se poser la question à

savoir ce que c'est qu'un Italien au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle et quelle est sa relation discursive entre l'image fictive reproduite et la réalité qui l'a engendrée.

Bon nombre de romans français du XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle retracent la vie paradoxale de l'Italien, une vie souvent marquée par des signes d'exclusion de toute affection humaine et qui l'entraîne à voir autour de lui tout se dégrader, se dénaturer, s'anéantir. Évoquons à cet effet un exemple tiré de *Candide* de Voltaire. Le philosophe n'hésite pas à faire recours au stéréotype pour désigner son Italien à trois têtes : la Vieille, le castrat et *Pococurante*.

*L'histoire de la Vieille* (chapitres 11 et 12) est ponctuée par la violence qui passe de la prise de corps au viol, de l'humiliation à la mutilation. Cette mise en abîme est une illustration du personnage de l'étranger, la Vieille étant une Italienne, fille du pape, que les circonstances ont amené à errer de pays en pays pour s'établir, comme les autres personnages à la fin du récit, avec la petite communauté dans le « jardin » final. C'est d'ailleurs une des rares fois où l'étrangère sera intégrée à 100% dans une société qui, si elle n'est pas idéale, elle est pour le moins fonctionnelle. Les détails narratifs qui nous intéressent pour illustrer l'irruption du stéréotype national italien dans le texte de Voltaire apparaît après les massacres et les scènes de viol à l'arrivée de la jeune Princesse de Palestrine au Maroc. La Princesse sera ainsi violée, faillira mourir maintes fois au cours de ce récit, sera sauvée, replongera dans l'opprobre, on lui coupera une fesse et ainsi de suite. Dans la scène qui nous intéresse, elle rencontre un compatriote, mais loin d'espérer de lui du secours, elle subira de nouveau les affres de l'humiliation.

Il faut convenir que la rencontre de ce jeune compatriote soulage la jeune fille « ravie d'entendre la langue de [sa] patrie. » Mais le jeune eunuque ne répond pas aux attentes de la princesse de Palestrine et au lieu de la ramener en Italie, il la conduit à Alger où il la vend au dey de cette province. Nous voici donc confronté à un autre stéréotype, celui du compatriote qui, à l'étranger, exploite l'un des siens. Le thème est d'actualité.

Que peut-on donc retenir ici par rapport au stéréotype national italien? De fait, pas grand chose. À l'exception de la référence à la castration, l'Italie semble se dissimuler derrière le style voltairien volontairement déformant par l'emploi d'expressions vulgaires empruntées à la langue italienne. À côté de l'image désolante du castrat, Voltaire en dresse une autre tout aussi caricaturale, grotesque et déprimante, celle du Vénitien *Pococurante*, porte-parole de la stérilité

d'un jardin condamné au mutisme au milieu de l'abondance, des connaissances et de la beauté. Si la Vieille représente la beauté flétrie et vilipendée, la bâtarde qui devra faire ses preuves avant de pouvoir accéder au jardin final, *Pococurante* lui, il désigne la beauté ignorée par l'indifférence et la corruption, c'est un terroriste de la pensée décadente, à la solde de l'insouciance et du laxisme, le stéréotype moderne du « *menefrechismo* » italien (le *je m'enfoutisme* français).

Le stéréotype national s'avère être donc un discours assez complexe de l'altérité. Ces êtres parfois repoussants et paradoxalement fascinants même séduisants sont, comme leurs confrères qui viennent de France, d'Allemagne, d'Espagne, d'Angleterre ou de Pologne, l'expression d'un signe double, entre le fictif et le réel, entre l'histoire complexe des mentalités et les traditions, autant de signes référentiels à considérer lorsqu'on se penche sur l'analyse du stéréotype de l'étranger :

Chaque nation a son caractère particulier, lit-on dans l'*Encyclopédie* de Diderot et d'Alembert : c'est une espèce de proverbe que de dire, léger comme un français, jaloux comme un italien, grave comme un espagnol, méchant comme un anglais, fier comme un écossais, ivrogne comme un allemand, paresseux comme un irlandais, fourbe comme un grec.

Le portrait identitaire d'une nation ne peut certes être si réducteur au risque d'étouffer tous les peuples de la terre.

*Université de Winnipeg*

### **Ego Eimi: The Voice Becomes the Story**

*Rick Watson*

"I can't get no satisfaction"—Jagger/Richards

"I want to hold your hand"—Lennon/McCartney

The book cultures of the East moved west into the Celtic/German realms. Raid, Renaissance, Reformation and Revolution discovered Autobiographical voice. One fruition happened in North America. This voice speaks in our northern prairie region in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Tell the people that "I AM" sent you—(Exodus: Torah/ Christian Bible)

"Ego Eimi"—Jesus of Nazareth—(metaphoric self-identification sayings, The Gospel of John). "If I speak in the tongues of men and angels, but have no love...."—The Apostle Paul, (1st Corinthians 13—all his Epistles are in first person).

