Karen Ferreira-Meyers

The Other and the Self in Laurent Herrou's Autofiction *Nina Myers*

Abstract: Laurent Herrou, a young contemporary French author, has been writing what can be termed autofictional texts. In addition to a few novels and his *Journal* (2015, 2016), the text published under the title of *Nina Myers* (2016) is part of the literary genre of autofiction. This paper proposes to analyse some autofictional features with a view to unpacking what autofiction signifies for the author. For Herrou, autofiction allows him to be 'plural' or 'dual'/'double', to embrace the different personalities and moods that form his Self. Literature gives the author another understanding of himself, his body, of the multiple bodies in which he lives, in a kind of multiplication of the Self and of others. The apparent link with psychoanalysis, childhood memories and imagination in his texts is one of the main characteristics of Herrou's autofiction.
Keywords: French Literature; Laurent Herrou; Nina Myers; Autofiction; Psychoanalysis.

Karen Ferreira-Meyers
University of Swaziland, Swaziland
karenferreirameyers@gmail.com

DOI: 10.24193/cechinox.2019.37.13

Introduction

Not all autofictional authors like to be classified as such. In my own research, I have observed that authors like Amélie Nothomb accept the label, while others like Calixthe Beyala and Nina Bouraoui tolerate it. Still others such as Annie Ernaux do not want to be associated with the term. Laurent Herrou, a young French contemporary author, fully accepts the application of the notion to his work. He has said so, for example, in the 'conversation' he had with Arnaud Genon[1].

Herrou is not yet well-researched in literary circles, even though his work is very interesting from a critical perspective. Born in Quimper (France) on the 6th of July 1967, Herrou has been publishing his literary texts since he was first discovered in 2000 as the author of *Laura* by the Le Rayon collection (Editions Balland) directed by Guillaume Dustan. Since then his main works have been published by his editor Jacques Flamant. These include autofictions, novels and a diary (*Journal*) spanning several years already. Four texts – *Je suis un écrivain* (2008), *Cocktail* (2010), *Les bonheurs* (2011) and *Les pièces* (2012)[2] – fall within the confines of a 'classic' definition of the autofictional genre in which

an autofictional pact lies at the basis of a text. They combine apparently contradictory elements, namely that of autobiographical and that of fictional writing. The rest of his bibliography foregrounds the different potential literary explorations of the Self.

Herrou's Autofictional Stance

Some of the traditional oppositional pairs like autobiography-novel, fact-fiction, referentiality-fictionality, and life-art are today, in an era of post-postmodernity, no longer valid. They have to be seen as continuums, without strict boundaries. Herrou's view on autofiction is similar, as we will discover below through a reading of *Nina Myers*. The genesis of the term autofiction is well-documented as Serge Doubrovsky's poetic self-description in the context of his novel *Fils* (Gasparini 15), but it is more difficult to find consensus regarding the definition of the term. Despite being intuitively clear, the concept seemingly remains open for different, partly conflicting interpretations.

There are many ways a critic can try to understand the literary position an author takes. One of these is to look at paratextual clues, a major one comprising the interviews, dialogues, comments made by the author or the interventions of critics that the writer accepts.

What can be learned from an interview between a writer who practices autofictional writing and an academic who made autofiction one of his main objects of study? That is the question which can be answered when reading Laurent Herrou and Arnaud Genon's 2017 printed conversation, *L'inconfort du "je". Dialogue sur l'écriture de soi*. This publication is the result of a 2015 conference entitled *Les enjeux de la chair dans les écritures autofictionnelles* (19 et 20 septembre 2015, ENS, Paris). Both authors are linked through a longstanding friendship based on their common interest in French authors Hervé Guibert and Doubrovsky's notion of autofiction. In their dialog, they tackle the main issue of the Self from three different perspectives: the practice of the diary[3], the concept of (auto)fiction and the echoes of otherness.

