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Translating Class in Jonathan Coe

Abstract: This article looks at the translation and reception in France of the contemporary British author Jonathan Coe. Coe's work is four times more popular in France than in the UK and is particularly enjoyed for its treatment of contemporary social and political issues in a largely realist setting. Coe's self-confessed writing project is to represent the plurality of British society as faithfully as possible. Through an analysis of the transposition of social class in the French translations of his novels, this article will reveal that a particular understanding of Britishness is created, which through use of standardization and domestication of British specificity, in fact dilutes the markers of British social class. The consequences of this are both social, in its impact on French understanding of Britain, and cultural, in its impact on the consumption of the contemporary British novel in France.

Keywords: Jonathan Coe, translation, contemporary British novel, French literary scene, class, Britishness

British fiction is hugely popular in France today and celebrated for its storytelling, its humour, and its treatment of the contemporary social and political world (see, for example, Noiville, 2006), all aspects which are commonly viewed to be in short supply in the contemporary French novel (see, for example, Cloonan, Holmes, Looseley and Holmes, Marx, Robitaille, Todorov). In his literary biography of B.S. Johnson, *Like a Fiery Elephant*, the contemporary British author Jonathan Coe suggests that since the 1970s rather than continuing the attempt at formal innovation, the British novel:

has reinvigorated itself...by recognising the multi-ethnicity of modern Britain and opening itself to influences from other cultures; by tapping into the energies of popular film, music and television; by turning its back on modernist elitism and rediscovering the pleasures of humour, storytelling, demotic and so on. (Coe, 2004b: 6)

Concurring with Coe's point about the 'demotic', Joseph Macé-Scaron, former director of *Le Magazine Littéraire*, makes the point that British literature deals with what we might call 'ordinary people', and claims that: 'le peuple' are 'ce grand oublié' in French contemporary literature (2012). Critic Laurent Wolf makes a similar point in *Le Temps* :

Aujourd'hui, il existe un extraordinaire écart entre la manière dont les écrivains anglo-saxons et les écrivains français inscrivent la littérature dans l'espace des événements et dans l'espace matériel. Dans l'un, chacun peut se reconnaître. Dans l'autre, chacun voit bien, le plus souvent, qu'il ne lui appartient pas et qu'il n'est pas concerné par lui. (2006)

If French readers are turning to the British novel for their dose of social and political realism, and specifically a snapshot of 'ordinary people' in Britain, how does the filter of French translation transpose that Britain?

The tension in literary translation between the need to maintain and transpose cultural context and the desire to open up to a new readership is rarely resolved without sacrifice of some kind. The French market for translated fiction is very healthy indeed, with, for example, Gallimard's 'Du monde entier' collection having represented more than 2000 titles since its inception in 1931.¹ It is this very popularity, however, which means that French readers often make

contrasting demands on the foreign novels they buy: they want their reading experience to transport them to another world, but simultaneously they want the book to be easily readable and digestible. The role of the translator (and, to some extent, the publisher), is to walk this tightrope. This article provides a case study of the translation and reception of British author Jonathan Coe on the contemporary French literary scene. It will show the difficulties involved in the translation of markers of British social class and analyse the social, cultural and literary implications of some of the choices made. In my analysis, I will use examples of lexical and cultural specificity from both narrative and dialogue and make reference to almost all of Coe's eleven novels to date, which have been translated by four different translators : Jean Pavans, Jean-François Ménard, Serge and Jamila Chauvin and Josée Kamoun.²

