

that the systematization of difference that is central to semiotics is especially apposite to a corpus of novels in which meaning is visibly and deliberately constructed around difference, in true Saussurean fashion. Martin reminds us of *Le Rêve mexicain* in which Le Clézio himself repeatedly points up cultural difference: 'l'or, les armes modernes et la pensée rationnelle contre la magie et les dieux'. Indeed, the novelist's aim is to subvert western hegemony, as *Le Chercheur d'or* (from which Martin derives the title of her study) suggestively illustrates: the original search for gold comes thus to be eclipsed by the perspective of the indigenous nomads, who, if they found the gold, 'le jetteraient à la mer'. One's only misgiving is that the tidiness of the semiotic packaging or indeed the schisms of Le Clézio's imaginary world itself may take insufficient account of the complex politics at work in a European literature of exoticism. The editors of this new series write of their desire to produce academic books which are also of visual beauty. Nevertheless, the pictorial illustrations, with their use of gold motifs, vague contours and oneiric suggestion, form a somewhat eccentric paratext, which contrasts with the binary oppositions and other 'hard edges' of the semiotic grids that underpin Martin's rational and persuasive argument.

EDWARD HUGHES

ROYAL HOLLOWAY, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Saint = Foucault: Towards a Gay Hagiography. By DAVID M. HALPERIN. New York—Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995. viii + 246 pp. Hb £14.99, \$23.00.

In these two long essays accompanied by an introduction and extensive notes Halperin demonstrates the continuing importance of Michel Foucault's critique of identity and makes his own contribution to the current debate which surrounds the publication of occasionally 'scandalous' biographical work on Foucault. Halperin's overall aim is to undermine, and indeed to overthrow, the constraints of a notion of 'gay' identity. He therefore chooses to write about Foucault as a 'queer' theorist. That is to say, a writer who constantly seeks to escape and confuse the boundaries of stable identity. Halperin's own strategy for talking about Foucault is calculatedly and theoretically 'perverse'. For Halperin, the true power of Foucault's work is generated by the struggle which has emerged over the latter's posthumous identity. The stakes involved in this struggle have provided Halperin with an insight into Foucault's work, and have been of use to him in confronting what he sees as his own personal and professional vulnerability as a gay man. Halperin unashamedly admits to a hagiographic relation to an imaginary Foucault. In fact, for him '*Michel Foucault, c'est moi*'. This approach is obviously part of a deliberate strategy to undermine established notions of identity by means of intense imaginative identification, and also to expand the boundaries of what is deemed to be relevant subject matter for academic debate. In this way, Halperin helps to explain the way in which — ironically for a writer who announced the death of the author — Foucault's life has become very much a part of his work in the period of reassessment since his death. As Halperin demonstrates in the second essay, 'The Describable Life of Michel Foucault', the question of life and work has

traditionally often been dealt with in terms of a central biographical key which explains the author's work. He, however, prefers an approach to Foucault which acknowledges the multiple facets of *œuvre* and biography, but which describes these in a plural, even heterogeneous form. In a similar way, Halperin shows how a single text can have a plural life. This is the case with *La Volonté de savoir*, which, in English translation as *The History of Sexuality*, has become an inspirational and iconic text for gay/queer activists in North America. The 'academic' reception of the book, on the other hand, has tended to concentrate on a well-rehearsed 'power and resistance' debate.

JOHN MARKS

LOUGHBOROUGH UNIVERSITY

Gilles Deleuze and the Theater of Philosophy. Edited by CONSTANTIN V. BOUNDAS and DOROTHEA OLKOWSKI. New York–London, Routledge, 1994. ix + 343 pp. Hb £40.00; Pb £12.99.

Deleuze combines rigour with imagination, and his dry terseness, together with an inventive proliferation of concepts, gives his work the appearance of a belated neo-Platonic system, in spite of (or perhaps because of) his declared commitment to finishing off the job of overcoming Plato, announced by Nietzsche and continued by Heidegger but still, like all of modernity's projects, unfinished. This volume of essays pays homage to the extraordinary wealth of dazzling and dizzying ideas to be found in his work. It is difficult to sustain Deleuze's own yoking of exhilaratingly unpredictable imaginings on the one hand and scholastic close argument on the other but some of the contributors here are inspired by this torque and write with both brio and analytical sharpness. Jean-Clet Martin produces a 'Cartography of the Year 1000' that builds on *Mille plateaux* and reminds us, suitably, of the apocalyptic tenor of much of Deleuze's writing; Paul Patton looks carefully at the importance of the notion of simulacrum; Réda Bensmaïa focuses on one of the most influential of Deleuze's notions, that of 'minor literature', especially important in debates about postcolonial writing; several of the contributors debate whether Deleuze has anything to offer feminism, Rosa Braidotti being relatively favourable to Donna Haraway's 'cyborgian' model of a post-humanist subjectivity, which intersects with similar machinic models in Deleuze, while Elizabeth Grosz is more resistant to a Deleuzian desubjectification which risks erasing women's struggles prematurely. It is indeed in his apparent disdain for the middle ground of competing and situated subjectivities, and in his romanticizing of the 'sauvage' (Alphonso Lingis has here an interesting discussion of 'savage inscription', but his evocations of 'savage societies' come close to essentialism), that Deleuze may be politically most difficult. It is a pity that nobody picks up the gauntlet of Gillian Rose, whose brief, acerbic but acute reading of Deleuze in *Dialectics of Nihilism* could provide the basis for a far-reaching critique of Deleuze's neglect of the broken middles of modern life. But the volume as it stands, and its liminal piece by Deleuze himself ('He stuttered'), is a reminder — a poignant one, now — of the visionary sweep of a philosopher who could evoke with equal fervour and insight the logic of the Stoics, the paradoxes of *Alice in Wonderland*, the 'vertiginous melodies' of Kleist, the cries of children and birds in Schumann and