

all the trivia from the website and made it resonate for students and general readers alike. Everything from the chief inspector's daily routine, his wife and family members, his clothing and pastimes, likes and dislikes, to places he has lived, worked, holidayed in, or investigated, is linked to the text in which it is first mentioned and, in some cases, to all subsequent mentions. Comparisons are made between how Maigret is presented in the three stages of Simenon's career, under publishers Fayard (1929–34), Gallimard (1939–44), and Presses de la cité (1947–72). Despite Simenon's coyness about his creation's appearance, other than his silhouette, from early novels onwards a composite likeness gradually appears, one feature at a time. Murielle Wenger's contributions allow Mme Maigret to be seen as much more than the patient wife who keeps her husband's dinner warm no matter how late he returns home. We see her gentle humour, her skills as sister, message-taker, needle-worker, cook, nurse, co-worker, and spouse, as well as the Penelope role that most readers see. It may surprise some to know that her name is Louise, even though in one early novel she appears as Henriette (the shared name of Simenon's mother and of his then mistress). Maigret's foibles are all documented: his fascination with stoves, preferably glowing hotly; his long list of aperitifs, pre- and after-dinner drinks, and beverages for every other occasion; his pipes and hats; his favourite meals; his humour; his choice of movies; and his dreams. Investigations within and without Paris are listed with the number of times that particular venue is used, so that we know that some street names are used once while, for instance, the avenue des Champs-Élysées is mentioned in forty-nine novels, and that Montmartre is the site of the most action. Along the lines of Randall Toy and Katherine Koller's *The Agatha Christie Who's Who* (London: Muller 1980), or, more pertinently, Young's *Georges Simenon*, this volume lists those with whom Maigret works — his fellow police officers, the judges, district inspectors, medical officers, and doctors — and in-depth analyses of his relationships with them. A potential challenge to readers is the naming of one of the sections 'Collaborators' (Chapter 7): the ambivalence of its meaning is problematic here because of the ongoing debate surrounding the extent, nature, and existence of Simenon's collaboration with the Germans during the Occupation. The book is conversational and easily read, and, apart from a little unevenness of editing, is a worthwhile addition to the library. This well-researched collection allows the reader to see Maigret as a tangible, well-rounded, and believable character.

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*La Violence dans l'œuvre de Samuel Beckett: entre langage et corps.* Sous la direction de LLEWELLYN BROWN. (Revue des lettres modernes; Samuel Beckett, 4.) Paris: Lettres modernes Minard, 2017. 462 pp.

Violence as staged in Samuel Beckett's texts, from the Trilogy's mother-battering and axe murders to the torture routines of *How It Is* and the late political plays, has psychoanalytic, political, and aesthetic functions that are difficult to disentangle. Oedipal violence of a peculiarly neurotic kind motivates the textual psychiatric hospital that is mid-century Beckett. Beckett's absorption in Sade's work in the 1930s and late 1950s has political significance, clearly, with the sadistic drive to hell-making that structures his more Dantescan texts, drawing on his own fascinated horror at totalitarian and fascist spaces. And the decision in the late 1930s to accommodate the mess as writerly project (see his 1961 interview with Tom Diver) — to wreak an assault on language's surfaces in order to release inward forces of derangement — takes violence as one of its techniques to ensure an aesthetic of deliberate failure. This collection, expertly brought together by Llewellyn

Brown, goes some considerable way to helping scholarship disentangle two of the strands, the psychoanalytic and aesthetic, with the advantage of the contributors' sharp command of critical theory as a mode of engagement. There is therefore a certain coherence to the volume of essays, which makes for a fine book. The theme is introduced by Brown's spirited argument about the super-ego as lynchpin to Beckett's interest in violence. This is echoed by a hardcore Lacanian reading by Bruno Geneste, one of the highlights of the collection. Geneste looks towards the super-ego as key to Beckett's exploration of cold instrumental forms of violence, occurring at the point of insertion of language into the body of the speaking subject. It is this piercing inscription that motivates the torturing narrator of *Comment c'est*, the main text for most of the contributors; it is this novel where *lalangue* leaks out as symptomatic fluid from the wounded body (or as extorted text), and which most frighteningly and bleakly stages a Sadean processing of victims as objects and numbers in a hellish series of violent textual and tortural exchanges. A terrific article by Elisa Baroghel traces the influence of Sade on Beckett, particularly Beckett's attempts to translate *Les Cent vingt journées de Sodome*, and meditates on Beckett's unreserved admiration for Maurice Blanchot's essay on the Marquis. Anthony Cordingley treats with gusto the vicious interactional narratological form that the violence of *Comment c'est* generates. Claire Lozier writes elegantly and persuasively on Georges Bataille and *Molloy*, whilst Natália Laranjinha gives a plausible account of 'dressage' in the plays. Three articles on the violent gaze, by Éric Wessler, Anne-Cécile Guilbard, and Eri Miyawaki, complete the volume. The collection's coherence lies in the sustained and detailed attention to the psychoanalytic and theoretical dimensions of Beckettian violence as super-ego drive and textual self-destruction. Although the political Beckett is missing (there is nothing on torture in Algeria as the real driver behind *Comment c'est*), this is an invaluable contribution to Beckett studies.

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ALAIN ROBBE-GRILLET, *Entretiens complices*. Édition établie et présentée par ROGER-MICHEL ALLEMAND. (Audiographie.) Paris: EHESS, 2018. 204 pp.

Les cinq entretiens avec Alain Robbe-Grillet que publie Roger-Michel Allemand sont largement inédits et ont été réalisés entre 1990 et 2001. L'éditeur a pris soin de ne pas 'figer les propos' de l'auteur en les faisant passer à l'écrit (p. 36). Dans son Introduction, il retrace le parcours de l'écrivain entre le 18 août 1922 et le 18 février 2008 en le replaçant dans la 'mouvance' (p. 14) du Nouveau Roman. 'Autobiographie' commente le moment où les 'Nouveaux Romanciers' écrivent leur autobiographie dans les années 1980. Selon Robbe-Grillet, l'autobiographie n'est pas une 'exposition', mais une 'exploration' (p. 43); la notion de sincérité lui est 'étrangère' (p. 44), et il refuse l'immobilité car les éléments de sa vie doivent 'ne pas se figer en quelque chose qui, tout d'un coup, va prendre un sens' (p. 46). Dans 'Rencontres', Robbe-Grillet déclare n'avoir pas été marqué par des rencontres 'de gens vivants' (p. 67, excepté son épouse) mais d'œuvres; il mentionne cependant Paulhan, Lindon, Barthes, etc., et, à propos d'œuvres, Kafka, Nabokov, Borges, puis Gide. Avec 'Énigmes', Robbe-Grillet examine le genre policier, la 'lutte entre l'ordre et le désordre' (p. 105) et le 'sens plein' chez Hitchcock (qu'il n'aime pas, p. 108). L'entretien débouche sur les cauchemars, les légendes bretonnes et la nouvelle génération de romanciers, dont Robbe-Grillet n'est pas proche. Dans 'Théories', Robbe-Grillet refuse de se considérer comme théoricien. La conversation glisse sur les moments où il était professeur invité aux États-Unis, puis sur Jésus et les évangiles, Barthes encore, et