Otherness can refer to physically detached others, 'other people', 'people in our surroundings', but can also refer to the 'other' in us, within ourselves. The link between autofiction and psychoanalysis has existed since the first appearance of the term. Indeed, Philippe Gasparini, "the archivist-narrator" (Burgelin 21) of autofiction, explains that the first occurrence of the word "autofiction" can be found in Serge Doubrovsky's draft of his novel *Fils* ("Son(s)" or "Threads"), entitled *Le Monstre*. The term appears on *feuillet* (handwritten page) number 1637 of that draft, where Doubrovsky narrates the psycho-analysis of one of his dreams, included in the novel's text. The narrator, Serge Doubrovsky, is in his car after a session with his psychoanalyst, called Akeret in the novel; he imagines that the dreams he noted down in his little book could become the subject of a fictional book, a *fiction* that he would write to the wheel of his car (in French: *auto*): an *autofiction* thus. Doubrovsky describes autofiction in *Textes en main*[4] as such: *"Fiction, de faits et d'événements strictement réels.' Fragments épars, morceaux dépareillés, tant qu›on veut : l'autofiction sera l'art d'accommoder les restes. Comme la psychanalyse, d'ailleurs, par le biais de la théorie, arrive à sa propre construction.*

L'autofiction produira, par le canal de l'écriture, son propre texte[5]*"*. This citation shows how autofiction and psychoanalysis are closely linked and how they both aid in 'constructing' the Self. Many autofictional authors have since then used the process of psychoanalysis, first, to better comprehend themselves and, subsequently, to write about the process and its outcomes.

Herrou explains, in his *Autoportrait* dated 24 July 2014[6], that he sees a psychoanalyst every week[7]. In his 2015 diary, published as *Journal 2015*, Herrou relates an exchange he had with his psychoanalyst: "Why do you dissociate your body from yourself, why when you talk about your own body, you say: the body, as if it were not your own? I thought about this and answered it is because I do not like it"[8]. Genon sees the writing of the diary as a way to love this body, this body *embodied* in a book. Or as he noted in a paper: "Even more than the writing of the body, of its flesh, it the writing itself that is embodied and then becomes Herrou's *body of work*"[9]. Writing for Herrou then means going back to his body, to this body he does not like or love at the onset but which he tries to understand, to conceive, to draw, to write through the use of words and phrases. Genon notes, interestingly, that the image of the double is important when it comes to diary writing. He bases his argument on Didier's work: "the author of a diary is double. He is the one who acts and the one who sees himself acting and who writes. The diarist is at the same time subject and object of his discourse"[10]. For Genon, Herrou's diarising constitutes the best laboratory in which autofictional writing is thought and executed. In addition, doubling the Self is also what is at stake in *Nina Myers*.

Nina Myers (Account of a Betrayal[11])

Nina Myers cannot be read on its own. It is part of Herrou's autofictional 'web'. As described in my own work[12]: certain texts can be described as autofictional because they are part of a rhizomic *ensemble*. Paratextual clues can be subdivided into epitextual modalisers (elements on the edges of the text itself: title, subtitle, preamble, notes, etc.) and peritextual ones (these are, as Hallyn noted in 1987, a hybrid group of signs which introduce, surround, isolate or end a given text. One of the possible effects of peritextual modalisers is the 'complete work' effect which means that an author's text is read in a particular way – in the example at hand, autofictionally – because elements in various of his texts read together demonstrate the autofictional tendency.

In a tweet, Herrou subtitled his autofiction as the account of a betrayal. Betrayal to whom? By whom? Why a betrayal? To try and understand Herrou's vision of his own text, it is important to read the following entry from Herrou's diary[13]:

> Je me suis couché un peu déprimé hier soir parce que je ne croyais plus en Nina Myers. Après sa réapparition dans la nouvelle saison de *24*, j'avais rejoint le texte qui porte son nom, j'avais rempli deux pages auxquelles je me rattachais davantage par habitude, ou volonté de faire, que réel désir. Je me suis allongé, attristé, je voulais que ça dure, j'avais envie qu'il se passe enfin quelque chose entre moi et un personnage, j'avais voulu y croire – mais ça ne fonctionnait plus. (…)
> Le sentiment de déprime continue, je n'ai pas envie de perdre Nina Myers ;

en même temps je ne sais plus comment la rattacher à moi. Je me suis demandé, après avoir envoyé *septembre* à Hubert Colas, si j'avais bien fait. Je me suis demandé aussi s'il ne serait pas enfin temps que j'abandonne définitivement ce fantasme d'être une femme. (…) Ce besoin, ce désir d'être une autre. Je me suis dit que je jouissais quotidiennement et que je prenais mon pied face à des hommes poilus. Des hommes qui n'intéresseraient pas la fille en moi.
Je me suis donc résumé la situation en ces termes : il y aurait une fille en moi, Nina, une héroïne de feuilleton, une espionne, un traître ; et il y aurait un homme, Laurent, attiré par des hommes bruts et virils. (…)
Il y aurait donc un choix à faire.
Ou : il y aurait une décision à prendre.
Savoir ce que j'abandonne : Nina, Laurent ou Jean-Pierre ?
Je n'abandonne rien ni personne, même si Nina perd pied. Nina perd peu à peu pied, et Laurent à sa suite, ne sait plus où il en est. (…)
D'où Nina.
Nina Myers.
Il y a un texte dans les dossiers de mon ordinateur qui porte ce nom-là, un texte dont je ne sais pas quoi faire parce qu'il est plus littéraire que je ne le voudrais. À un moment donné j'ai abandonné la réalité du fantasme pour prolonger le texte, c'était la première erreur. Je pourrais me plonger dans un nouveau visionnage de la première saison de *24*, je sais que ça fonctionnerait à nouveau. Que Nina Myers reprendrait possession de mes gestes. Lorsque je parle de volonté, je sais de quoi je parle. Nina se manifeste, mais je fais tout, de mon côté, pour que la manifestation ait lieu. (…)
Femme qui marche et Nina Myers. (…)
J'ai perdu (peut-être) Nina Myers, et dans le processus, je me suis perdu un peu plus.

These excerpts show the ambiguity of the main character in *Nina Myers*. Who is she? Nina or Laurent, or both at the same time? Laurent's feminine side? Hidden or out in the open? In *L'inconfort du « je »*, Herrou states: "I do not write novels, no, I'm writing my life, or I'm rewriting my life, my life writes itself, or I become a character in my life"[14].

While Herrou accepts the term autofiction to describe the literary genre he employs, he sees it as an *a posteriori* labelling of his writing. Writing the Self is not easily categorized or classified in his opinion. In a diary (whether published or unpublished), there is an urgency based on the need to 'evict', 'expel', 'force out' certain facts and emotions in a 'state of emergency', in a certain manner to free the Self of itself. In an autofictional text, the same author can take his time to explore the same events and sentiments over and over again, in a vast field of narrative possibilities. As such, an autofiction is a space of/for transformation, multiplication, variation, erasure of the limits of truth via the use of 'fictional truths'. Or otherwise stated, autofictional writing is interested in the narrating—and thus narrated— subject. According to Colonna, the 'I' is fictionalized while still maintaining referentiality to the real-life subject. This apparent contradiction can be grasped in the texts at hand by the conflation of the author and the narrator: the narrator

is identifiable as the author via various paratextual and textual markers. Yet, autofictional texts establish a critical distance to straightforward referentiality by means of a number of narrative strategies.

While not following the traditional definition of autofiction as a text which is paratextually labelled as a novel while the protagonist (who in most cases also is the narrator) bears the author's name, *Nina Myers* can still be read as one of those atypical autofictions in which the writer manifests a deep and constant desire, an irrepressible obsession to capture his 'I', always metamorphosing throughout his text, as he observes, examines and even dissects it. These last two verbs, according to Genon, refer to the medical field which Herrou started off studying years ago (he abandoned these studies quite early on). Genon insists that writing itself is also a confrontation with fictional doubles, an exploration of the possibilities and impossibilities of our experience of life. Autofiction is then seen as a conscious autobiography of impossibility, what Genon adequately terms an "autofraction", a fractured, fragmented Self's attempt to capture itself while being conscious of illegible and unattainable unity. Herrou translates this idea into a violent image: for him autofiction occurs in a literary "boxing ring" where the "I" is caught between realities and fantasies.