In spite of later differences of doctrinal hair splitting, Luther, Calvin, Descartes and company point to the Romantics. All these events deepened a sense of narrative self (Existential? Yes.); then the age of Revolution, not yet ended (Internet, computers and all), took the individual narrative beside them and made my confession to them... (*Tower of Song*), (*Sisters of Mercy*), Leonard Cohen.

I present my songs as one untimely re-born. "I am your dead prairie Grandma/I am Tunkshila Tatanka Himself/I'll be Dancin on my grave in jubilation", (*I Am and Jubilation Suite*)—Rick Watson.

We see, with ear and eye, at the center of our (yours/my) head(s), how the music of some northern troubadours, no matter how global/local an audience they address, take their power and cues from the voice of individual consciousness and conscience.

Solid common ground built this 2000-year-old tradition, older than Jesus and the Septuagint—method, a particular use of metaphor and traditional structures, folksy language. We hear the "self" conscious voice from these poets and troubadours, we see at least four key themes: Personhood, Community and fragmentation; the meaning of place: promise and lost promise; and transcendence: mythic spirit (spirits) in a new world.

*Minot State University*

## Index

### A

- A Season in Hell* 39  
*A Trauma Artist: Tim O'Brien and the Fiction of Vi* 25  
*A Wild Sheep Chase* 29. *See also* *Hitsuji o meguru boken*  
*Adrienne Clarkson Presents* 54  
 Africains sans papiers 52  
 Afrique Occidentale Française 41  
 Ahmed, Azouz Ali 9  
 AIDS 34  
*Alcoholics, The* 26  
 Alexia sine agraphia 25  
*Alien Interlude* 29  
 Amerindian 53  
 Ancestor Syndrome 12  
*Anchoress of Shere, The* 45  
 Antelme, Robert 9  
 Apostle Paul 57  
 Arabes 52  
 Armus, Diego 34  
 Arnold, Gustav 11  
 Artifact 22  
 Athabasca University 52  
 Autobiographical Elements 47  
 Autobiographie et féminisme 41  
 Autobiographies, Fictionalized 42  
 Autobiography, Secular Spiritual 21  
 Autobiographique 50  
 Autobiographique, fiction 39, 45  
 Autobiography, Fictional 49  
*Autobiography of My Face* 11  
*Autobiography of My Mother* 11

**B**

Bâ, Mariama 41  
 Baker, Carolyn D. 13  
 Ball, Fred 15  
 Becker, Barbara 35  
 Bhabha, Homi 53  
 Bible 22  
 Bibliomancy 13  
 Bildungsroman 31, 32  
 Birmingham, England 28  
 Bismarck State College 23  
*Bois de Boulogne* 52  
 Borowski, Tadeusz 9  
 Brazil 33  
 Brenna 17  
 Buck, Wolfgang 48

**C**

Cairnie, Julie 15  
 Calvin 57  
 Campbell, Christina 35  
 Canadiens-français 47  
*Candide* 54, 55  
 Canonicity 17  
 Cape Breton 17  
 Carleton University 31  
 Carpenter 45  
 Carpenter, Christine 46  
 Chen, Ying 37, 38  
*Chiasmaticque* 41  
 Christine 45  
 Clover, Carol 46  
 Cohen, Leonard 57  
*Colony of Unrequited Dreams* 21  
*Corinne ou l'Italie* 54  
*Créateur* 41  
 Crisis, Oka 52

Cuban 53  
 Culture, French-Canadian 52  
 Culture, German 48

**D**

Daguerreotype 22  
*Daguerreotype Series, The* 22  
 Defoe, Daniel 13  
 Deleuze, Gilles 44  
*Der Rosenkavalier* 20  
*Der Untertan* 48  
 D'Erneville, Annette 41  
 Descartes 57  
 Diakhaté, Ndèye Coumba 41  
 Diderot 54  
 Diop, Birago 41  
 Diop, Cheik Anta 41  
*Disease in the History of Modern Latin America* 34  
*Don Juan* 20  
*Du Côté de chez Swann* 10

**E**

Eakin, Paul John 28  
*Ego Eimi* 56  
*Ein Heldenleben* 20  
*Ein Zeitalter wird besichtigt* 48  
*Eine Biographie* 48  
*Elektra* 20  
*Elizabeth Stories, The* 42  
 Engel, Howard 25  
 English, Gabriel 17  
*English Patient, The* 13, 14  
 Erickson, Carolly I. 31

**F**

Fiction, Autobiographical 20  
 Fiction, Crime 25



Fiction, Historical 30  
 Fictions, Autobiographical 52  
 Fictions in Autobiography 28  
 Fictions, postcolonial 52  
*Finis Britannia* 36  
*First Elizabeth, The* 31  
 First Nation 52  
 Flügge, Manfred 48  
 Flynn, Kevin 21  
 Franco-Américanie 46  
 Francophone, d'Afrique 41  
 Freiheitssystem 19