Jonathan Coe in France

Jonathan Coe came to the attention of the French reading public on the publication of *What a Carve Up!*, published in France as *Testament à l'anglaise*, in 1995. *What a Carve Up!* is a simultaneously searingly critical and hilarious novel about the Thatcher years and the selling off of Britain's state apparati. However, Coe already had three published novels to his name: *An Accidental Woman* (1987), *A Touch of Love* (1989) and *The Dwarves of Death* (1990): brief, sometimes funny, sometimes crushingly sad studies of the lives of young British people trying to make their way in a world which seems stubbornly turned against them. It was *What a Carve Up!* which made his name, though, and began his popular rise outside the UK. Eight more novels have followed³ and Coe's work is now read worldwide, and is particularly known and loved in continental Europe (France, Italy, Switzerland, Greece). In France, Coe is published by the venerable Gallimard as part of their 'Du monde entier' collection. The 'Gallimard' name in France is an assurance of literary quality, and indeed Coe is accompanied in this exclusive

club by other contemporary British writers such as Martin Amis, Michael Frayn, Ian McEwan, Zadie Smith, Graham Swift, and classic authors such as Lawrence Durrell, William Golding, D.H. Lawrence, Iris Murdoch and Evelyn Waugh. Coe is the receiver of two prestigious French literary prizes: the *Prix Médicis Etranger* in 1998 and the *Prix du Meilleur Livre Etranger* in 1996,⁴ as well as a holder of the *Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres*. Indeed, interestingly, his sales figures are four times higher in France than in the UK (2010) and he has been described variously in the French press as: 'Le plus brillant romancier anglais' (Amette, 2003); a 'phénomène de la littérature anglaise' (Simon); 'l'un des plus brillants représentants de la littérature britannique' (*Lyon Plus*); and 'la valeur montante du roman anglais, le golden boy, le surdoué de la bande' (Amette, 2006).

Class in Jonathan Coe

Coe's work treats contemporary social and political issues in a largely realist setting. In an interview with Philip Tew, Coe explained that during the writing of *The Rotters' Club* (2001), which is set in the 1970s, he carried out painstaking research to ensure historical accuracy (Coe, 2013a, 2013b). Indeed, a number of French reviews of Coe's work recommend the reading of his novels as a way of getting to grips with British politics and society (Bérenger; Noiville, 2009; Onot-dit-Biot). Vanessa Guignery has emphasized the 'multiplicity of perspectives, voices and literary genres' (2013) in Coe's work and indeed Coe has expressed his desire to represent the plurality of British society as faithfully as possible, something he conceives of as a political project (Liebaert). This broad representation means the inclusion of characters from all over England: London, Birmingham, Sheffield, Leeds, Watford and Scarborough, among others, are all settings for parts of his novels, as Coe says, 'it is part of my mission, if you like, to remind readers that London is only a small part of the country' (Chadderton). British identity

politics, too, plays an important role in Coe's writing project. Gender, sexuality and race are all dealt with, but, arguably most persistently, his novels treat class politics. Coe has expressed his personal anger towards the politics of Margaret Thatcher and the neo-liberal order which followed, as well as the more recent banking crisis and the subsequent politics of austerity (Coe, 2013d, 2013e, 2013f). In addition to the class war going on between workers and management at the Leyland Longbridge car plant in *The Rotters' Club*, Coe addresses gentrification (*The Closed Circle*); social division through education (*The Rotters' Club*, *Maxwell Sim*); and the folly of the super-rich (*Number Eleven*).

Coe claims that he 'normally write[s] about the lower-middle class: Michael Owen, Benjamin Trotter, Maxwell Sim and their families would be perfect examples' (Coe, 2013c). In fact, his work, like the traditional 19th century novel, brings people of different socio-economic classes into contact with each other, usually to the detriment of 'the lower-middle class' characters. Michael Owen gradually discovers his life has been ruined in a number of ways by the upper-class Winshaws in *What a Carve Up!*; reading his father's account of his early life in the City, Maxwell Sim discovers that 'it was Crispin Lambert [the upper-class investment banker] who screwed things up for [Roger and my dad]' (Max, in MS 292);⁵ in *The Rain before it Falls*, Rosamond, from a modest background, goes to live with her aunt's wealthy family; in *The Dwarves of Death* at Madeline's birthday party, Robin is made to feel profoundly out of place by her upper-class friends:

I stayed where I was. None of the other guests tried to introduce themselves to me. They all seemed to be called things like Jocasta and Jeremy and were wearing outfits which must have cost more money than I would have thought of spending on a year's wardrobe. They gave me a wide berth, and sneaked glances at me with wary, amused eyes which made my cheeks burn. (DD 172)

In *The Rotters' Club*, Benjamin meets Cicely's family in Wales and draws a clear class distinction between their forms of holiday accommodation:

Benjamin couldn't tell which gable she was drawing his attention to. Come to that, he wasn't too sure what a gable was. He didn't think that his parents' house in Longbridge had gables. He remembered his family, suddenly - almost for the first time that day - and found it bizarre, almost unthinkable, that their caravan was still pitched only a few miles away... (RC 343)

French reviews of Coe's work have highlighted the significance of his representation of a variety of social classes: 'À la manière d'un Dickens enjoué, il mélange et malaxe les personnages, les classes sociales pour donner un tableau d'époque, vaste badigeonnage. Argent et sentiments. La lutte des classes et les coucheries: tout devient roman, féroce, spontanément' (Amette, 2003; see also Bérenger). Coe's work shows a remarkable sensitivity to the markers of British social class, from characters' sociolects to the foods they eat; it is this specificity and plurality, I will argue, which is lost in the French translation.

Translating Class in Jonathan Coe

Jonathan Coe claims that his narrative style is clear (Stélandre), in that he uses little lyricism or poetry. José Kamoun, French translator of his latest three novels, *The Terrible Privacy of Maxwell Sim*, *Expo 58* and *Number Eleven*, describes Coe's prose as 'oralisée, conversationnelle, fluide' (Tresvaux). However, to his readers' delight, and perhaps to his translators' dismay, there are also frequent puns and word play, such as the difficulty of reproducing Benjamin and Lois Trotter's mischievous nick-names of 'Bent Rotter' and 'Lowest Rotter' in *The Rotters' Club*. Jamila and Serge Chauvin cleverly call them 'les Roteurs' – thereby maintaining the sound of the original but also imbuing it with similar, pejorative and childish meaning for the French. Nevertheless, what does pose a problem for his translators is the social specificity of Britain. Indeed, this aspect of his work is partially erased in decisions such as the domestication of 'the Tube' (WCU! 62, DD 3, E58 11) to 'le métro'

(TA 94, NM 15, E58 26); the banalisation of the ‘Oyster card’ (MS, 117) to ‘ma carte de transport’ (MS 167); and ‘down to the local Tesco’ (CC 55) as ‘au supermarché’ (CF 81).

Some of the most evocative symbols of social class in Britain are either generalised or omitted. In Jean Pavans’s translation of Coe’s second novel, *A Touch of Love* (1989), the ubiquitous middle-class ‘Radio 4’ (10) becomes ‘une chaîne d’informations’ (TA 21). In the same text, in the final story within a story, the protagonist’s smug certainty that ‘his wife invariably stayed at home in the afternoons listening to the play on Radio 4’ (203) is rendered by Pavans as ‘pour écouter la pièce radiophonique de l’après-midi’ (TA 251). The inclusion of the detail ‘Radio 4’ transmits the sense of a particular type of listener: generally middle-class, well-educated and interested in culture. As it turns out, the protagonist’s wife is in fact not at home listening to the play on Radio 4 at all, but rather out gambling and drinking lager. The loss of the reference to ‘Radio 4’ thus lessens the comedy at the incongruity of the social values expressed in this passage. In *Expo 58*, however, Josée Kamoun retains the source-text reference: ‘branché sur l’émission *Today*, de Radio 4’ (315). Flat caps in *The Rain before it Falls* (73), so evocative of a certain time and class in England, are simply translated as ‘casquettes’, in the French version, which can be any kind of cap in French (*Pluie* 80). In the same way, the social geography of London is glossed over in the French. Thus, in *What a Carve Up!* London’s ‘mansion blocks’, with all their fake grandeur, are only ever translated as ‘immeuble[s]’ (TA 167), while Michael’s ‘basement flat’ in London, with all the social connotations that holds, is rendered in French simply as ‘Notre appartement’ (TA 364).