In his quest to discover reality and truth, autofiction embodies the ability to reconstruct lived experiences and at the same time to fault this same experience: a potential anchored in writing as representation and repetition. Any attempt at classification only becomes more complicated. For Arnaud Genon, Herrou embodies many aspects of autofiction, fiction being used by the author to better represent and understand 'real' life.

Real life is dual, double, plural, as in what a mirror reflects back to us, multi-faceted and fragmented. Traditional autobiography intends to present the author and the reader with an even image, clearly defined and framed, while autofiction presents a reflection that ripples and breaks over half-hidden depths. Autofiction assumes the discrepancy between the subject (the person, his life) and its reflection (the protagonist, his story). It knows that even a perfect mirror sends back an inverted image; it interestingly shows that people want the contrary of what is and even the contrary of what they want[15].

Genon cleverly observes that *Nina Myers* (2004) is another literary modality the author uses to write his Self/about himself. Here, the person who says 'I' in the text does not automatically revert to the author, but to Nina Myers, one of the characters of the televised series *24 hours*. What Herrou does is introduce ambiguity by trying to convince the reader that the narrator is in fact Nina Myers. He does this through the very first words of the book: "My name is Nina Myers"[16]. However, this assertion is slowly negated, as throughout the text the 'I"s identity will unravel while the author tries to construct it. On page 12, the reader reads: "my name is Nina Myers, which means something like: I'm Nina Myers. But this is not really true. I'm not Nina Myers - which is also false"[17].

As in real life, the author-narrator no longer knows who this 'I' is? Who are we? How do we represent ourselves? Laurent Herrou-Nina Myers continues by describing the unravelling of his character/being in the following words:

> I'm not doing well. That is why that this sentence unravels, as a coil of wire, to infinity, that's why it's important for me, essential even, that my name today is: Nina Myers. Still you have to know that Nina Myers is a liar. That this means I lie. That every single thing that I have said thus far may be true, as it may also be completely invented. My background for example: I can tell you what I want.[18]

Genon continues his analysis: if Nina Myers is a liar, the narrator (and thus also the author) who claims to be Nina Myers is also a liar. From that observation onwards, anything becomes possible. The preliminary statement is more than a game or the expression of an identity crisis, as can be seen from the following excerpt: "maybe I'm not Nina Myers. I'm (not) a writer. (not) A man"[19]. The author figure *becomes* little by little, starts to take shape, begins to find its contours as an elusive and ever-changing 'I'. A bit of intertextual reading is necessary here. Just like Flaubert was Emma Bovary, Herrou was Laura in his first autofiction *Laura*. The narrator of *Nina Myers* refers to Laura: "You have to understand what I am doing. I transform personalities. I shape them. I draw them. (…). Laura was not scary. Laura is dead. I killed her in 400 pages. Nina is a completely different story"[20].

Laura's reappearance, as the author's double in the novel *Laura* (but also in *Le bunker*)[21] indicates just how much of a plural "I" Laurent Herrou's postmodern 'I' represents. Genon (2018) describes this 'I' as a fictional hologram which constructs and deconstructs its own existence, thereby showcasing its/the author's vulnerability. The Self described in all Herrou's literary works explores its own possibilities, which include becoming its 'other' or even going as far as completely disappearing. Genon notes this when on the last pages *Nina Myers*' narrator asks what a sole liar is. His answer is: a mirror, an empty mirror[22]. In all, it is only through the other, the Other, the reader and all the others that an author, a character, a narrator can assert himself as a plural and heterogeneous 'I'.

