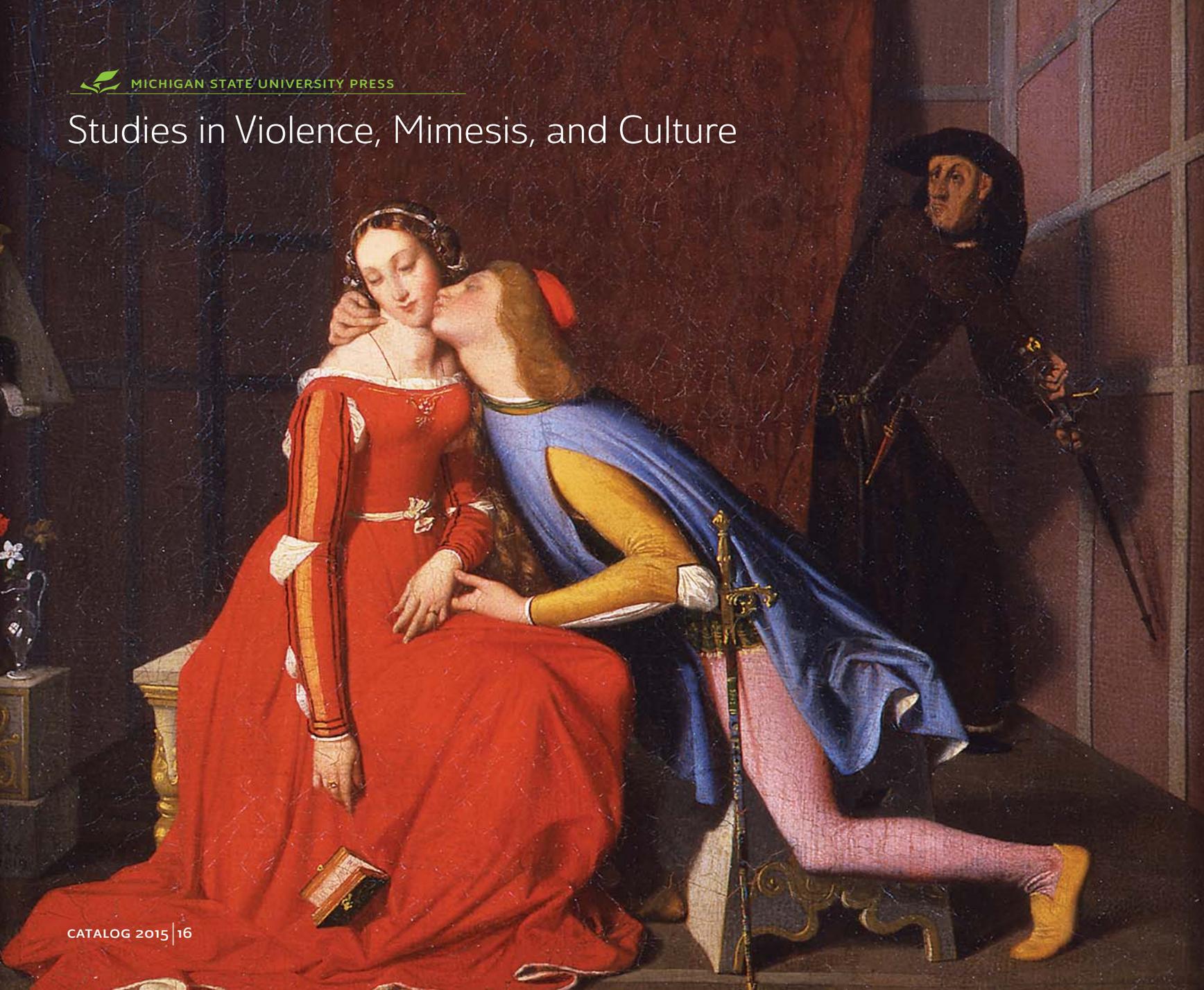


Studies in Violence, Mimesis, and Culture





STUDIES IN VIOLENCE,
MIMESIS, AND CULTURE

MM

BREAKTHROUGHS
IN MIMETIC THEORY



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Battling to the End

Conversations with Benoît Chantre

René Girard

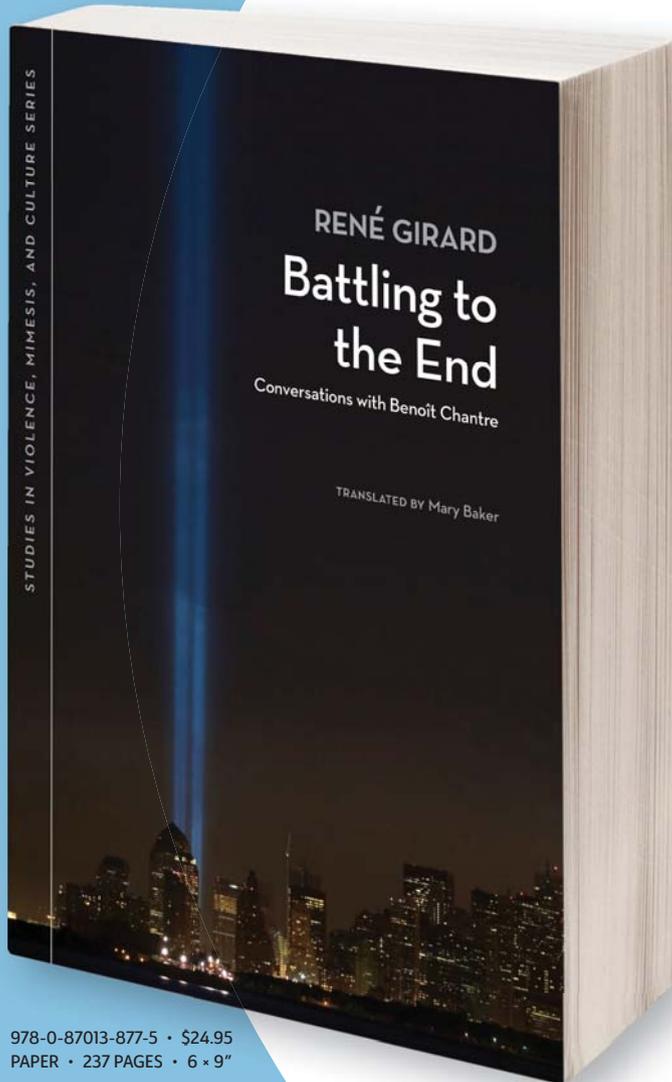
Carl von Clausewitz (1780–1831), the Prussian military theoretician who wrote *On War*, is known above all for his famous dictum: “War is the continuation of politics by other means.” In René Girard’s view, however, the strategist’s treatise offers up a more disturbing truth to the reader willing to extrapolate from its most daring observations: with modern warfare comes the insanity of tit-for-tat escalation, which political institutions have lost their ability to contain. Having witnessed the Napoleonic Wars firsthand, Girard argues, Clausewitz intuited that unbridled “reciprocal action” could eventually lead foes to total mutual annihilation. Haunted by the Franco-German conflict that was to ravage Europe, in Girard’s account Clausewitz is a prescient witness to the terrifying acceleration of history. *Battling to the End* issues a warning about the apocalyptic threats hanging over our planet and delivers an authoritative lesson on the mimetic laws of violence.