British food is strongly bound up with social class. Part of Coe’s immersion of the reader into specific time and place is dependent upon the evocation of meals and eating habits. The descriptions of lower-middle-class provincial 1970s fare in *The Rotters’ Club*, for example, will make some British readers sigh with nostalgia for a simpler time and others titter with

knowing superiority. Secret lovers, Bill and Miriam's meals at the disappointing hotel they stay in, recall the meals at 'The Berni Inn' which the trade union shop stewards are 'treated to' in the opening pages: 'Bill went for the mixed grill. Miriam chose the chicken-in-a-basket' (RC 81). This is rendered in the French as: 'Bill opta pour le mixed grill. Miriam choisit l'émincé de poulet' (BC 113). Taking the chicken out of its basket here removes the sense of provincial aspiration of the original. Further, turning it into a French dish ('l'émincé de poulet') removes the British specificity of the pub meal. Indeed, a number of Coe's translators choose to domesticate certain traditional British meals. Again, in *The Rotters' Club* both 'processed meat pies' (RC 70) and 'shepherd's pie' (RC 135), staples of the British working class, become variously 'les quiches surgelées' (BC 99) and 'une quiche' (BC 184). A comforting 'Horlicks' which Benjamin Trotter has with his mother (RC 427), becomes 'une tisane' (585) in the French version, whose middle-class, healthy connotations are in direct opposition with the comforting, homely connotations of Horlicks. In *The House of Sleep*, the greasy-spoon staple 'HP sauce' is simply removed from a description of a cafe table (HS 297, MDS 40). In offering a landscape of British food which largely closely resembles a French one, first of all 'the foreign' is denied and the French reader is condescended to. Second, the quirks and specificity of the British class system are removed. Indeed, French food represents something quite different to the British, evocative of exoticism and middle-class holidays abroad. Significantly, the upper classes in *What a Carve Up!* partake of French-style food; in not respecting the difference in food choices, the translators fail to capture the class identities and divisions which are of such importance in the novels.

Furthermore, 'tea', meaning 'working-class dinner' in English, is not conveyed in the French translation of *The Rotters' Club*. 'They had tea together' (RC 42) is translated as 'Ils dînèrent en famille' (BC 62). This translation shift is obligatory, the French language does not offer the variety of English in its lexis here ; yet the French verb 'dîner' gives the meal a grandness

which is absent from the Andertons' tea of sausage, chips and beans. The translators often mistake working-class British 'tea' for the other rendering of 'tea' in the English language: a cup of tea. For example, in *Maxwell Sim*, when narrating his childhood, Uncle Clive reports that he and his mother 'walked home, looking forward to warmth, tea and Thursday-night television' (MS 54). Josée Kamoun translates this, albeit with unifying alliteration, as : 'nous sommes rentrés tous deux, pressés de retrouver le cocon du jeudi soir: tiédeur, thé, television' (MS 80). Similarly, 'sitting in their front room at tea-time on a Saturday afternoon' (MS 284) 'le samedi après-midi, dans le salon, à l'heure du thé' (MS 375). The word 'thé' in the French language can only refer to a cup of tea or some kind of afternoon tea, not the evening meal, which is clearly the meaning in context, despite Coe's potentially misleading mention of 'afternoon' in the second example. In this way, in addition to denying class specificity, the French reader retains a stereotypical idea of Britain: where afternoon tea is drunk by all.

