Although Johnston makes no claim to be definitive ('d’autres nous suivront' (p. iii)), her work, with its extensive quotations from letters and the accounts of contemporary witnesses, is now essential for any attempt to relate Maupassant’s œuvre to his life. However, its length and detail make it difficult to consult on specific points. One can never know what facts will prove useful to future readers, but in some areas (the family’s financial affairs, for instance) precision is pushed to the limit of readability. The index includes only people, not works, and, owing to the absence of a bibliography and a reliance on ‘op. cit.’ in the endnotes, bibliographic references are often difficult to find after the first full citation.

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On just three brief occasions (in 1859, 1865, and 1870) Empress Eugénie held direct political power as regent during Napoleon III’s foreign policy crises. Alison McQueen’s book relates how Eugénie also exercised indirect political power and influence throughout the Second Empire in ways that have hitherto been underestimated: through her constant involvement in visual culture and cultural patronage. In researching this topic, McQueen has undertaken ambitious investigation of primary sources and archival information. Existing misinformation is corrected, familiar topics are fleshed out, and new material is introduced. The documentation is supported by numerous illustrations, including photographs taken by McQueen herself. Underlying her account is an argument for the rehabilitation of Eugénie, who was widely vilified in her time and has been neglected since. When Eugénie (1826–1920) married Napoleon III in January 1853, she needed to effect a rapid transition from her Spanish past to the Parisian present. McQueen explains how she did this initially through charitable works and foundations, chiefly the construction in 1853–55 of the Fondation Eugène Napoléon, which was created to improve education and counter social injustice. McQueen then turns to the transformation of Eugénie herself into an imperial icon through public and private portraits of her, in which official portraits by Franz Xaver Winterhalter are central but where sculptural portraits and photographs also figure. She follows this with a survey of Eugénie’s collecting of works of art, including a programme of purchases from the Salon. Widening her scope to international politics, McQueen devotes a chapter to ‘International Diplomacy and Transnationalism’ and addresses projects that tend towards the imperialist: from the Musée chinois at Fontainebleau to the opening of the Suez Canal. The narrative moves finally beyond the Second Empire to Eugénie’s exile after 1871, with emphasis on her installation of Bonapartist and Catholic monuments and memorials at Chislehurst and Farnborough in southern England. A brief Epilogue takes us to her death in 1920 and to a final evaluation of her achievements in terms of her exemplary moral commitment and integrity, a unified identity underlying her public persona. This evaluation will seem problematic to some in that it emphasizes Eugénie’s personal morality at the expense of wider ideological issues concerning political values. Only once does McQueen truly criticize Eugénie’s moral stance, providing a postcolonial critique of her acceptance of French colonialist expansion. Further debate about evaluation of Empress Eugénie, therefore, remains open, and possible developments in this sphere of evaluation also come quickly to mind, for example comparisons between Eugénie and Princess Mathilde, who was a member of the Imperial Court by virtue of being Napoleon III’s cousin and who was involved in artistic life in a way quite distinct from that of the Empress. Yet these potential debates and possible developments lie outside McQueen’s approach and run the risk of distorting its value. By concentrating...
with strong focus and enlightening documentation on the particularities of Eugénie’s case, she opens new perspectives regarding the profound symbiosis of visual culture and the political under the Second Empire.

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‘Nothing was more central to cultural life in nineteenth-century Paris than the lyric stage’ (p. 1). It is hard to imagine a more convincing corroboration of this statement than the richly varied, intriguingly and closely interlinked collection of fifteen essays it introduces. The volume’s three sections, ‘Institutions’, ‘Cultural Transfer’, and ‘The Midi and Spain, or Autour de Carmen’, provide a comprehensive account of a highly significant and intricate period in French musical history. Running through the collection is the conviction that enhanced understanding of the evolution of diverse theatrical institutions is reached through evaluation of the ways in which they and the individuals they employ interact. Olivier Bara’s analysis of Jean-Baptiste Chollet’s time at the Opéra-Comique and Lesley Wright’s discussion of the complex character of Léon Carvalho, its one-time director, show the advantages and disadvantages of the artist–institution relationship from multiple viewpoints. Katharine Ellis examines the roles of several theatre managers during the Second Empire, when the now-familiar problem of public-interest arts funding began to emerge. Offenbach’s role in establishing the aesthetic identity of the Bouffes-Parisiens is a focus of Mark Everist’s chapter, while David Grayson, by analysing the experiences of the composer-journalist Victorin Joncières, unravels the problems of young opera composers struggling to have their work performed. Finally in this section, through the figure of Fromental Halévy, Diana R. Hallman assesses the benefits and personal cost of employment at the prestigious Opéra de Paris. Essays in Part II focus on the adaptation of particular works to distinct cultural, political, and aesthetic contexts. Sarah Hibberd describes how Auber and Scribe succeeded in uniting history and aesthetics in Gustave III. Arnold Jacobsen’s finding that Palanti’s mise en scène for Halévy’s La Juive dates from its revival around 1866 rather than from the original 1835 production has implications that go far beyond the piece itself. Rebecca Harris-Warrick’s discussion and documentation of press reaction to different versions of Lucia di Lammermoor in three separate institutional contexts provides a vivid illustration of the practice of reworking. Annebrit Fauser, in her essay on Tannhäuser, richly documents the assertion (Baudelaire) that the French, critics and public alike, lacked aesthetic judgement. The positioning at this point in the volume of Marian Smith’s ‘tale of two Sylphides’ and Peter Lamothé’s analysis of Massenet’s Les Érinnyes subtly enhances the works’ Wagnerian resonances. All three essays in the third section deal with matters relating to the filtering of one culture through another. Kerry Murphy’s multifaceted discussion of Carmen is complemented by Ralph P. Locke’s detailed study of original Spanish sources used by Bizet. Finally, focusing on the links between Emma Calvé’s international career and her success in the role of Carmen, Steven Huebner reiterates one of the collection’s leitmotifs: the impact of individual endeavour on the whole. Biographical notes on contributors are preceded by a comprehensive Bibliography, Discography and Filmography and by Levin’s immensely helpful overview of Parisian musical theatres from 1830 to 1900. For those less familiar with the topic, this might well prove to be the ideal introduction to the subject so brilliantly explored and documented in the body of the work.

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