“*Battling to the End* is elegant, profound, wide-ranging and frequently punchy. The introduction and epilogue are persuasive, prophetic tours de force.” —*San Francisco Chronicle*

“I think Girard is the most important theorist on the competitive behavior of human beings.” —German philosopher Peter Sloterdijk, interview in *Frieze Magazine*, 2009

“*Battling to the End* is a powerful re-thinking of the Bible’s apocalyptic literature developing from an insightful analysis of Carl von Clausewitz’s unfinished classic, *On War*. . . . Theologians, military strategists, anthropologists, any thoughtful person who cares about humanity’s future, in fact, will profit from engaging Girard.” —Right Reverend Pierre W. Whalon, Bishop in Charge of the Convocation of Episcopal Churches in Europe, *Anglicans Online*

■ **René Girard** is a member of the French Academy and Emeritus Professor at Stanford University. His books have been translated and acclaimed worldwide.

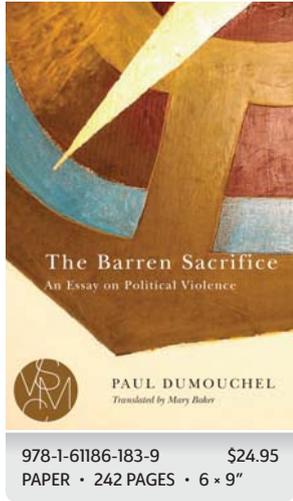


978-0-87013-877-5 • \$24.95
PAPER • 237 PAGES • 6 × 9”

The Barren Sacrifice

An Essay on Political Violence

Paul Dumouchel



According to political theory, the primary function of modern states is to protect us—from one another and from external enemies. Yet these same states commit genocides, ethnic cleansings, and large-scale massacres against their own citizens. This paradoxical reversal, suggests Paul Dumouchel, is an ever-present possibility inscribed in the very structure of modern states. The latter need an enemy to exist not because they are essentially evil but because modern politics constitutes a violent means of protecting us from our own violence. Drawing on and critiquing the insights of Max Weber, Carl Schmitt, Hobbes, and René Girard, Dumouchel develops a theory of territory and

solidarity of profound relevance to a contemporary world of long-term civil conflict and stateless refugees. Increasingly, in times of both war and peace, the sacrifices demanded by the state no longer suffice to protect us from ourselves.

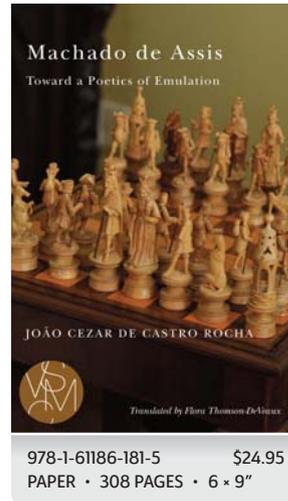
“The reflection on political violence Paul Dumouchel conducts in this book is one of the most original and stimulating I have had the opportunity to read in a long time. . . . Dumouchel always presents his arguments precisely and clearly. While his intention is not to teach us a lesson, his book itself amounts to a lesson in intellectual rigor. It also constitutes an implicit call for us to find a way to deal with the violence that consumes our societies.” —Marcel Hénaff, Distinguished Research Professor, University of California, San Diego

■ **Paul Dumouchel** is Professor of Philosophy at the Graduate School of Core Ethics and Frontier Sciences, Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan.

Machado de Assis

Toward a Poetics of Emulation

João Cezar de Castro Rocha



This book offers an alternative explanation for one of the central riddles of Brazilian literary criticism: the “midlife crisis” that Machado de Assis experienced between 1878 and 1880, which resulted in the writing of *The Posthumous Memoirs of Brás Cubas*, as well as in the remarkable production of his mature years. Focusing on Machado’s masterpiece *Dom Casmurro*, Castro Rocha explores tensions generated when Eça de Queirós published the acclaimed novel *Cousin Basílio* and analyzes Machado’s two long texts condemning his literary rival. This approach enables Castro Rocha to construct a new theoretical framework based on a literary appropriation of “thick

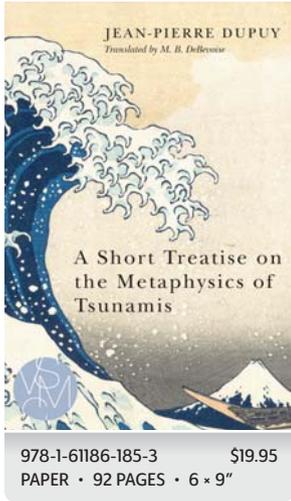
description,” an ethnographic method from which he derives his key hypothesis: an unforeseen consequence of Machado’s reaction to Eça’s novel was a return to the classical notion of *aemulatio*, which led Machado to develop a “poetics of emulation.”

“Acute, captivating, beautifully written and translated, this is a masterly reinterpretation of one of the world’s greatest novelists. . . . João Cezar de Castro Rocha unfolds in front of our eyes the subtle, ramified, mimetic complexity of Machado de Assis’s genius, along with the anxieties of its formation.” —Pierpaolo Antonello, Reader in Modern Italian Literature and Culture, University of Cambridge

■ **João Cezar de Castro Rocha** is Professor of Comparative Literature at the Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro.

A Short Treatise on the Metaphysics of Tsunamis

Jean-Pierre Dupuy



This incisive essay examines recent catastrophes—including the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami and the Fukushima nuclear disaster—in light of metaphysical debates surrounding the 1755 Lisbon earthquake and twentieth-century meditations on Auschwitz and the nuclear bomb. Philosophers have long distinguished between contingent natural catastrophes and intentional acts of moral evil. The last century, however, produced moral atrocities so incommensurable that their victims understood them as divorced from human responsibility. Survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki likened the horror they had suffered to a natural disaster—a tsunami. The collapse of the distinction between natural and moral evil

calls for a new way of thinking about humanity's future. The better to rouse us from our collective lethargy, Jean-Pierre Dupuy embraces the paradoxical logic of Biblical prophecy, which views apocalyptic disaster as both unlikely and inevitable.

"This is a remarkable book that will deepen appreciation among English language readers for the significance of Jean-Pierre Dupuy's work. . . . Having been influenced by a diverse spectrum of contemporary thinkers—John Rawls, Hannah Arendt, Hans Jonas, René Girard—he steps beyond them to engage one of the fundamental challenges of our time: how to comprehend and respond to those newest forms of evil that are intertwined with advances of science and technology."

