

refuted by the linguistic phenomenon that a speaker can use a definite description to talk about an object when the object does *not* uniquely satisfy the descriptive content. Kripke argues that Donnellan is wrong, because we can easily imagine a hypothetical community, in which Russell's analysis is stipulated to be correct, but in terms of the general principle of the divergence of speaker's referent from semantic referent, the linguistic phenomenon mentioned by Donnellan will be exhibited (127). Third, a speaker's referent of a singular term may be transmitted from one speaker to another, and might eventually become the semantic referent (135-136). Gareth Evans's case of 'Madagascar' is an example.

Reviewer's comments: (1) Kripke should give an explanation of *how* an author can create an abstract fictional character, without which his ontology of fictional characters is mysterious; (2) Kripke's analogy of perception with fiction seems incorrect: if the object of sight must be physical in some sense, and if hallucinatory objects are non-physical (94), then they cannot be objects of sight; (3) 'there is no such true proposition as that SH exists' is apparently about the proposition that SH exists, which is denied by Kripke, so it is hard to understand that his 'metapositional' analysis *is* an analysis; (4) the lectures are full of rich philosophical ideas, which have influenced and will continue to influence philosophers in metaphysics, philosophical logic and philosophy of language.

Acknowledgment: This review is supported by the National Social Science Foundation of China (grant no.10CZX032) and the Foundation for Philosophy and Social Science of the Ministry of Education of China (grant no. 14JHQ005).

MIN XU *Huazhong University of Science and Technology*

Figures of History

JACQUES RANCIÈRE

Cambridge: Polity, 2014; 97 pp.; \$13.95 (paperback); \$48.95 (hardcover)

doi:10.1017/S0012217315000189

It might seem at first glance that there are at least three different philosophers existing within Jacques Rancière. First, we have the political philosopher. From his study of workers' emancipation, *The Nights of Labor: The Workers' Dream in Nineteenth-Century France*, to more recent texts, such as *Hatred of Democracy* (2007), he has been one of the main figures behind the renewing of French political theory. The second philosopher is the pedagogical one. Rancière has argued, most notably in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster*, against the figure of the intellectual, of the teacher, and poses 'the equality of intelligences' as a founding principle of his views on education, as well as politics.

The third Rancière is the aesthetic. Drawing mostly from his study of cinema and visual art, he has proposed a reading of aesthetics that is intertwined with the struggle for recognition of those he calls the 'have-not.' *Figures of History* is clearly written by this third Rancière. A collection of two different texts composed in the context of the exhibition '*Face à l'Histoire*,' organized by the Centre Pompidou in 1996, this book

explores questions familiar to his readership, mainly the relation between representation and history.

In an age characterized by resentment against time itself and an interest in the present while denying certain aspects of the past (such as the Holocaust), Rancière argues that the camera plays an ambiguous role. While it records the images authentically, it does so “as a double agent faithfully to two masters: the one behind the camera who actively directs the shots, and the one in front of the camera who passively directs the camera’s passivity” (6). For Rancière, this duality is precisely what differentiates historical paintings, presenting the greats and their deeds, from modern recordings, in which the light shines equally on both the great and the small. Indeed, on the photographic plate “light itself is an object of sharing and distribution, *partage*; but is only conflictually common” (15). In this idea of the sharing of the light one can see an earlier version of an important concept of Rancière’s philosophy: the “distribution of the sensible,” defined in the latter *Politics of Aesthetics* (2006) as “the system of self-evident facts of sense perception that simultaneously discloses the existence of something in common and the delimitations that define the respective parts and positions within it.”¹

However, this distribution of the sensible is neither reversed nor cancelled by the camera. As Rancière notes about an older woman asked to recall the Soviet era in *Phantom Efremov*, by forcing those in front of the lens to answer the questions of those behind, there is “a pact of oppression between those who always ask the questions and those they question, to whom they ‘give’ a voice without answering in return or considering them in all their equality as speaking beings” (39).

