

The present study focuses on the problematics of perception of the bodily image as it appears in a women-written corpus. The theme of the metamorphosing female body has been investigated in three contemporary French novels : *Biographie de Zaïma* by Amélie Nothomb, *Truismes* by Marie Darrieussecq and *Rosie Carpe* by Marie NDiaye. All written by female authors around the same age, these novels report on what it is like being a woman in a postmodern world. The female heroes are confronted with their own bodily self and the long-standing tradition of a male-dominated society. These testimonies, that comprise traumatising bodily experiences and difficult relationships with others, contribute to forge the feminine identity.

The three female protagonists of the investigated corpus embark on an identity quest. They struggle against the established order to find their place in the society.

Nothomb's narrator thematizes the difficult passage from a child to an adult body which imposes the body /mind separation on women. She perceives this transformation as a traumatizing experience of loss and denies it by confining her body. In a revulsion towards the adult female body anorexia is an attempt to defeat abjection. The hero of *Truismes*, on the other hand, constitutes an incarnation of the abject body.

Providing a detailed recording of the disturbing metamorphosis of the narrator into a sow, Darrieussecq explores the specificities of the leaking female body and the fear it inspires. Her protagonist struggles in the phallogocentric world until she finds her way as a writer, though in a porcine body. Finally, the quest in *Rosie Carpe* is directed to the questions of belonging. While desperately seeking a family, the protagonist becomes increasingly estranged from the world attaining in the end a complete dissolution of identity.