The tenor and accent of voices are constantly emphasised in Coe's work, and often the socio-economic connotations of these voices are highlighted. In *A Touch of Love*, Richard, in Robin's first story, 'wondered whether his own obvious Home Counties accent was annoying her' (41); in *Expo 58*, Foley is intimidated at work by: 'smooth, softly-spoken, well-educated voices. The voices of Establishment men' (5); in *The Closed Circle*, the children at Pizza Express are 'shrilling across the room in perfect BBC English: beginning even now to master the braying accents of the ruling class...' (84) Indeed, dialogue, which always makes up a significant part of Coe's novels, is particularly problematic in translation. The particular language variety chosen by Coe for his characters signifies far more than semantic meaning. Although Coe does not phonologically represent his characters' sociolects, the choice of lexis is a marker of sociocultural belonging and identity.

In *The Rotters' Club* in particular, Coe uses a group characterizing discourse in order to represent as faithfully as possible the working-class and lower-middle-class characters in the Midlands of the 1970s. Endearments and exclamations notably pose a problem in translation. For example, the ubiquitous 'love', used to all the family and between female friends : 'Cup of tea, love?' Irene Anderton asks her husband, Bill (34). In the French translation, Serge and Jamila Chauvin render this as : 'Tu veux un peu de thé, mon amour?' (BC 52). 'Love' in the particular milieu described is almost used like a tic or a filler in English, whereas the French 'mon amour' is very different – stronger in feeling and usually specific to a particular, loving relationship. For example, when Miriam and Bill are on the phone and Miriam is trying to persuade her secret lover to spend the night with her, she uses 'Bill – *darling* –' (RC 41) translated, aptly this time, as 'Bill...*mon amour*...' (BC 61). A more appropriate translation for 'love' as a common endearment is later used in the same text: 'Hello, love' (RC 125) says Benjamin's grandmother when he arrives for a visit. This is translated as 'Bonjour, mon chéri' (BC 184) – a more pertinent choice in terms of the relationship involved.

Similarly, Bill's response to Irene's offer of tea is 'That'd be grand' (RC 34). This is translated as 'Ce serait super' (BC 52). Similarly to the example above, the French translation is overstated in its enthusiasm. 'Grand', used widely in particular by working-class men of Bill Anderton's generation, is deliberately quiet and under-stated. In terms of exclamation, on the night he has planned to propose to her, Malcolm says to Lois Trotter : 'Blimey, love...You look cracking' (RC 46). This is translated as 'Ben dis donc, mon cœur!...T'es vraiment super mignonne!' (BC 68). Once again, 'mon cœur' is too strong an equivalent for 'love'. Both 'blimey' and 'cracking' are loaded with connotations of Malcolm's identity as a lower middle-class man in the Midlands of the 1970s. The French translation contains expressions which are more generic. Finally, prior to her disappearance, Miriam reports that Vile Victor called her 'a dirty piece of stuff' (RC 85) because she refused to sleep with him, translated into French as

‘ salope’ (BC 118) and then ‘I was sure he was going to belt me in the face’ (RC 85) ‘je croyais qu’il allait me coller une baffé’ (BC 118). Again in these examples, the expression ‘dirty piece of stuff’ and the verb ‘to belt someone’ are specifically positioned within a particular time and social class, whereas ‘ salope’ and ‘coller une baffé’, while colloquial, remain common usage in contemporary France.

Use of swearing is particularly indicative of age and class. Bill Anderton again, lying to Irene about why he can’t come to a parent-teacher evening, says ‘It’s a bugger, I know...’ (RC 42), which is translated as ‘Je sais que c’est chiant’ (BC 62). Similarly, Colin Trotter’s ‘Bugger, bugger, bugger!’ (CC 40) when he realizes in *The Closed Circle* that he has forgotten to set the video recorder to tape his son Paul meeting the Prime Minister, is translated as ‘Merde, merde, merde!’ (CF 63). ‘Bugger’ is ‘dad-swearing’: mild, largely male, and belonging to those who came of age in the 1960s. ‘Chiant’ and ‘merde’ are both timeless and ageless. Indeed ‘merde’ is also used to translate ‘Damn’ in *La Pluie avant qu’elle tombe* (147), ‘Bloody hell’ in *Bienvenue au Club* (44) and ‘Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!’ in *Les Nains de la Mort* (17). All of these various swear words in English have different social connotations. The problem here is that the French lexical choices would be just as at home in 2015 – there is no sense of a different time. All these examples, then, fail to transpose the distinctiveness of the British sociolect.