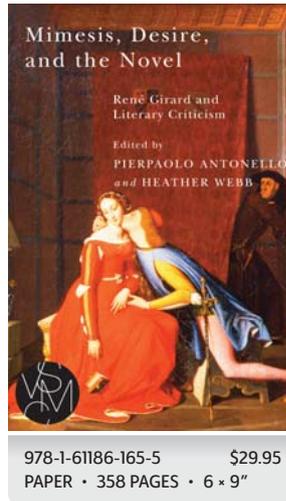
—Carl Mitcham, Professor of Liberal Arts and International Studies at the Colorado School of Mines and Professor in the School of Philosophy, Renmin University of China

■ **Jean-Pierre Dupuy** is Professor of Social and Political Philosophy at the École Polytechnique, Paris.

Mimesis, Desire, and the Novel

René Girard and Literary Criticism

Edited by Pierpaolo Antonello and Heather Webb



Fifty years after its publication in English, René Girard's *Deceit, Desire, and the Novel* (1965) has become a classic of modern criticism, and the notion of triangular desire has entered the theoretical lexicon. This volume provides a forum for a new generation of scholars and critics to reassess, challenge, and expand the hermeneutical reach of key issues raised by Girard's book, including literary knowledge, realism and representation, imitation and the anxiety of influence, metaphysical desire, deviated transcendence, literature and religious experience, individualism and modernity, and death and resurrection. It also provides an extensive and detailed historical understanding

of the representation of desire, imitation, and rivalry in European and world literature, from Dante and Dickens to Proust and Jonathan Littell.

"This powerful collection of informed critical responses to René Girard's seminal work—both to its central tenets and multiform applications—could not be more pressing in contemporary literary-cultural studies. Scholars across all the disciplines that Girard has interrogated will discover anew his key understanding: literature as theory is very much alive."

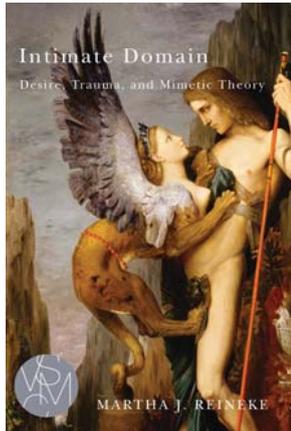
—Mary Orr, Professor of French, Director of the Institute of Language and Culture, University of Southampton

■ **Pierpaolo Antonello** is Reader in Modern Italian Literature and Culture at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of St John's College. ■ **Heather Webb** is Lecturer in the Department of Italian at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of Selwyn College.

Intimate Domain

Desire, Trauma, and Mimetic Theory

Martha J. Reineke



978-1-61186-128-0 \$29.95
PAPER • 414 PAGES • 6 x 9"

In *Intimate Domain*, Martha J. Reineke reframes the Freudian notion of the “family romance” in order to initiate a long-overdue dialogue between psychoanalysis and René Girard’s mimetic theory, which she argues can benefit from a richer and more elastic understanding of Freud’s thought and legacy. Attending to familial dynamics Girard has overlooked and reclaiming aspects of his early writing on sensory experience, Reineke uses psychoanalytic readings of literature to place mimetic theory on firmer ground. She draws on three exemplary narratives—Proust’s *In Search of Lost Time*, Sophocles’s *Antigone*, and Julia Kristeva’s *The Old Man and the Wolves*—in order to explore

fundamental patterns of mimetic desire among family members, foregrounding the affective and bodily nature of repetitive violence. When our childhood relationships are etched by trauma, she argues, we are precluded from experiencing restorative transformation—and yet families can also act as intimate spaces for healing and positive mimesis.

“Reineke’s *Intimate Domain* is an authoritative and timely response to many of our contemporary dilemmas. Drawing on René Girard’s neglected early work on sensory experience, Reineke boldly reactivates the stalled relationship between mimetic theory and psychoanalysis.” —Maria Margaroni, Associate Professor in Literary Theory and Feminist Thought, University of Cyprus

■ **Martha J. Reineke** is Professor of Religion in the Department of Philosophy and World Religions at the University of Northern Iowa.

Can We Survive Our Origins?

Readings in René Girard’s Theory of Violence and the Sacred

Edited by Pierpaolo Antonello and Paul Gifford



978-1-61186-149-5 \$24.95
PAPER • 388 PAGES • 6 x 9"

Are religions intrinsically violent (as argued by the ‘new atheists’)? Or, as René Girard claims, have they been functionally rational instruments developed to cope with the intrinsically violent runaway dynamic that characterizes human social organization in all periods of human history? Is violence decreasing in this time of secular modernity (as argued by Steven Pinker)? Or are we, rather, at increased and even apocalyptic risk from our enhanced powers of action and our decreased socio-symbolic protections? Girard’s mimetic theory has slowly been recognized as one of the most striking contributions to fundamental anthropology, in particular for its power to model and explain

the violent sacred, ancient and modern. The present volume sets this power of explanation in an evolutionary and Darwinian frame. It asks: how far do cultural mechanisms of controlling violence, which allowed humankind to cross the threshold of hominization, still represent today a default setting that threatens to destroy us?

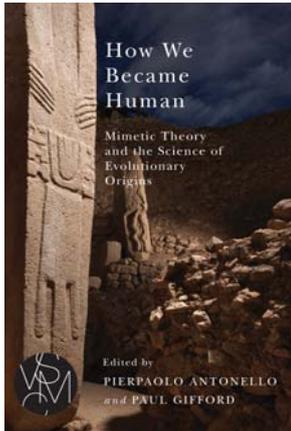
“The importance of studies such as the ones contained in this book is that they both underline the urgency of the cultural crisis and open up impressive possibilities for conversation between Girardians and others in the mainstream of our discourse.” —Right Reverend Rowan Williams, Master of Magdalene College, Cambridge, former Archbishop of Canterbury

■ **Pierpaolo Antonello** is Reader in Modern Italian Literature and Culture at the University of Cambridge and a Fellow of St. John’s College. ■ **Paul Gifford** is Buchanan Professor of French Emeritus at the University of St Andrews.

How We Became Human

Mimetic Theory and the Science of Evolutionary Origins

Edited by Pierpaolo Antonello and Paul Gifford



978-1-61186-173-0 \$29.95
PAPER • 406 PAGES • 6 x 9"

Gifford argue that Girard's theory has the potential to become for the human and social sciences an overarching framework akin to the integrating model that present-day biological science owes to Darwin.

