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The study of Pierre Mertens' literary work approaches the implication of the subject in the history of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, in which it helpfully confronts the novelistic domain. It does so by starting with the risks of unconscious formation. The worrying influence of the word over the ego, psychoanalysis and philosophy's great preoccupation, is at the center of this study, unique within its genre, which also explores modernity. It raises the challenge that Pierre Mertens' work poses in the field of francophone novels of the past fifty years.