

Review

Reviewed Work(s): Patrick Modiano by Akane Kawakami

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and the more novelistic form of falling in love that builds over time and through a series of deepening emotional insights. In Chapter 6 Molière's comedies are shown to have a more complex relationship to the novel than has usually been supposed. Mme de Lafayette's most important works are the subject of Chapter 7, including *La Princesse de Clèves*, sometimes called the first modern French novel. The last chapter is on the important 'moralist' La Bruyère. In short, Goodkin's book is a major contribution to literary studies.

UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA

JOHN D. LYONS

*Patrick Modiano*. By AKANE KAWAKAMI. (Modern French Writers, 6) Liverpool: Liverpool University Press. 2015. 224 pp. £75. ISBN 978-1-78138-274-5.

Akane Kawakami's study is an extended edition of her earlier work, *A Self-Conscious Art: Patrick Modiano's Postmodern Fictions* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2000), here updated with a new introduction and two additional essays to reflect the recent recognition of Modiano by the jury of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2014. Kawakami's work is thus a timely intervention in the ever-expanding field of Modiano criticism. In the earlier edition of her book Kawakami sought to shift the focus of literary criticism on Modiano from concentration on the author as a 'writer of the Occupation' to an altogether more complex understanding of Modiano and his works. Arguing convincingly for the need to consider Modiano as a 'postmodern' writer, Kawakami thus devoted her original study to the postmodern aspects of Modiano's outputs.

After a short introduction outlining how Modiano has become increasingly present in the public consciousness in the fifteen years since Kawakami's first edition, the book begins in earnest with a detailed and thorough chapter on the role of the postmodern narrator in Modiano's work, in which Kawakami draws extensively on theories of postmodernism developed by scholars in the field. In this opening chapter she succinctly explores the complexities of Modiano's narrative style, touching on the links with both Proust and Camus, along with a whole cast of the great and the good of French literature. In the second substantive chapter Kawakami goes on to examine the 'narrative order' of Modiano's writing, followed by some consideration of the ways in which he develops an effect of the 'unreal' ('l'irréel'). The five subsequent chapters deal with Modiano's use of history, the theme of 'parody and disappointment', the ways in which Modiano's work constitutes an effort at 'being popular', the role of women, and the endlessness of time in his œuvre. These chapters, which featured in the first edition of Kawakami's book, analyse in detail the ways in which Modiano's work takes on various and interesting forms.

If there was to be one criticism of this otherwise lucid and coherent study, it is the proliferation of other critics' work that crops up in the course of the text. This does not, in itself, present a barrier to an academic audience engaging with this book, but given the increasing tendency to teach Modiano's work at undergraduate level, the array of often complex material covered in the course of the study, especially in the

first two, new chapters, may prove challenging for an undergraduate audience. It might therefore have been helpful for Kawakami to provide a synopsis of the major critical movements in the updated introduction. Non-academic, general audiences in search of a clear and concise introduction to Modiano's work may be somewhat disappointed.

Nevertheless, this book will be of significant benefit to students at postgraduate level and indeed scholars in the field of contemporary French literature and even Memory Studies. Although some undergraduate students may well struggle with parts of the more complex literary theory, this is a worthwhile and timely study which furthers our wider understanding of Patrick Modiano and his work.

UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK

DAVID LEES

*Les Salauds vont en enfer: pièce en deux actes.* By FRÉDÉRIC DARD. Ed. by HUGUES GALLI, THIERRY GAUTIER, and DOMINIQUE JEANNEROD. Dijon: Éditions Universitaires de Dijon. 2015. 236 pp. €16. ISBN 978-2-36441-120-3.

Frédéric Dard was such a prolific author, and one whose works—especially his San-Antonio novels—are so regularly reprinted, that his potential reader may very well wonder if any new publication bearing his name is actually required. In the case of *Les Salauds vont en enfer: pièce en deux actes*, the answer is a resounding 'yes', for not only does this edition focus on that relatively rare beast in Dard's oeuvre, a play, but it is the first time that this particular text has been published in its entirety at all.

Furthermore, the work itself is not without interest. Set in the USA, and influenced by the American *roman noir*, it revolves around the relationship between two men who are confined together, first in a prison cell (Act I) and then, having escaped, in a cabin in the mountains (Act II). One of them is a spy, the other a 'stool pigeon', but the audience does not know which is which. This uncertainty drives the drama until the arrival of a mysterious woman at the mountain hideaway changes the dynamic. The identity of the informer does eventually emerge, but a number of twists in the tale ensure that surprises come right through to the end.

The version of the script presented (and informatively annotated) is essentially that of the 1950s original, although this does mean, as the editors acknowledge, that some of the vocabulary used may today still seem vulgar if not shockingly racist. The greater part of the volume, however, is devoted to an extensive introduction and a detailed *dossier critique*. This critical apparatus, which includes a host of glossy images, comprehensively contextualizes the play, highlights its intertextual echoes (Sartre's *Huis clos*, for example), and documents its progress through its various generic reincarnations: originally performed at the Théâtre du Grand-Guignol in 1954, it was reworked principally as a cinema film (1955), the now much more famous novel (1956), and finally a TV film (1971).

This book will obviously be of relevance to all students and enthusiasts of Dard, but it may additionally appeal to specialist theatre buffs and to those whose interest