## G

Gard, Julie 22  
 Gary, Romain 51  
 Gender 15  
 Gide, André 40  
 Gill, Judith 27  
 Gilles Deleuze 44  
 Godfrey, David A. 24  
*Going After Cacciato* 24  
*Graven Images* 29  
 Gray, Clarke 17

## H

Hahner, June E. 33  
 Haldan, Victor 36  
 Hamidou, Cheik Kane 41  
 Haruki, Murakami 29  
 Heberle, Mark A. 25  
 Heinrich Mann 48  
*Heinrich Mann: Eine Biographie* 48  
 Hermeneutics 13  
 Hessling, Diederich 47  
 Highway, Tomson 52  
 Himmelfarb, Morton 44  
*History of Newfoundland, A* 22

*Hitsuji o meguru boken* 29. *See also A Wild Sheep Chase*  
*How Our Lives Become Stories* 53  
*How Our Lives Become Stories: Making Selves* 11  
 Huidobro, Vicente 36  
 Hypersexualization 33

## I

"I AM" 57  
*I Am and Jubilation Suite* 57  
*I, Elizabeth* 31  
 I-Novel Tradition 29  
 Icon, "feminist" 46  
 Identitaire 54  
*If I Die in a Combat Zone* 24  
 Imache, Tassadit 50  
 Imaginaire 54  
 Imperial Eyes 53  
 Imperial Germany 47  
*In the Lake of the Woods* 24  
*Intermezzo* 20  
 Israelism, British 13  
 Ist Corinthians 13 57

## J

Jamestown College 14, 25, 48  
 Japan 30  
 Japanese, Modern Literature 29  
 Jean-Jacques Rousseau 54  
 Jesus of Nazareth 57  
 Johnson, Chandice M. 25  
 Johnston, Wayne 21  
 Journal 40  
*Journal et Les Cahiers d'André Walter* 41  
*Journal of the Plague Year* 13  
 Joyce, James 13  
*Juifs-polonais* 52  
 Julian of Norwich 45

## K

Keener, John 30  
 Kenner, Hugh 13  
 Kenzaburo, Oe 30  
 Kincaid, Jamaica 11  
*Kiss of the Fur Queen* 52  
 Kobo, Abe 30  
 Kong, Ying 27

## L

*La mémoire de l'eau* 37, 38  
*La Rue Deschambault et La route d'Altamont* 45  
*La Seine* 51, 52  
*La transculture* 53  
 L'Académie Goncourt 51  
 Lakehead University 47  
 Larvie, Patrick 34  
*Le grand voyage* 9  
*L'Écriture ou la vie* 10  
 Lee, William 29  
*Leg to Stand On, A* 11  
 Lejeune, Philippe 53  
*Les Cahiers d'André Walter* 40  
 Lévi, Primo 9  
 Lewicki, Bryony J. 30  
 Lewis, C. S. 49  
*L'histoire de la Vieille* 55  
 Li, Hua 31  
 L'imaginaire 52  
 Linguistic "Non-Space" 43  
 Lionnet, Françoise 53  
 Literature, Canadian 17  
 Literature, Canadian Atlantic 17  
 Literature, Uses of 25  
 Littéraire, création 39  
 Louise, Mary Pratt 53  
 Lozensky, Christopher 33

Lumières 54  
 Luther 57  
 L'œuvre romanesque 9

## M

Madame de Staël 54  
 Maiga-Ka, Aminata 41  
 Malcolm, Karen 35  
 Mann, Heinrich 47, 48  
*Manuscrit trouvé à Saragosse* 54  
 Mao era 32  
 Mao Zedong 38  
 Marlboro Man 53  
 Maury, Debra 36  
 Mayville State University 13  
 McGill University 44  
 Meadwell, Kenneth 37  
*Mémoire, La de l'eau* 38  
*Mémoires du comte de Grammont* 54  
*Memory Book* 25  
 Meng, Wang 33  
 Minot State University 35, 46, 57  
 Mise-en-abyme 44  
 Mo, Yang 33  
 Monsieur N'Da Amédée 51  
 Montesquieu 54  
 Montreal 43  
 Moodie, Susanna 28  
 Moulaison, Glenn 39  
 My Lai massacre 24  
 Myth 22

## N

Naturalisé, Français 51  
 Ndoye-Mbengue, Mariama 41  
*Né à Moscou* 51  
 Ness, Linda 40  
 Neural Darwinism 11