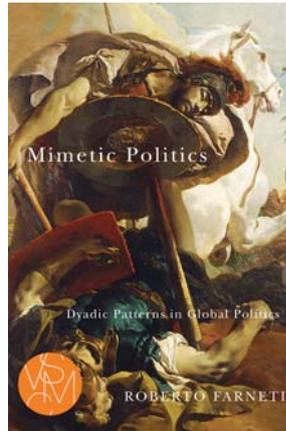
"Rarely does one see such an esteemed collection of scholars brought together to discuss issues of the first importance—both to the sciences and the humanities. . . . This is, in short, an outstanding work of interdisciplinary scholarship." —Dr. Chris Fleming, Senior Lecturer, School of Humanities and Communication Arts, University of Western Sydney

■ **Pierpaolo Antonello** is Reader in Modern Italian Literature and Culture at the University of Cambridge and Fellow of St. John's College. ■ **Paul Gifford** is Buchanan Professor of French Emeritus at the University of St. Andrews.

Mimetic Politics

Dyadic Patterns in Global Politics

Roberto Farneti



978-1-61186-148-8 \$19.95
PAPER • 194 PAGES • 6 x 9"

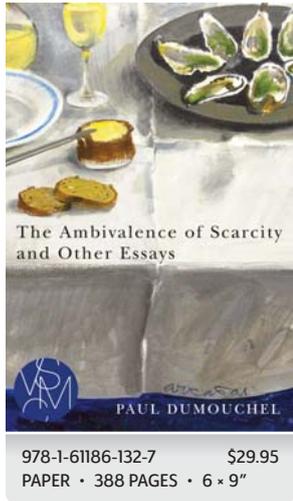
spontaneous polarization in human conflicts (the emergence of dyads or "doubles"), and the strange and ever-growing resemblance of mimetic rivals, which is precisely what pushes them to annihilate each other.

"Roberto Farneti has taken a series of interlocking ideas from the immensely influential anthropologist René Girard; greatly expanded, modified, and in some places refined them; and then turned them to an understanding of the modern politics of global conflict. The result is a work of troubling and stunning originality . . ." —Anthony Pagden, Distinguished Professor of Political Science, University of California, Los Angeles

■ **Roberto Farneti** is Assistant Professor of Politics at the School of Economics and Management of the Free University of Bozen-Bolzano in Italy.

The Ambivalence of Scarcity and Other Essays

Paul Dumouchel



We associate insufficient resources with conditions of poverty that produce social unrest. And yet scarcity also functions as a driving force for economic growth. In *The Ambivalence of Scarcity*, Paul Dumouchel reveals the blurred line separating undesirable deprivation from healthy incentive and argues that scarcity—and the accompanying disappearance of reciprocal ties of obligation—is the price at which modern economies purchase a diminution in contagious violence. Dumouchel also addresses the question of envy and its role in debates about economic anthropology. He offers a critique of Helmut Schoeck's *Envy: A Theory of Social Behavior* and explores the benefits

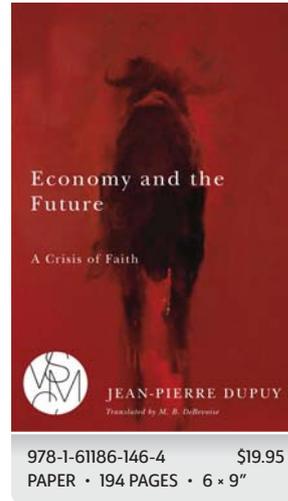
of using mimetic theory as both a general framework for economic analysis and a tool to understand situations in which economic agents change preferences or behave inconsistently. Additional sections explore the notion of *méconnaissance* central to Girard's work and analyze the violence typical of modern societies, from high school bullying to genocide and terrorist attacks.

"Paul Dumouchel is a subtle, powerful, and profoundly original thinker. He has an uncommon knack for making us look at the most basic social facts with different eyes. Taking mimetic theory in new directions, this book uncovers the hidden logic behind the economic and political transformations of our time." —Mark R. Anspach, anthropologist and editor of *Oedipus Unbound: Selected Writings on Rivalry and Desire* by René Girard

■ **Paul Dumouchel** is Professor of Philosophy at the Graduate School of Core Ethics and Frontier Sciences, Ritsumeikan University, Kyoto, Japan.

Economy and the Future A Crisis of Faith

Jean-Pierre Dupuy



A monster stalks the earth—a beast that takes fright at the slightest noise and starts at the sight of its own shadow. And yet the world's leaders tremble before it. They tremble, Jean-Pierre Dupuy says, because they have lost faith in the future. The monster in question is the market. What Dupuy calls Economy has degenerated today into a mad spectacle of unrestrained consumption and speculation. But in its positive form—a truly political economy in which politics, not economics, is predominant—Economy creates not only a sense of trust but also a belief in the open-endedness of the future without which capitalism cannot function. In this indictment of the hegemonic

pretensions of neoclassical economic theory, Dupuy argues that the immutable decision of God has given way to the unpredictable and capricious judgment of the crowd. Our future depends on whether we can see through the blindness of orthodox economic thinking.

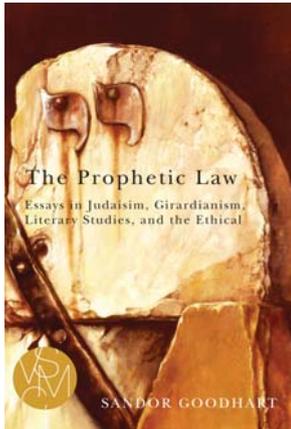
"A mastery of a wide range of disciplines allows Jean-Pierre Dupuy to penetrate an enigma compounded of the mystery of time, apocalypse, faith, Calvinism, Max Weber's great masterpiece, Sartre's concept of bad faith, and Camus's *The Stranger*." —Gérard Leclerc, *France Catholique*

■ **Jean-Pierre Dupuy** is Professor of Social and Political Philosophy at the École Polytechnique, Paris.

The Prophetic Law

Essays in Judaism, Girardianism, Literary Studies, and the Ethical

Sandor Goodhart



978-1-61186-124-2 \$24.95
PAPER • 342 PAGES • 6 x 9"

Whether engaging the European novel, ancient Greek tragedy, Shakespeare's plays, or Jewish and Christian scripture, René Girard teaches us to draw upon the interpretative readings already available within (and constitutive of) those classic texts. In *The Prophetic Law*, literary scholar, theorist, and critic Sandor Goodhart brings mimetic theory together with Biblical scripture (Genesis and Exodus), literature (the European novel and Shakespeare), and philosophy and religious studies (ethical and Jewish subject areas). He also reproduces polemical exchanges—including with René Girard—as part of what could justly be deemed Jewish-Christian dialogue. The twelve texts

that make up the heart of this volume constitute the bulk of the author's writings to date on mimetic theory outside of his three previous books on Girardian topics. Together they offer a comprehensive engagement with Girard's sharpest and most original literary, anthropological, and scriptural insights.

