

essentialism, which demonstrates an overall attentiveness to the most fundamental concept in Irigaray's work. What is perhaps missing from the volume is a critical approach to Irigaray's thought: the essays are illuminating rather than critical. This is understandable given that the volume is based on conversations between Irigaray and her students. For those getting to grips with the more difficult philosophical concepts in Irigaray's work for the first time, the essays provide an accessible avenue to her other publications. However, for those looking for a critical engagement, the collection is less satisfying.

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Jacques Rancière: History, Politics, Aesthetics. Edited by GABRIEL ROCKHILL and PHILIP WATTS. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. vii + 358 pp. Hb \$89.95; £72.00. Pb \$24.95; £16.99.

Jacques Rancière is one of a number of contemporary French philosophers whose work can be seen as taking place at the confluence of two factors: the influence of the structuralist or post-structuralist discourses of Althusser, Foucault, Barthes, Lévi-Strauss, Derrida, and Lacan, and the events of May 1968. Rancière's thought focuses on a particular configuration of the relation between these two factors, the relation between discourses of knowledge — even discourses that subvert or claim to subvert knowledge — and events of rupture, specific interlocutions, and/or dissensual voices. Different versions of Rancière's affirmation of untimely instances that upset the agreed order and temporality of things are elucidated and explored in this excellent book, which can work both as an introduction to Rancière's thought and as a critical assessment thereof. The volume, consisting of sixteen chapters, originated in a 2005 Pittsburgh conference, but adds essays by French philosophers Alain Badiou, Étienne Balibar, and Jean-Luc Nancy, who belong to the same generation as Rancière, an essay by Tom Conley on Rancière's writing on cinema, and an Afterword by Rancière himself. The book is organized into the three sections of the subtitle, signalling the three domains in which Rancière's contribution has been most acute, although a significant aspect of his thought involves a challenge to the orthodox divisions according to which the sensible world has been shared out (the notion of 'le partage du sensible', the title of a key work of 2000). Cross-referencing is made possible by a detailed index. Each section of the book includes essays that will be of vital interest to students and academics in French studies (but, evidently, not only within this field), whichever of the three domains identifies their mode of interest. Kristin Ross's essay, for example, the first in the 'History' section, looks at Rancière's challenge to 'functionalist' modes of historiography, but also uses Rancière's affirmation on untimely voices as a tool to unpick what she sees as the 'spatial' rhetoric operating in late post-structuralism (in de Certeau, for example). Still within this section, the essays by Éric Méchoulan and Giuseppina Mecchia address the use Rancière makes of classical sources. In the following section Peter Hallward, Todd May, Yves Citton, Bruno Bosteels, and Solange Guénoun discuss sympathetically, yet also polemically, Rancière's place, role, and potential in terms of political philosophy and action. The third section focuses on Rancière's contribution to aesthetics, which is significant. Subtle negotiations with the thought of Gilles Deleuze — on cinema and on art — is a particular feature of some of the contributions here, including Conley's discussion of Rancière's notion of the 'redemptive typology' (p. 226) shared by Deleuze and Godard in their respective summative histories. Each chapter in this volume is an engaging and valuable critical engagement with Rancière, and, while the book as a whole makes a

persuasive case for a thorough and urgent reading of Rancière's work, it is also a useful critical supplement to it.

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Perec, Modiano, Raczymow: la génération d'après et la mémoire de la Shoah. By ANNELIESE SCHULTE NORDHOLT. (Faux titre, 315). Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2008. 335 pp. Pb €67.00; \$94.00.

Most Holocaust studies are American, while those in French or about France, despite increasing numbers since 1995, are still relatively rare. Focusing on theme and technique, Schulte Nordholt's study presents interesting comparisons of forgetting, the *devoir de mémoire*, and the work of memory. The lack of an index is unfortunate, but a useful foreword provides a guide to the author's approach, starting by situating her study in a theoretical context (Marianne Hirsch, Susan Rubin Suleiman, and so on). She discusses the coming to writing in the 1970s and 1980s of survivor children of the war, or the children of survivors, such as Patrick Modiano and Henri Raczymow, who, she argues, are also part of 'la génération d'après' (although Robert Bober included only survivor children in his 1971 film of that title). For her, Georges Perec resembles the other two writers as he is a 'témoin absent' (p. 60): the young age at which he experienced the trauma of the war meant that he could not properly assimilate the event. Raczymow's work is discussed partly through examination of the folktale tradition, his poetic litanies of Jewish names, his notion of 'effacement' (linked to Perec's 'disparition'), *la mémoire trouée*, and feelings of shame in being denied the right to write. Crucial to this study are the postmodern and modern sensibilities of the three figures (whether via Oulipo or the *nouveau roman*). While Raczymow's wordiness in *La Saisie* seems to seek to fill a void and Perec's *Un homme qui dort* is traversed by a death wish, Schulte Nordholt interestingly links the notion of absence not only with traumatized or absent memory, but also with a specifically French notion of modernity, citing Flaubert's 'livre sur rien' (p. 18). Her examination of the thematization of writing and the difficulty of bearing witness to what one has not lived through (for example, in Raczymow) is a potentially useful idea for Modiano studies, where writers figure prominently. The discussion of *Un homme qui dort* extends some ideas by Claude Burgelin, Bernard Magné, and Manet van Montfrans, and there is an interesting section on Perec's writings on the rue Vilin, incorporating Philippe Lejeune's idea of 'la mémoire oblique'. Also important are Proustian echoes, especially for the importance of the mother (p. 64) and the notion of the 'roman-cimetière' (p. 155), although Proustian memory is shown as happier and more spontaneous (p. 193). Place is also foregrounded, through Schulte Nordholt's notion of the 'paradoxe des lieux' (pp. 161–63), which involves an absence of place (lost places of origin/distance from places of extermination) coexisting with a surdetermination of place. However, Modiano's father is confusingly presented as being 'originaire de Salonique' (p. 183) rather than Parisian. The theme of walking is highlighted. The discussion of Modiano's *Accident nocturne* is striking, as is the interesting presentation of his *Rue des boutiques obscures* as being partly about the disappearance of a mother. Several fruitful links are made between that text and Perec's *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*. Some other key texts discussed include Modiano's *Dora Bruder*, *La Place de l'Étoile*, and *Paris tendresse*, Perec's *Récits d'Ellis Island*, and Raczymow's *Reliques* (the last three for the notion of photography/photo albums).

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