So what can the cinematic image—and more importantly what can history—do to combat this spirit of our times, to combat those who want to deny what was? Refusing the idea that the Holocaust is ‘unrepresentable,’ Rancière turns around Adorno’s famous idea that art is impossible after the Shoah and affirms that “after Auschwitz, art is the only thing possible, because art always entails the presence of an absence ...” (49). It is this absence that allows fiction to bear witness to the harshness of the 20th century, to help us face the intolerable.

In ‘Senses and figures of history,’ Rancière tries to liberate the meaning of history, especially in relation to representation. At first he postulates four senses of history: history as examples worthy of being imitated; history as a story, a meaningful fable of a significant moment; history as a specific mode of time, characterized by a common destiny marked by terror and death (as in Goya’s *El tres de mayo*); and finally history as the fabric of the sensible, or more bluntly as the time where anyone can make history. For Rancière, in this sense “history puts itself ... as the living principle of the equality of every subject under the sun” (70).

But those senses of history entwine with each other and reshape the relationship between figuration and pictorial genres, overlapping with the three poetics of modernity Rancière identifies: the *abstract/symbolist poetic* which, from Kandinski to Newman, replaces the representational world with an equivalent order; the *expressionist symbolist* of an Otto Dix characterized by metamorphoses through the represented changes places and exchanges powers; and the *(sur)realist poetics* which destroys the relation of form and subject (as in Carel Willinck’s *Late bezoekers van Pompei*). Those three poetics put the “building of relationship in the place of reproduction of things—using

¹ Rancière (2006), 12.

not only the equality of all represented, but also the capacity of all matter to become form and subject” (79-80).

From this, “without any claim to exhaustivity,” Rancière defines three ways in which modern art faced history. He describes first the *analogical* manner in which symbols take shape through a ritual or a detached movement (abstract symbolism as Newman or expressionist symbolism as Fautrier). The second way turns images into signs and signs into images, in a *mythological* way as evident in pop art which transforms images of art into images of the world and vice-versa. Third, in a (*sur*)*realist* form which plays on the possibilities of the figure, painting the human subject as it becomes inhuman. For Rancière, these manners illustrate that art always finds a way to face up to history, or to turn things around, that “the felt outrageousness of history never ceases to find pictorial expression” (93).

Although not the best introduction to Rancière’s philosophy—either to his political or aesthetics views—*Figures of History* is a great addition to his work and shines a new light on some of his latter publications, such as *The Politics of Aesthetics*. Readers interested in philosophy of history might also want to consult his 1992 book, *The Names of History*, where he elaborated upon the themes present in this book.

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HUGO BONIN *Université du Québec à Montréal*

Les arts de lire des philosophes modernes

DELPHINE ANTOINE-MAHUT, JOSIANE BOULAD-AYOUB et

ALEXANDRA TORERO-IBAD, dir.

Québec, Presses de l’Université Laval, 2015, 356 p.

doi:10.1017/S0012217316000378

Les arts de lire des philosophes modernes, publié sous la direction de Delphine Antoine-Mahut, Josiane Boulad-Ayoub et Alexandra Torero-Ibad, est le plus récent volume paru dans la collection «Mercure du Nord» des Presses de l’Université Laval. Les livres de cette collection interdisciplinaire contiennent des analyses historiques et contextuelles animées par la conviction que la connaissance du passé, ainsi que l’histoire des réceptions de certains concepts contemporains, aideront à mettre en lumière de nouveaux aspects de ces concepts et à suggérer des solutions à des problèmes actuels.

Les arts de lire des philosophes modernes est un ouvrage collectif contenant vingt-deux contributions, la plupart écrites par des chercheurs consacrés, auxquels se joignent quelques étudiants. La période étudiée s’étend de la fin du XVI^e siècle (Giordano Bruno) jusqu’à l’époque de l’*Encyclopédie* (Diderot, D’Alembert, D’Holbach). Cette réflexion sur les arts de lire des philosophes modernes atteint avec succès les objectifs