This is how Laurent Herrou explains this process (in an interview with Thomas Dreneau):

> There are writers who are righteous, and others who perform: I never considered my texts (almost never, I think only one of them which is a counterexample) and performing. Maybe it was my life, but it was first and foremost literature. I wanted to make that clear to everyone. This is why I wrote the preamble to the diary, where I urge people who know me not to read themselves into the text, not to be tempted to look for themselves (I am aware, however, that this was some kind of provocation)[23].
>
> My real name is Laurent Herrou, using a pseudonym has never seemed necessary to me. Femininity is something I claim, it has helped build me and sometimes deconstruct me, literarily. I published a text that reads: "my name is Nina Myers, which means something like: I'm Nina Myers. This is not really true. I'm not Nina Myers – which is also false". This is a bit the same as with Laurent and Laura[24].

Conclusion

Je suis un écrivain (2008) summarises the author's intentions and writing objectives well. As Genon observes, Herrou's *Je suis un écrivain*

> seems to affirm, right from its title, this desire to include the "I" in this new relationship between writing the Self and fictional writing. To affirm "I am a writer" can be read at the same time as signifying "I am someone who writes novels, stories, giving special attention to style, to a manner of saying" (broad sense given to the word "writer"), but also as indicating the prominent place given to that "I" which is immediately associated – through Herrou's name on the front cover – with the author. All this communicates to the reader (since any use of "I" automatically refers to the recipient of the message) Herrou's identity through his identification with the status of writer - known to be fragile – to confirm or even reinforce it. In fact, Herrou performatively embodies, the posture of a writer of the Self who seeks by this usage of the "I" to assert himself as a writer: I write therefore I am and I am because I write (I). So here we see the typical triple autofictional logic emerging: literary and stylistic logic, importance accorded to the "I" and its quest for identity, willingness to share life experiences with the reader an experience of life.[25]

Autofiction is, therefore, a fiction that reflects a fiction, in order to extract an intimate truth, just like psychoanalysis is undertaken to find a person's inner truth. Breathing life into an autofiction is breathing a second, double life into oneself/one's Self. Everything is fragmentary, disconnected, and only reconnects through the act of writing.

If autobiography is a mirror of its author, then autofiction is akin to a kaleidoscope, Genon's fictive hologram, a fragmented mirror that shows with each turn a different, distorted, hypnotic reflection of the same image, the same life, the same "monster" who dreams and writes, as Doubrovsky would have it.

Works Cited

Colonna, Vincent, "L'Autofiction. Essai sur la fictionalisation du soi en literature." Diss. EHESS Paris, 1989.

Colonna, Vincent, *Autofiction et autres mythomanies littéraires*. Auch: Tristram, 2004.

Didier, Béatrice, *Le journal intime*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1991 [1976].

Doubrovsky, Serge, *Fils*, Paris, Galilée, 1977.

Doubrovsky, Serge, *Un homme de passage*, Paris, Grasset, 2011.

Ferreira-Meyers, Karen, *Comparative analysis of autofictional features in the works of Amélie Nothomb, Calixthe Beyala and Nina Bouraoui*, PhD Thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Gasparini, Philippe, *Autofiction. Une aventure du langage*, Paris, Seuil, 2008.

Genon, Arnaud, "Lisez, ceci est mon corps : l'écriture autofictionnelle de Laurent Herrou", dans Isabelle Grell (dir.), *Les Enjeux (En/je) de la Chair dans l'*écriture autofictionnelle, Louvain-la-Neuve, EME éditions, 2017, pp. 121-133.