Similarly, the upper-class sociolect recreated so successfully by Jonathan Coe in *What a Carve Up!* creates problems for Coe’s French translators. For example, Mortimer Winshaw calls the butler, Pyles, ‘an absolute brick’ (10), translated as ‘un très brave type’ (TA 25), and ‘Frightful scenes’ (120) become ‘Des scènes affreuses’ (TA 172). Henry Winshaw calls Keith Joseph : ‘a trifle disconcerting’ (131), translated as ‘un peu déconcertant’ (187). The nouns ‘Un type’ and ‘un peu’ and the adjective ‘affreux’ do not carry the upper-class sociocultural connotation of the original English and thus do not capture the ‘poshness’ of the characters in *What a Carve Up!* Coe uses a similar sociolect in *Expo 58* to capture the idiolect of the 1950s. Here, Joséé

Kamoun makes use of some archaic French terms to create a largely successful portrait of the UK at this time. Mr Swaine, Foley's boss, declares that Foley is : 'making a jolly fine job of it too...' (6), which Kamoun translates as: 'il se débrouille rudement bien' (20). Wilkins the spy's fairly gentle 'God damn it, man' (134) is translated by 'Sapristi' (158), another appropriately outmoded French term.

The very clear lines in the British class system are even crossed by the French translations at times. In *What a Carve Up!* the quintessential Cockney, Sid James, calls Thomas 'mate' and 'matey' (320-1); meanwhile when Michael arrives at Winshaw Towers for the reading of the will, Thomas angrily calls him 'man' (432, 447), as in 'What on earth are you blathering on about, man?' (447) Both these terms are translated as 'mon vieux' (442-3, 593, 613), which, first of all, is far too friendly an expression, and furthermore, fails to capture the difference in class expressed by the speaker. 'Mon vieux' is also used to translate 'old man' when used between the male Winshaw family members, which is far more fitting of their class and relationship.

Conclusion

To conclude, the ubiquity and complexity of social class in Britain clearly presents a challenge in translation. The desire to provide a relatable equivalent to the reader while maintaining the fictional world Coe has created approaches the limits of translatability. Serge Chauvin, co-translator of four of Coe's novels, comments in a different context on the incapacity of the French language to emulate the linguistic variation which exists in the English language :

Je crois que l'écueil majeur c'est que le français ... est une langue académique, au sens par exemple où il n'admet pas beaucoup le dialecte, la pluralité des approches de la langue; et cela, c'est un problème quasi insoluble quand on est confronté à la richesse et à la diversité de la langue anglaise...Et là, c'est souvent un crève-cœur de s'apercevoir qu'on revient vers une standardisation, faute de pouvoir disposer d'un outil existant, car on ne peut pas créer de toutes pièces la langue d'une communauté, régionale ou sociale,

et le plus souvent on n'a pas l'équivalent en français qui permette de rendre cette particularité du retravail de la langue. (Bensoussan)