*New York Times, The* 24  
*New Yorker, The* 29  
 Newfoundland 17, 21  
 Newman, Shirley 53  
 Nietzsche 36  
 Nnadi, Joseph 41  
 Nobel laureate 30  
 Nom de plume 15  
 Noonan, Robert 15  
 North Dakota State University 27, 49  
*Northern Zone of the City* 31  
*Norwei no mori* 29. *See also Norwegian Wood*  
*Norwegian Wood* 29, 30  
*Nothing Man, The* 27  
*Nothing More Than Murder* 26

## O

O'Brien, Tim 24  
*Obscura: The Daguerreotype Series* 22, 23  
 "On the Rainy River" 24  
 Ondaatje, Michael 14  
*One of the Damned* 16  
 Orual 49

## P

Pain 42  
*Parisian in Brazil* 33  
 Parody 32  
 Pelmanism 13  
 Pentecostalism 21  
*Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality* 34  
*Pocourante* 55  
*Poéticisé* 39  
 Polito, Robert 26  
 Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome 25  
 Postcards 35  
 Postcolonial 53  
 Postcolonial Representations 53

Postmodern 29, 30, 42  
 Pot au noir 33  
 Potvin, Liza 42  
 Proust, Marcel 10  
 Prowse, D.W. 22  
 Psyche 49

## Q

Québécois 43, 52, 53  
 Queen's University 10

## R

Rackham, Michèle 43  
*Ragged Trousered Philanthropists, The* 15  
 Rak, Julie 53  
 Ran, Hao 33  
 Raoul, Valérie 40  
 Reading, Supplemental 25  
 Religiosity 52  
 Religiosity, Catholic-based 53, 54  
 Renee, Louise 45  
 Revolution, Cultural 31  
 Revolution, Quiet 52  
 Richards, Grant 15  
 Ricoeur, Paul 9  
 Rimbaud 39  
 Rolland, Romain 20  
 Romantics 57  
 Rousseau, Jean-Jacques 54  
 Roy, Gabrielle 45

## S

Said, Edward 53  
 Salome 20  
 Sauer, Michelle M. 45  
 Schonberger, Vincent L. 46  
 Senghor, Léopold Sédar 41

*Semper Eadem* 30  
 Semprun, Jorge 9  
 Sept Lacs Plus au Nord 52  
 Septuagint 57  
 Sexuality, Brazilian 34  
 Shields, Carol 27, 28  
 Shishosetsu 29, 30  
*Sinfonia Domestica* 20  
*Sisters of Mercy* 57  
*Small Ceremonies* 27, 28, 29  
 Smallwood, Joey 21  
 Smith, Sidonie 53  
 South Africa 15  
 Spalding, John 28  
 Stevenson, Katherine 47  
 Strauss, Richard 20  
 Sullivan, Dale L. 49  
*Surprised by Joy* 49

## T

Talahite-Moodley, Anissa 50  
 Texts, Biographical 30  
 "That Part of the Story Is My Own" 24  
*The Things They Carried* 24  
 "The Vietnam in Me" 24  
*Till We Have Faces* 49  
 Tirven, Vina 51  
*Tomcat in Love* 24  
 Tong, Su 31, 32  
 Toussaint-Samson, Adèle 33  
 Toussant, Emma 33  
*Tower of Song* 57  
 Tressell of Mugsborough 15  
 Tressell, Robert 15  
 Tunkshila Tatanka 57

## U

*Ulysses* 13

*Un chant écarlate et Comme le bon* 41  
*Une Fille sans Histoire* 51  
*Une si longue lettre* 41  
 Université de Toronto 51  
 Université de Winnipeg 42, 56  
 University of Guelph 16  
 University of Manitoba 29, 30, 33, 45  
 University of North Dakota 12, 37  
 University of Saskatchewan 22  
 University of Toronto 21, 41  
 University of Victoria 54  
 University of Winnipeg 20, 36, 39, 40  
*Untertan* 47

## V

Vautier, Marie 52  
 Verlag, Rowolt 48  
 Vier Letzte Lieder 20  
 Vietnamiens 52  
 Viselli, Sante A. 54  
 Voice, Autobiographical 56  
 Voltaire 54  
 Von, Charlotte Stein 19

## W

*Wanderer, The* 43, 44  
 Watson, Julia 53  
 Watson, Rick 56, 57  
*Wealth of Nations, The* 19  
*White Lies (for my mother)* 42  
 Whodunits 25  
 Wick, Scotland 35  
 Wilfrid Laurier University 43  
 William, Mark Brown 13  
 Williams, Tony 46  
 Winnipeg 35  
 Winter, Michael 17  
 Words, Immigrant 43

Writer, Transcultured 52  
Writers, Chinese 32

X

*XVIIIe siècle* 54, 55

**Life Members**

Emerson Case  
Kathleen Rettig  
Gaby Divay  
Rory Egan  
Roberta Harvey  
Jim Simmons

Ursala Hovet  
Tim Messenger  
Michael Moriarty  
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