Genon, Arnaud, "En quête du je : les égo-territoires de Laurent Herrou", *RELIEF - Revue Électronique de Littérature Française*, 12(1), pp. 113–124. DOI: http://doi.org/10.18352/relief.992, 2018.
Herrou, Laurent, *Laura*, Paris, Balland, 2000.
Herrou, Laurent, *Nina Myers*, La-Neuville-aux-Joûtes, Jacques Flament Editions, 2004.
Herrou, Laurent, *Je suis un écrivain*, Montpellier, Publie.net, 2008.
Herrou, Laurent, *Cocktail*, Marseille, EP & LA, 2010.
Herrou, Laurent, *Les bonheurs*, La-Neuville-aux-Joûtes, Jacques Flament Editions, 2011.
Herrou, Laurent, *Les pièces*, Paris, Emoticourt, 2012.
Herrou, Laurent, *La part généreuse*, La-Neuville-aux-Joûtes, Jacques Flament Editions, 2014a.
Herrou, Laurent, *Vice de forme*, lecture publique, Paris, Atelier Corinne Glass, 14 juin 2014, www.youtube.com, 2014b.
Herrou, Laurent, *Le bunker*, La-Neuville-aux-Joûtes, Jacques Flament Editions, 2015.
Herrou, Laurent, *Journal 2015*, La-Neuville-aux-Joûtes, Jacques Flament Editions, 2016.
Herrou, Laurent, "Toute vie est un roman, entretien avec Laurent Herrou, 12 avril 2016, par Arnaud Genon", *La Cause littéraire*, 26 avril 2016.
Herrou, Laurent, *Autoportrait en Cher (et en mots). Journal de résidence*, La-Neuville-aux-Joûtes, Jacques Flament Editions, 2016.
Herrou, Laurent, *Journal 2016*, La-Neuville-aux-Joûtes, Jacques Flament Editions, 2017.
Herrou, Laurent, *Le petit mot*, Éléments de langage, 2018.
Herrou, Laurent and Genon, Arnaud, *L'inconfort du "je". Dialogue sur l'écriture de soi*, La-Neuville-aux-Joutes, Jacques Flament éditions, 2017.

Notes

1. Laurent Herrou et Arnaud Genon, *L'inconfort du "je". Dialogue sur l'écriture de soi*, La-Neuville-aux-Joutes, Jacques Flament éditions, 2017, 93 pp.
2. "Les pièces" or the parts are like all those parts that are missing, fragments of memories that we need to reconstruct our own story.
3. According to Herrou, the 2017 diary (*Journal 2017*, published in 2018) closes the "trilogy from Berrichon" (consisting of the diaries of 2015 and 2016, respectively published in 2016 and 2017 at Jacques Flamant Editions).
4. See also Serge Doubrovsky's articles entitled "L'initiative aux maux : écrire sa psychanalyse" et "Autobiographie/vérité/psychanalyse".
5. Serge Doubrovsky, "Textes en main", p. 213.
6. Available online, http://www.jacquesflamenteditions.com/laurent-herrou/.
7. "Je vois un psychanalyste dans la capitale une fois par semaine" (28 July 2014, http://www.jacquesflamenteditions.com/laurent-herrou/).
8. My translation of: "Pourquoi est-ce que vous dissociez votre corps de vous-même, pourquoi quand vous parlez de votre corps, vous dites : le corps, comme si ce n'était pas le vôtre ? J'ai réfléchi et j'ai répondu : parce que je ne l'aime pas." (2016a, p. 165)
9. My translation of: "Plus qu'une écriture du corps, de la chair, c'est l'écriture, dans le travail de Laurent Herrou, qui prend corps, puis devient corps" ? (Genon, 2018, p. 122).
10. My translation of: "Le diariste est deux : il est celui qui agit et celui qui se regarde agir, et qui écrit. […] le diariste est perpétuellement à la fois sujet et objet de son discours"
11. My translation of Herrou's tweet: "Nina Myers, récit d'une trahison", http://www.jacquesflamenteditions.com/302-nina-myers/
12. Ferreira-M eyers, Karen, *Comparative analysis of autofictional features in the works of Amélie Nothomb, Calixthe Beyala and Nina Bouraoui*, PhD thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal, 2011, pp. 48-49.
13. As can be found on http://deboitements.net/spip.php?article570.

