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### **How Novels Feel: Emotional and rational reading processes in contemporary fiction**

In this paper, we aim to investigate the depiction of cognitive acts within two near-contemporary ‘autofictional’ novels, namely, David Williams’s *Eye of the Father* and Serge Doubrovsky’s *Fils*. Both novels feature literary scholars as the main protagonists, both of whom eventually come to realisations about their own emotional predicament through the variously emotional and rational engagements with literary texts and/or literary interpretations. We believe that the mentioned texts speak in interesting ways to—and possibly challenge—recent work in the field of cognitive poetics. For instance, both novels raise the question as to whether rational or emotional reading processes trigger literary epiphanies. Bypassing the question if emotional or rational processes take priority, Williams’s *Eye* and Doubrovsky’s *Fils* rather appear to suggest that emotional and rational responses are interdependent. If this is correct, this would in turn prompt us to question the possibility of rational and “objective” approaches to literary texts. Reading texts at the nexus of emotion, ‘autofiction,’ and interpretation, we wonder if a literary scholarship as a discipline needs to account for both, emotional-subjective and rational-objective approaches. This would further imply the necessity to redirect literary studies towards a more empirical approach.