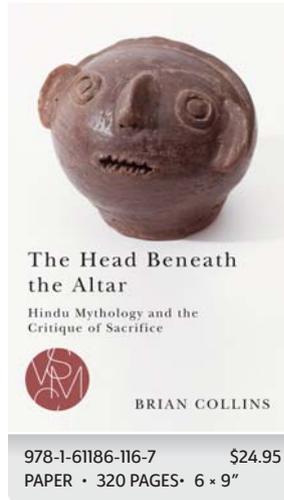
"Essays by Goodhart and responses from Girard and others address a common theme: Goodhart's call to bring within the purview of mimetic theory the anti-sacrificial message of Judaism and other religious and reflective traditions. An essential backstory to the Girardian corpus, these essays chronicle and preserve for future generations a conversation that spanned two decades and had a transformative impact on mimetic theory." —Martha J. Reineke, Professor of Religion, University of Northern Iowa

■ Sandor Goodhart is Professor of English and Jewish Studies at Purdue University.

The Head Beneath the Altar

Hindu Mythology and the Critique of Sacrifice

Brian Collins



978-1-61186-116-7 \$24.95
PAPER • 320 PAGES • 6 x 9"

The Head Beneath the Altar is the first wide-ranging study of Hindu texts through the lens of René Girard's theory of the sacrificial origin of religion and culture. The book also performs a careful reading of Girard's work, drawing connections between his thought and the ideas of Georges Dumézil and Giorgio Agamben, among other theorists. Brian Collins examines the notion of sacrifice from the earliest recorded rituals through the flowering of classical mythology and the ancient Indian institutions of the duel, the oath, and the secret warrior society. He also uncovers implicit and explicit critiques in the tradition, confirming Girard's intuition that Hinduism offers an alternative anti-sacrificial worldview to the one contained in the Christian gospels.

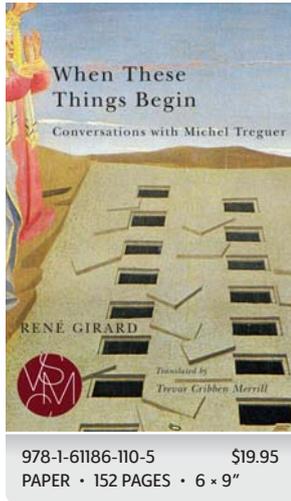
"This study both honors Girard's many contributions and, with respect to the Indian context, pushes beyond them. It greatly widens, beyond the Christian West, our necessary conversation about religion, violence, and the heritage of sacrifice in today's global web of religious and secular societies." —Francis X. Clooney, SJ, Parkman Professor of Divinity and Director of the Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University

■ Brian Collins holds the Drs. Ram and Sushila Gawande Chair in Indian Religion and Philosophy at Ohio University.

When These Things Begin

Conversations with Michel Treguer

René Girard



In this lively series of conversations with writer Michel Treguer, René Girard revisits the major concepts of mimetic theory and explores science, democracy, and the nature of God and freedom. In Girard's view, "our unprecedented present is incomprehensible without Christianity." Globalization has unified the world, yet civil war and terrorism persist despite free trade and economic growth. Because of mimetic desire and the rivalry it generates, asserts Girard, "whether we're talking about marriage, friendship, professional relationships, issues with neighbors or matters of national unity, human relations are always under threat." Literary masters Marivaux, Dostoevsky, and

Joyce understood this, as did archaic religion, which warded off violence with blood sacrifice. Christianity brought a new understanding of sacrifice, giving rise not only to modern rationality and science but also to a fragile system that is, in Girard's words, "always teetering between a new golden age and a destructive apocalypse."

"These conversations with Michel Treguer—who admires and is familiar with his interlocutor's work, but also is critical of it—show the amazing degree to which today's earth-shaking events bear out Girard's theses." —P. Gardeil, *Nouvelle revue théologique*

■ René Girard is a member of the French Academy and Emeritus Professor at Stanford University. His books have been translated and acclaimed worldwide.

The One by Whom Scandal Comes

René Girard



Even the most faithful Christians have felt the need to rescue the Sermon on the Mount, with its command to turn the other cheek. Is there no way to inject some virile defiance back into the passive behavior that Jesus asks of us? In this collection of essays and conversations, anthropologist René Girard warns against underestimating the Gospel text's implacable logic. Far from recommending weakness for its own sake, Jesus provides the only foolproof antidote to escalating violence rooted in mimetic reciprocity. And in a world endowed with the capacity for total self-annihilation, we all have excellent reasons for wanting to keep the peace. Essays on the cause of violence ("Violence and

Reciprocity"), the internal contradictions of neo-primitivism ("Noble Savages and Others"), and the continuity between archaic religions and Christianity ("Mimetic Theory and Theology") precede a wide-ranging conversation between Girard and Sicilian cultural theorist Maria Stella Barberi.

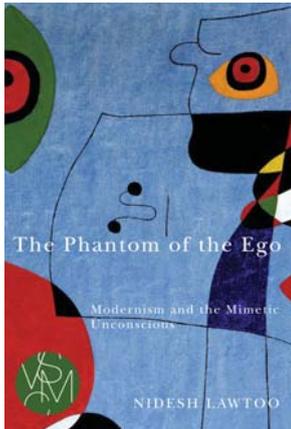
"[Girard's] books . . . constitute essential reference points for anyone seeking to understand the foundations of religious phenomena. . . . *The One by Whom Scandal Comes* . . . seeks to explore the underpinnings of the religious universe, and offers up reflections on a theory that Girard has never ceased to develop and refine." —Jean-Pierre Thomas, Université de Sherbrooke, review in [Religiologiques](#)

■ René Girard is a member of the French Academy and Emeritus Professor at Stanford University. His books have been translated and acclaimed worldwide.

The Phantom of the Ego

Modernism and the Mimetic Unconscious

Nidesh Lawtoo



978-1-61186-096-2 \$29.95
PAPER • 424 PAGES • 6 x 9"

The Phantom of the Ego shows how the modernist account of the unconscious anticipates contemporary discoveries about the importance of mimesis in the formation of subjectivity. Lawtoo starts with Friedrich Nietzsche's antimetaphysical diagnostic of the ego, his realization that mimetic reflexes—from sympathy and hypnosis to contagion and crowd behavior—move the soul, and his insistence that psychology informs philosophical reflection. Through a comparative reading of Joseph Conrad, D. H. Lawrence, and Georges Bataille, Lawtoo shows that before becoming a timely empirical discovery the "mimetic unconscious" emerged from an untimely current in literary

and philosophical modernism. If the modern ego is born from the spirit of imitation it is not strictly speaking an ego at all but what Nietzsche calls "a phantom of the ego." Lawtoo's study explores an unconscious whose *via regia* is mimesis rather than dreams, and in doing so renews our understanding of the human psyche.

