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*Sacrificed Lives: Kristeva on Women and Violence.* By Martha J. Reineke. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1997. ISBN 0-253-21128-X. Pp. 232.

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Reineke's book explores the unconscious and (virtually) predetermined links between, on the one hand, the phenomenon of sacrifice and, on the other hand, violence against women. She engages this task through the complex work of psychoanalyst and linguist, Julia Kristeva. Reineke seeks to clarify the ominous consequences for women of an economy of sacrifice. Also, she highlights the importance of Kristeva's work for feminists concerned with the continuing and escalating problem of violence against women.

Reineke seeks to go beyond "surface" explanations of social factors in understanding violence against women. She endeavours not only to fathom the unconscious dimensions of violence but also to explore how the human psyche uses violence to probe ever more deeply into a victim's body. Further, Reineke explores why, statistically, the victim's body is more often a woman's body. She hopes to uncover an "internal logic" to violence against women. Reineke posits that surfacing this hidden logic facilitates the efforts of feminists in dismantling at the foundations recurring acts of violence against women.

Julia Kristeva describes a condition of the speaking subject that many of her (feminist) critics see as essentialist and ahistorical on the one hand, and deterministic, on the other. Thus, Kristeva, according to her critics, closes off options for women to escape an oppressed and determined existence. Reineke seeks to go beyond these criticisms. She argues convincingly concerning Kristeva's important contribution to our understanding of the subject's very real agency. In addition, Reineke asserts that Kristeva provides a deep insight into the subject's transforming and creative potential despite the "victim/executioner" modality that underlies the psychic structure of all human beings. Tapping into the creative and transforming potential of the human psyche depends largely on our capacity to uncover and move beyond the determining link between order and disorder. As well, it depends on our capacity to "tame the demons" in ourselves instead of "searching for a scapegoat" in the other.

Utilizing the analytic tool of sacrificial theory, Reineke probes the "intractable nature of violence" (6) which is substitutionary, involves a bodily investment of the perpetrator, and paralyzes both victim and persecutor. Reineke insists sacrifice is a "powerfully instructive metaphor for analyses of women's lives" (5). She follows an interrogative mode of analysis attempting to highlight the usefulness of psychoanalytic theory for feminist concerns about violence against women. Historical and social factors must not eclipse the impact of psychic structures. Kristeva's most important contribution lies in her unraveling of the psychic structure of the human person. She demonstrates how

that psychic structure *constitutes* the potentially productive and potentially destructive *speaking* subject.

*Sacrificed Lives* consists of two parts. Initially, in part I, Reineke clarifies the context within which Kristeva writes and explicates the latter's psychoanalytic theory of the speaking subject. Following an introduction (chap. 1), chapter 2 elaborates upon the connection between Kristeva and the work of Jacques Lacan. This involves both Lacan's influence and Kristeva's movement beyond Lacan. In addition, although specifying the feminist critiques of Kristeva's work, Reineke emphasizes and elaborates upon the contribution Kristeva makes to the overarching goals of feminists. Kristeva's theory posits the *determining* influence of a "boundary" condition that underlies our human condition and accounts for the multifaceted dimensions of violence. In chapter 3, Reineke explores Kristeva's account of the speaking subject as a subject who is founded on a "loss." It is this "loss" at the foundation of the speaking subject that is both constructive and destructive of human identity. Consequently, it figures dramatically into the violence of a sacrificial economy. Chapter 4 elaborates upon the subject's emergence into language (the symbolic order). It examines the continuing influence that the drives (what Kristeva designates the "semiotic") have upon language and the speaking subject. For Kristeva, negativity (associated with drives) breaks down "identity." Reineke explores this aspect of Kristeva's theory since it helps us understand not only *why* human beings feel threatened but also *what* it is that threatens us. Negativity, for Kristeva, is both "agency-creating jouissance" and "death-dealing rejection" (71).

At this juncture Reineke brings in the work of anthropologist René Girard. Reineke wants to present an *expanded* theory of sacrifice and she accomplishes this through both Kristeva and Girard. According to Reineke, "Girard strengthens aspects of Kristeva's theory" through his book, *Violence and the Sacred*, because he posits violence as the origin of human culture. Kristeva is disinclined to draw too heavily on the potential of sacrifice in offering an understanding of violence against women. Thus, linking Kristeva and Girard is a key strategy for Reineke, who states: "The full-blown theory of sacrifice that emerges from this conversation with Girard and Kristeva sustains this project's larger thesis: linguistic and cultural codes, especially religion, *are* structured by a sacrificial economy oriented toward matricide" (73). If Kristeva fails to draw sufficiently on a theory of sacrifice in understanding violence against women, Girard's weakness appears in his failure to take up the significance of sexual differentiation. Kristeva's contribution to a theory of sacrifice is important at this point.

In part II of *Sacrificed Lives*, Reineke utilizes three paradigmatic cases: holy women in late medieval Christianity (chap. 5), victims of the witch hunts (chap. 6) and finally, representations of the mother in the cultural archives of the West (chap. 7). These "case-studies" serve to demonstrate how, by circumscribing the semiotic drives of the human psyche (with their potential negativity), the symbolic attempts to maintain the appearance of order amid disorder and creates the illusion that speaking subjects are "fully self-possessed creations of their own efforts" (186).

Reineke's book is important on three counts. First, it highlights the value of Kristeva's work for North American feminists. This group of scholars tends to undermine Kristeva's work. For various reasons, they miss Kristeva's strategic method of holding in tension the symbolic (language as a system encompassing essentialist categories) and the semiotic (that aspect within language that has the power to pluralize language, thus, undermining essentialist categories). Kristeva's strategic mode of analysis facilitates our understanding of the "split" condition that underlies the human psyche. She brings to consciousness a third cause of violence against women adding to North American feminists' traditional insistence on the influence of the historical and the social. Second, *Sacrificed Lives* highlights, through linking the work of Girard and Kristeva, the importance of understanding the "economy" of sacrifice. In an age where the notion of sacrifice, ignored and minimized, has receded into the primitive recesses of the human psyche, Reineke clarifies how a sacrificial economy continues to influence our psychic imagination. This influence has devastating consequences on women as victims of sacrificial violence. Third, Reineke understands well the potentially liberating insights Kristeva offers women when faced with what appears to be the *determining* influence of language and the symbolic (patriarchal) order. Kristeva's work is exhilarating in its potential to subvert oppressive and repressive forces not only for women but for all who experience deeply their divided condition as a speaking subject and the irreconcilable otherness that lives within each of us.

*Sacrificed Lives* is dense and difficult reading. Reineke utilizes the "rarefied" language of the small group of scholars she is addressing. In my view, it is unfortunate that she does not reach out to a larger audience. I recommend this book because of its important insights into Kristeva's contribution to women and the issue of violence against women. As well, Reineke's elaboration of sacrifice and her insistence that the economy of sacrifice continues to influence our secular worldview is crucial. However, I cannot say with confidence that it will clarify either Kristeva's work or the continuing influence of sacrifice on the human psyche to those who are not already very familiar with Reineke's specialized language.

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*Fragments of the Spirit: Nature, Violence, and the Renewal of Creation.* By Mark I. Wallace. New York: Continuum Publishing Company, 1996. ISBN 0-8264-0903-2. Pp. xii+237

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The Spirit comes with healing in her wings to a world that cries out for transformation and renewal. The Spirit comes to a world in need of refreshment as the breath of God and the water of life. The Spirit comes to a world fragmented by violence and suffering with the promise of health and wholeness for all creation (226).