14. My translation of: "Je n'écris pas des romans, non, j'écris ma vie, ou je réécris ma vie, ou ma vie s'écrit d'elle-même, ou je deviens le personnage de ma vie."
15. When the author discovers himself in the mirror, it is by fragments, both in Fils and in Le Livre brisé (The Broken Book, which tells the story of his relationship with second wife, before and after her death). xxii The protagonist wants "l'inverse de ce qui est" (*Fils*, p. 270). The protagonist's mother wants him to be "LE CONTRAIRE DE CE QU'ELLE VEUT" (*Fils*, p. 254).
16. Laurent Herrou, *Nina Myers*, La-Neuville-aux-Joûtes, Jacques Flament Editions, 2004, p. 11.
17. My translation of: "Je m'appelle Nina Myers, qui veut dire quelque chose comme : je suis Nina Myers. Ce qui n'est pas véritablement vrai. Je ne suis pas Nina Myers — qui est faux également" (p. 12).
18. My translation of: "Je ne vais pas bien. C'est pour cela que la phrase se dévide, comme une bobine de fil, à l'infini, c'est pour cela que c'est important pour moi, capital, que je m'appelle aujourd'hui : Nina Myers. Il faut savoir quand même que Nina Myers est une menteuse. Que je mens donc. Que chaque chose que je déclare peut être vraie, comme elle peut être complètement inventée. Mes origines par exemple : je peux raconter ce que je veux." (pp. 14-15)
19. Herrou, *Nina Myers*, pp. 30-31.
20. My translation of: "Il est nécessaire que vous compreniez ce que je suis en train de faire. Je transforme la personnalité. Je la façonne. Je la dessine. […] De Laura, il n'y avait rien à craindre. Laura est morte. Je l'ai tuée en quatre cents pages. Pour Nina, c'est une autre histoire". (Herrou, *Nina Myers*, pp. 44-45)
21. Laurent Herrou, *Le bunker*, La-Neuville-aux-Joûtes, Jacques Flament Editions, 2015, pp. 83-86.
22. Herrou, *Nina Myers*, p. 53.
23. My translation of: "Il y a des écrivains qui sont justes, et d'autres qui se mettent en scène : je n'ai jamais considéré mes textes (presque jamais, je pense à l'un d'eux qui est justement un contre-exemple) comme de la mise en scène. C'était peut-être ma vie mais c'était avant toute chose de la littérature. Je voulais que cela soit clair pour tout le monde. D'où le préambule au journal, où j'enjoins les gens qui me connaissent à ne pas lire, pour ne pas être tentés de se chercher (je suis conscient cependant que c'était une provocation)".
24. My translation of: "Je m'appelle vraiment Laurent Herrou, le passage par le pseudonyme ne m'a jamais paru nécessaire. La féminité est quelque chose que je revendique, elle m'a aidé à me construire et parfois à me déconstruire, littérairement. J'ai publié un texte qui dit ceci : «Je m'appelle Nina Myers, qui veut dire quelque chose comme : je suis Nina Myers. Ce qui n'est pas véritablement vrai. Je ne suis pas Nina Myers — qui est faux également». C'est un peu la même chose avec Laurent et Laura."
25. My translation of: "Laurent Herrou, *Je suis un écrivain*, semble affirmer, dès le titre, ce désir d'inscrire le "je" dans ce nouveau rapport qu'entretiennent écriture de soi et écriture fictionnelle. L'affirmation "je suis un écrivain" se lit en même temps comme "je suis quelqu'un qui écrit des histoires, des romans, en accordant une place particulière au style, à la manière de dire" (sens le plus large accordé aujourd'hui au mot "écrivain"), mais postule aussi la place prépondérante du "je" que l'on associe directement – par l'intermédiaire de son nom sur la première de couverture – à l'auteur. Il communique par ailleurs au lecteur (tout "je" postule un destinataire) son identité en l'associant au statut d'écrivain – que l'on sait fragile – pour l'assoir ou le conforter. En fait, il vient incarner, de manière performative, la posture d'un écrivain du "je" qui cherche par ce "je" à s'affirmer comme écrivain : j'écris donc je suis et je suis car j'écris (je). On voit donc ici se profiler une triple logique qui constitue le propre de l'écriture autofictionnelle : logique littéraire et stylistique, place accordée au "je" et à sa quête d'identité, volonté de partager avec le lecteur une expérience de vie." (Genon, 2018, p. 117)