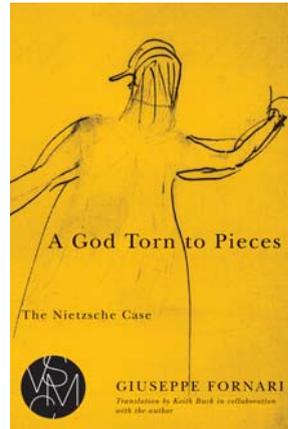
"Nidesh Lawtoo delivers a brilliant, solid, and lucid essay on the contradictions and aporias of the mimetic impulse. The work primes a wide-ranging critique of modernity and its still-fighting shadows, overhauling our Platonic home base with the shrewd alliance of Nietzsche and Lacoue-Labarthe." —Avital Ronell, University Professor of the Humanities, New York University

■ Nidesh Lawtoo is Visiting Scholar at The Humanities Center, Johns Hopkins University.

A God Torn to Pieces

The Nietzsche Case

Giuseppe Fornari



978-1-61186-101-3 \$24.95
PAPER • 162 PAGES • 6 x 9"

Friedrich Nietzsche's importance as a religious thinker and his "untimeliness" place him at the forefront of modern thought. Capable of exploiting his own failures as a cognitive tool to discover what other philosophers never wanted to see, Nietzsche ultimately drove himself to mental collapse. In *A God Torn to Pieces*, Giuseppe Fornari seeks the cause of this self-destructive destiny, which, he argues, began earlier than his rivalry with the composer Richard Wagner and dates back to the premature loss of Nietzsche's father. Fornari examines the author's poetry as well as testimony from close friends and interlocutors and concludes that Nietzsche's fatal rebellion against Christian consolation led him to become one and the same not only with Dionysus but also with the crucified Christ. This self-crucifixion, Fornari argues, repeated the fate of the victim whose compassionate innocence Nietzsche denied in his writings: the philosopher's madness amounted to a desperate refusal of grace and forgiveness.

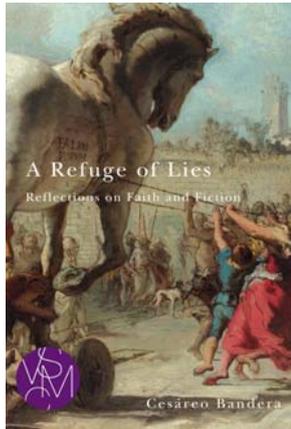
"*A God Torn to Pieces* presents a fascinating, original interpretation of one of the most misunderstood thinkers in the history of philosophy."
—Wichita Eagle

■ Giuseppe Fornari is Professor of History of Philosophy at Bergamo University, Italy.

A Refuge of Lies

Reflections on Faith and Fiction

Cesáreo Bandera



978-1-61186-088-7 \$19.95 USD
PAPER • 150 PAGES • 6 x 9"

In a series of ambitious essays, Cesáreo Bandera has charted the role of religion in the emergence of modern literature. His latest study expands on that project through readings of Homer, Virgil, and Cervantes. In his seminal *Mimesis*, affirms Bandera, Erich Auerbach saw the chasm separating epic poetry and Biblical narrative, yet failed to grasp the Homeric text's religious implications. Bandera points to Greek poetry's profound ties to the archaic sacred and re-reads Odysseus as both a mythical hero-god and an archetypal deceiver. Contemporary readers assume that the *Iliad*, with its dazzling literary effects, stands closer to modern fiction than does the Bible. And yet the epic's flawless surface hides an anthropological reality that ancient culture managed to approach only by means of subterfuges and masks: Homer's work is "a refuge of lies." The greatest modern fiction, by contrast—and notably *Don Quixote*—partakes of the Bible's passionate and unprecedented concern for narrative truth.

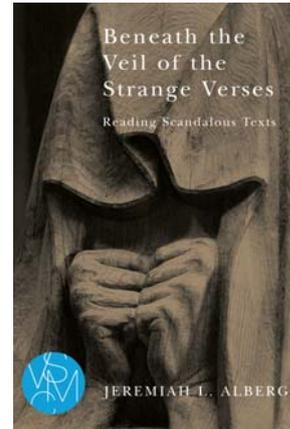
"Cesáreo Bandera's clear and insightful study starts with Erich Auerbach's distinction between Homeric poems and the Old Testament, leading to a profound understanding of the biblical legacy and its uncovering of sacred violence." —Wolfgang Palaver, Professor of Catholic Social Thought and Dean of the Faculty of Theology, University of Innsbruck

■ **Cesáreo Bandera** is Emeritus Distinguished Professor of Spanish Literature at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

Beneath the Veil of the Strange Verses

Reading Scandalous Texts

Jeremiah L. Alberg



978-1-61186-076-4 \$19.95
PAPER • 160 PAGES • 6 x 9"

An episode in Plato's *Republic* describes Leontius's unwillingness to look directly at corpses by the city wall and his simultaneous inability to look away. His combination of fascination and revulsion exemplifies what Jeremiah Alberg refers to as "scandal." *Beneath the Veil of the Strange Verses* traces the roots of this conflicted desire in the work of great thinkers and poets. In Nietzsche, tragedy is a compelling spectacle that diverts our gaze from a deeper truth, while Rousseau, in portraying himself as the eternal victim, narrows our understanding of persecution. Dante's hermeneutics of blindness and Flannery O'Connor's salutary shocks of violence, on the other hand, go beneath the surface of our illusions about exclusion and victimhood. By its nature, the author argues, scandal is the basis of interpretation; it is the source of the obstacles that prevent us from understanding what we read, and of the bridges that lead to a deeper grasp of the truth.

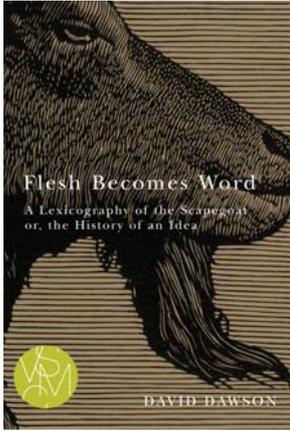
"What is the relationship between looking, reading, and scandal? Alberg answers with a subtle, thoughtful, and finally stunning meditation on the work of Nietzsche, Rousseau, and Flannery O'Connor." —Sandor Goodhart, Professor of English and Jewish Studies, Purdue University

■ **Jeremiah L. Alberg** is Professor of Philosophy and Religion at International Christian University in Tokyo.