Possibly as a result of this, in the translation of Jonathan Coe's novels into French, we have seen that standardization of social and cultural specificity is prevalent. However, the French critical line is that Jonathan Coe's novels are popular as a result of their social and political realism, and that in this way they provide access to British contemporary society, and for the French reader a great deal of that realism and that 'Britishness', is, in fact, missing. The choice to employ standardization and domestication, possibly in an attempt to privilege readability and translator invisibility, thus reduces the French reader's understanding of British social class as so carefully conveyed by Jonathan Coe and obscures the experiential context in which the language is used. Thus language as expression of identity, in this case, of social class, is not sufficiently conveyed. Coe's writing project, to accurately capture the diversity of British society at a specific moment in time, is thus undermined. The annihilation of working-class communities and the subsequent loss of identity which occurred from the late 1970s onwards through the systematic destruction of traditional industrial and manufacturing industries (such as the British Leyland factory in *The Rotters' Club*) made this recording of British life in the 1970s even more important, as Coe recognizes (Coe, 2013d). If it is immersion into the fictional world Coe has created which is of such interest to the French, it is surprising that the various translators make no use of borrowing and very little use of foreignization. Anthony Pym has argued for the importance of the *function* of the variety of language used: 'The thing to be rendered is not the source-text variety...The thing to be rendered is the variation' (2000). While parallel direct translation may be problematic in the case of sociolect, an understanding of the function of the variation and its social meaning and the workings of the British social class system, as well as of Coe's writing project, would have allowed the French translators greater freedom and creativity in their choices. Finally, the front covers of the French translations of

Coe's novels display stereotypical symbols of 'Britishness': *A Touch of Love* features a double-decker bus ; *The Dwarves of Death* features a red telephone box and a punk rocker's head ; *What a Carve Up!* features men in top hats; *The Rotters' Club* shows boys in school uniform ; the Houses of Parliament appear on the front of *The Closed Circle*. Clearly, the 'Britishness' of these novels is a draw for the reader and Gallimard has chosen to signify this by using the most widely understood symbols. This creation of an artificial 'Britishness' can also be said to be taking place within the pages of the translated novels. Instead of taking into account the social variation so present in Jonathan Coe's fictional world, the translators have, in a number of instances, chosen to create a banalized, 'smoothed-out' version of Britain.

¹ <http://www.gallimard.fr/Catalogue/GALLIMARD/Du-monde-entier>, accessed 2 June 2015.

² See bibliography for details.

³ Jonathan Coe's novels in chronological order, followed by their translations, all published by Penguin in the UK and Gallimard in France: *An Accidental Woman* (1987), *La femme de hasard* (2006); *A Touch of Love* (1989), *Une touche d'amour* (2002); *The Dwarves of Death* (1990), *Les nains de la mort* (2001); *What a Carve Up!* (1994), *Testament à l'anglaise* (1995); *The House of Sleep* (1997), *La Maison du sommeil* (1998); *The Rotters' Club* (2001), *Bienvenue au club* (2002); *The Closed Circle* (2004), *Le Cercle fermé* (2006); *The Rain before it Falls* (2007), *La pluie avant qu'elle tombe* (2008); *The Terrible Privacy of Maxwell Sim* (2010), *La vie privée de Monsieur Sim* (2011); *Expo 58* (2013), *Expo 58* (2014) and *Number Eleven* (2015).

⁴ The first for *The House of Sleep*, published in France in as *La Maison du Sommeil* (Gallimard, 2008), and the second for *What a Carve Up!*, published in France as *Testament à l'Anglaise* (Gallimard, 1995).

⁵ In quotations the novels shall from now on be referred to in abbreviation as *A Touch of Love* (TL); *Une Touche d'amour* (TA); *The Dwarves of Death* (DD); *Les Nains de la mort* (NM); *What a Carve Up!* (WCU); *Testament à l'anglaise* (TA); *The House of Sleep* (HS); *La Maison du sommeil* (MDS); *The Rotters' Club* (RC); *Bienvenue au club* (BC); *The Closed Circle* (CC); *Le Cercle fermé* (CF); *The Rain before it Falls* (Rain); *La Pluie avant qu'elle tombe* (Pluie); *The Terrible Privacy of Maxwell Sim* (MS); *La Vie très privée de M. Sim* (MS); *Expo 58* (E58).

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