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Jon Stewart, ed., *Kierkegaard's Influence on Philosophy. Tome II: Francophone Philosophy*. Farnham and Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2012. xiii + 266 pp. Indices of Persons and Subjects. £65.00 (hb). ISBN 978-1-4094-4638-5.

Review by Clare Carlisle, King's College London.

This collection of essays belongs to the 'reception' section of Jon Stewart's vast editorial project, *Kierkegaard Research: Sources, Reception and Resources*. The whole series is planned to contain twenty-one volumes, and since 2007 fourteen of these have been published (volume 15, tome I, *Kierkegaard's Concepts*, is forthcoming in December 2013). As many of the volumes comprise several tomes, over thirty books have already been produced. This book, the second tome of volume 11, *Kierkegaard's Influence on Philosophy*, provides an extremely useful starting-point for exploring the diverse responses to Kierkegaard's texts and ideas in twentieth-century French thought. Like others in the series, this collection brings together an international group of contributors, and Stewart is to be commended for including in his project many less-established researchers alongside eminent Kierkegaard scholars.

The book has eleven chapters, each devoted to a thinker in the modern French tradition: Sylviane Agacinski, Roland Barthes, Georges Bataille, Maurice Blanchot, Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Derrida, Jacques Ellul, Pierre Hadot, Emmanuel Levinas, Jean-Luc Marion and Paul Ricoeur. This alphabetical ordering encourages readers to dip into the book rather than read its chapters consecutively, as a chronological arrangement might have suggested. A brief historical introduction would, in fact, have been a useful addition, as the Francophone reception of Kierkegaard has certainly been shaped by the selection of texts for French translation. Before 1930, only a few extracts from *Either/Or*—including *Le journal du séducteur*—had been translated into French, but through the 1930s several full translations became available, due largely to the efforts of Paul-Henri Tisseau, Jean-Jacques Gateau and Knud Ferlov, including *Traité du désespoir* (Ferlov and Gateau, 1932), *La répétition* (Tisseau, 1933), *Crainte et Tremblement* (Tisseau 1935) and *Le concept d'angoisse* (Gateau and Ferlov, 1935). It would also be interesting to hear more about how certain figures, such as Jean Wahl in particular, influenced the early interpretation of Kierkegaard in France. Jeffrey Hanson and José Miranda Justo, in their chapters on Levinas and Deleuze respectively, highlight Wahl's influence, but a more thorough discussion of the impact of Wahl's *Études kierkegaardienes* would belong in an editorial introduction. [1] Of course, the scope and scale of his series suggest that Stewart is already busy enough.

The chapters follow a common structural framework, although within this there is significant variation. Each contributor starts by briefly introducing the life, works and significance of the thinker in question, and ends with a bibliography in three sections: references to Kierkegaard in the thinker's corpus; sources of the thinker's knowledge of Kierkegaard (here we frequently find references to Lev Shestov and Jean-Paul Sartre, as well as to Wahl); and secondary literature on the thinker's relation to Kierkegaard. Most chapters are divided into several sections, focusing either on a series of key themes, or on periods or phases of a thinker's work. Contributions also differ in the extent of analysis they offer, and in the amount of critical distance they gain from their subjects.

Not surprisingly, one of the virtues of this collection is to catalogue the immense diversity of readings of Kierkegaard among a couple of generations of French thinkers—many of whom came through the same educational system, and share an intellectual and cultural heritage. For Derrida, Kierkegaard stimulates reflection on secrecy, authorship, and the deconstruction of systematic thought; Marion focuses on theological themes of gift and love; Hadot is most interested in Kierkegaard's use of Socratic method; Deleuze is inspired by concepts of movement and repetition, and by the question of style. It is also interesting to see tensions emerge between these different readings of Kierkegaard. While Deleuze finds Kierkegaardian faith to be the restoration of immanent life, for Marion—according to Leo Stan—Kierkegaard is concerned with “a truth that is utterly heterogeneous and therefore transcendent to this world” (p. 212). At least in this case, the tension is one that belongs to Kierkegaard's thought, and which reflects his view of the paradoxical nature not only of Christian doctrine, but of religious life.

It is probably inevitable that this volume illustrates the tendency of scholars to adopt the philosophical manner of their subjects. For example, the chapter on Deleuze is full of cryptic declamations and sweeping generalities, while Joel Rasmussen's discussion of Ricoeur offers careful textual analysis. Indeed, Rasmussen's thoughtful assessment of Ricoeur's response to Kierkegaard is one of the highlights of the book. Another outstanding contribution is that of Leo Stan, who develops an intelligent and productive account of thematic convergences between Kierkegaard and Marion—in spite of the fact that “so far there exists only one explicit reference to Kierkegaard in Marion's entire corpus” (p. 209).

Although the quality of the contributions is somewhat uneven—as it often is in collected volumes of this kind—almost every chapter is well worth reading. The book seems to be aimed primarily at Kierkegaard scholars, since the French thinkers are introduced at a fairly accessible level (with varying success), while Kierkegaard's own ideas are generally assumed to be familiar to the reader. As a guide to where to begin in uncovering Kierkegaard's reception and legacy in France, the volume is invaluable. It will be especially appreciated by Anglophone graduate students embarking on study of Kierkegaard's relationships to the range of thinkers covered, and since it also—unsystematically—raises questions and evokes debate on some of the most enduring issues in Kierkegaard studies, it offers much for specialist scholars too.

Because of the structure of Stewart's whole series, this volume cannot stand alone as a resource for analysis of Kierkegaard's influence on French and Francophone thought. Volume nine in the series, *Kierkegaard's Influence on Existentialism*, includes chapters on Jean-Paul Sartre, Maurice Merleau-Ponty, Jacques Maritain, Albert Camus, Michel Henry, Gabriel Marcel and Simone de Beauvoir, so it is an essential supplement as well as an excellent companion to *Kierkegaard's Influence on Philosophy: Francophone Philosophy*. One notable absence from either of these works is a chapter on Alain Badiou, whose emphasis on subjectivity and decision brings his philosophy close to Kierkegaard's in some important respects.

LIST OF ESSAYS

Kevin Newmark, “Sylviane Agacinski: Reading Kierkegaard to Keep Intact the Secret”

Joseph Westfall, “Roland Barthes: Style, Language, Silence”

Laura Llevadot, “Georges Bataille: Kierkegaard and the Claim for the Sacred”

Daniel Greenspan, “Maurice Blanchot: Spaces of Literature / Spaces of Religion”

José Miranda Justo, “Gilles Deleuze: Kierkegaard's Presence in his Writings”

Marius Timmann Mjaaland, "Jacques Derrida: Faithful Heretics"

Sarah Pike Cabral, "Jacques Ellul: Kierkegaard's Profound and Seldom Acknowledged Influence on Ellul's Writing"

Nicolae Irina, "Pierre Hadot: Philosophy as a Way of Life: Hadot and Kierkegaard's Socrates"

Jeffrey Hanson, "Emmanuel Levinas: An Ambivalent but Decisive Reception"

Leo Stan, "Jean-Luc Marion: The Paradoxical Givenness of Love"

Joel D. S. Rasmussen, "Paul Ricoeur: On Kierkegaard, the Limits of Philosophy, and the Consolation of Hope"

NOTE

[1] Jean Wahl, *Études kierkegaardiennes* (Paris: F. Aubier, 1938).

Clare Carlisle
King's College London
clare.carlisle@kcl.ac.uk

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