Flesh Becomes Word

A Lexicography of the Scapegoat or, the History of an Idea

David Dawson



978-1-61186-063-4 \$19.95
PAPER • 220 PAGES • 6 × 9"

Though its coinage can be traced back to a sixteenth-century translation of Leviticus, the term "scapegoat" has enjoyed a long and varied history of both scholarly and everyday uses. While Tyndale employed it to describe one of two goats chosen by lot as part of the Day of Atonement ceremonies, the expression was soon used to name victims of false accusation. *Flesh Becomes Word* follows the scapegoat from its origins in Mesopotamian ritual across centuries of typological reflection on the meaning of Jesus' death, to its first informal uses in the pornographic and plague literature of the 1600s, and finally into the modern era, where the word takes recognizable shape in

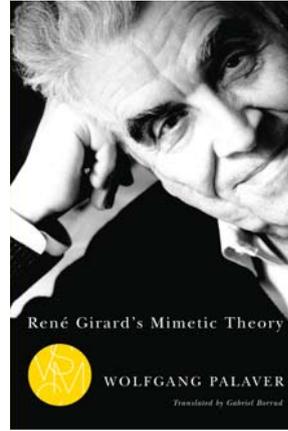
the context of the New English Quaker persecution at the close of the seventeenth century. The circumstances of its lexical formation prove rich in implications for current theories of the scapegoat and the making of the modern world alike.

"Not since Erich Auerbach's magisterial 'Figura' has an original philological study doubled so effectively as a theory of history or demonstrated so clear an understanding of history as the invention of acts of signification. . . . An extraordinarily thorough work of textual research and thoughtful analysis, *Flesh Becomes Word* is a powerful contribution to religious, anthropological, political, and social theory; to philology; and to theory of history." —Claudia Brodsky, Professor of Comparative Literature, Princeton University

■ **David Dawson** teaches at the University of Costa Rica in San José. He wrote *Flesh Becomes Word* while a Visiting Scholar at Stanford's Department of French and Italian.

René Girard's Mimetic Theory

Wolfgang Palaver



978-1-61186-077-1 \$29.95
PAPER • 424 PAGES • 6 × 9"

This systematic introduction explains mimetic theory's three main pillars (mimetic desire, the scapegoat mechanism, and Biblical revelation) with the help of examples from literature and philosophy. Palaver also examines the broader implications of Girard's ideas, from the mimetic dimension of war to the relationship between generative scapegoating and capital punishment. He places mimetic theory in the context of cultural and political debates about terrorism, gender, and the relationship between religion and modernity. An accessible book aimed at students and teachers, Palaver's text is complemented by annotated references to Girard's wide-ranging work as well as to the secondary literature on mimetic theory and its applications.

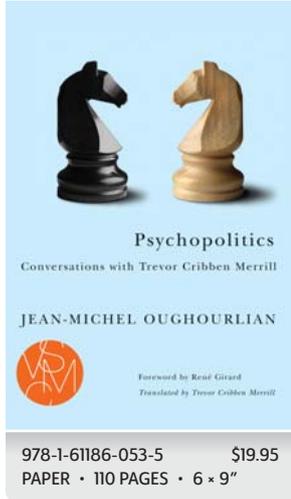
"Palaver's survey of Girard's mimetic theory is the most thorough introduction to Girard's thought and its ramifications that has been written, uniting profound insight, clear explication, and a tremendous breadth of research." —James G. Williams, author of *The Bible, Violence, and the Sacred* and editor of *The Girard Reader*

■ **Wolfgang Palaver** is Professor of Catholic Social Thought and Chair of the Institute for Systematic Theology at the University of Innsbruck.

Psychopolitics

Conversations with Trevor Cribben Merrill

Jean-Michel Oughourlian



For thousands of years, political leaders have unified populations by aligning them against a common enemy. War acted as a sacrificial outlet for dangerous internal strife. Yet today more than ever, the search for enemies results in anything but unanimity. In a world of global terrorist networks and contagious financial crises, evaporating national borders and metastasizing civil war, power politics is increasingly helpless to trigger the ancient mechanism of violent polarization. Psychiatrist and diplomat Jean-Michel Oughourlian, who pioneered an “interindividual” psychology with René Girard, argues that future leaders must walk in the footsteps of Gandhi, Martin Luther

King, and Nelson Mandela. Having overcome their own vengeful passions, these psychopolitical geniuses led by example, teaching their followers to overcome rivalry instead of channeling pent-up violence against a scapegoat.

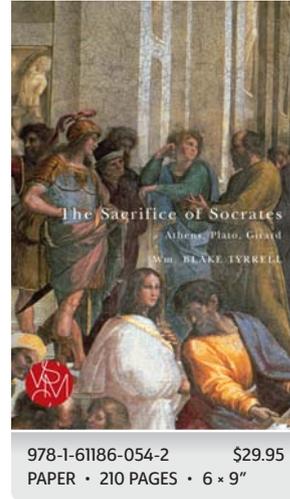
“Bringing together the psyche, which is normally individual, and the political, which is normally collective, was an excellent idea . . . The analysis of the psychological effects of globalized information is truly innovative.” —Olivier Kempf, Professor at Sciences Po and author of *NATO in the Twenty-First Century*

■ **Jean-Michel Oughourlian** is President of the Association of Doctors of the American Hospital of Paris and Ambassador of the Sovereign Order of Malta to the Republic of Armenia.

The Sacrifice of Socrates

Athens, Plato, Girard

Wm. Blake Tyrrell



About 404 BCE, when Athenians suffered the shame of losing a war because of their own greed and foolishness, the public’s blame fell upon Socrates, a man whose extraordinary appearance and behavior made him a ready target. The philosopher was subsequently put on trial and sentenced to death. Plato’s *Apology* depicts Socrates as both the bane and the cure of Greek society, while his *Crito* shows a sacrificial Socrates, a *pharmakos* figure, the human drug through whom Plato can dispense his philosophical remedies. William Blake Tyrrell analyzes classical texts through a Girardian lens in order to suggest that Plato, although without an explicit theory of mimetic crisis and

sacrificial resolution, possessed a sophisticated implicit understanding of both. *The Sacrifice of Socrates* uncovers abundant evidence connecting the death of Socrates to the rituals of ancient Athens and places the philosopher in the context of Plato’s “victimary culture.”

“Blake Tyrrell offers more insight to the man of Socrates, who perhaps knew more about his fate than he truly let on. *The Sacrifice of Socrates* is an essential pick for philosophy and literary criticism collections.” —*Midwest Book Review*

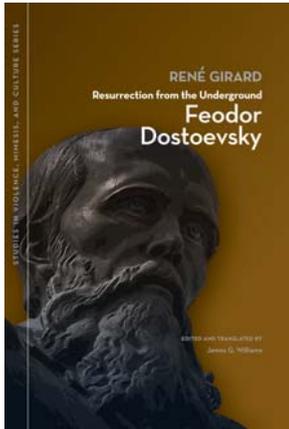
■ **Wm. Blake Tyrrell** is Distinguished Professor of Classics at Michigan State University.



Resurrection from the Underground

Feodor Dostoevsky

René Girard, edited and translated by James G. Williams



978-1-61186-037-5 \$24.95
PAPER • 120 PAGES • 6 x 9"

Midway through an uneven literary career punctuated by tragedy and trauma, Feodor Dostoevsky suddenly began producing the great novels for which he is remembered today. Comparing the works written after his decisive creative rupture (notably *Notes from Underground* and *The Eternal Husband*) with earlier, lesser-known novels and correspondence, René Girard argues that Dostoevsky's genius is rooted in a profound personal transformation. Having first justified his perversely jealous behavior as noble generosity, the Russian novelist ultimately saw through his own romantic illusions to skewer self-defeating, "underground" patterns of desire. Girard's essay highlights the

bitter comedy of Dostoevsky's famous short masterpieces as well as the essentially religious impulse driving the Russian author's aesthetics in *Crime and Punishment* and *The Brothers Karamazov*. *Resurrection from the Underground* is an essential and thought-provoking companion to Dostoevsky's oeuvre.

"*Resurrection from the Underground* is of interest not only to aficionados of Dostoevsky, but to those wishing to gain a better understanding on Girard's work on desire, violence, and religion." —Joshua Paetkau, review in *Rain Taxi*

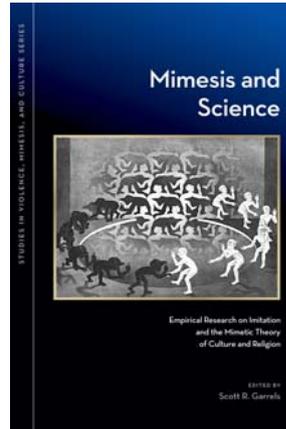
■ **René Girard** is a member of the French Academy and Emeritus Professor at Stanford University. His books have been translated and acclaimed worldwide. ■ **James G. Williams** is the author of *The Bible, Violence, and the Sacred* and editor of *The Girard Reader*.



Mimesis and Science

Empirical Research on Imitation and the Mimetic Theory of Culture and Religion

Edited by Scott R. Garrels



978-1-61186-023-8 \$24.95
PAPER • 272 PAGES • 6 x 9"

This compendium brings together some of the foremost scholars of René Girard's mimetic theory with leading imitation researchers from the cognitive sciences. Interlocking chapters explore the foundational yet previously overlooked role of imitation in child development, adult psychology, emotions, social identification, aggression, and war. Contributors include developmental psychologist Andrew N. Meltzoff, neuroscientist Vittorio Gallese, philosopher Jean-Pierre Dupuy, and anthropologist Mark R. Anspach. Their articles outline the empirical evidence and theoretical arguments linking the neural basis of social interaction to the structure and evolution of human culture and

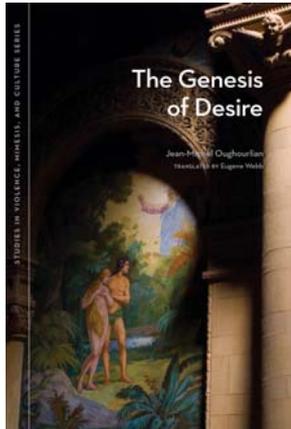
religion. A concluding interview with René Girard retraces the development of mimetic theory. This interdisciplinary volume deepens our understanding of the distinctive human capacity for acts of both empathy and violence, shedding light on some of the most pressing and complex questions in our contemporary world.

"The most exciting and generative new ideas arrive over bridges built between previously isolated fields. *Mimesis and Science* brings together Girard's paradigm-changing mimetic theory with a very large literature on human imitation from fields of psychology, cognitive neuroscience, and cultural anthropology. The result is a stimulating set of essays that will advance current perspectives on human nature and human culture." —Warren S. Brown, Graduate School of Psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary

■ **Scott R. Garrels** is a licensed clinical psychologist in private practice and Adjunct Professor in the School of Psychology at Fuller Theological Seminary.

The Genesis of Desire

Jean-Michel Oughourlian



978-0-87013-876-8 \$24.95
PAPER • 174 PAGES • 6 x 9"

How can we build strong, lasting love relationships in an era of restless desires and high divorce rates? Though we have shrugged off the constricting rules that governed courtship and marriage in previous generations, our increased freedom presents serious challenges to the stability of couples. Jean-Michel Oughourlian argues that our tendency to imitate the desires of our partner leads to the jealousy, envy, and competition that tear marriages apart. Illustrating his theoretical points with rich case studies, Oughourlian shows how couples who find themselves on the "infernal seesaw" of rivalry can replace the sterile game of one-upmanship with clear boundaries and

a realistic understanding of the mimetic mechanisms that shape their feelings. He analyzes the archetypal story of Adam and Eve and outlines a concrete "politics of desire" to help defuse the unpredictable conflicts generated by reciprocal imitation.

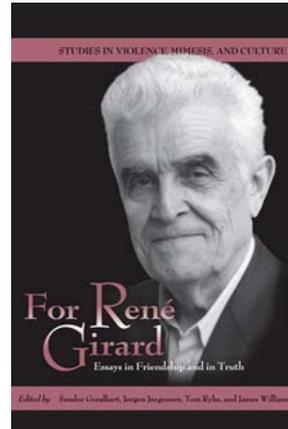
"Finally, the war between the sexes is explained. *The Genesis of Desire*, alternating between case studies and more theoretical statements, convincingly defends the possibility that breakups need not be permanent." —SirReadaLot.org

■ **Jean-Michel Oughourlian** is President of the Association of Doctors of the American Hospital of Paris, where he was Head of Psychiatry from 1981 to 2007.

For René Girard

Essays in Friendship and in Truth

Edited by Sandor Goodhart, Jørgen Jørgensen,
Tom Ryba, and James Williams



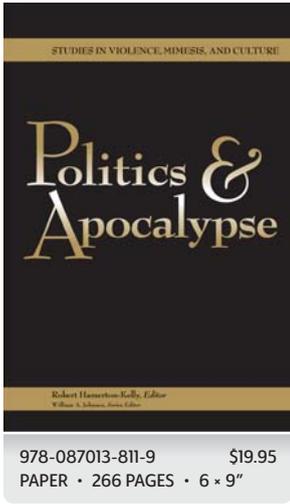
978-0-87013-862-1 \$24.95
PAPER • 289 PAGES • 6 x 9"

Like Albert Einstein, Sigmund Freud, Émile Durkheim, Martin Buber, or others who have changed the way we think in the human sciences, René Girard's ideas have altered our understanding of the world. We will never think the same way again about violence, myth, and the Jewish and Christian scriptures, which in Girard's view explain the crises and scapegoating events from which our culture emerged. The essays in this volume, including personal testimony and appreciations from many of Girard's closest friends and collaborators, fall into roughly four areas of interpretive work: religion and religious study; literary study; the philosophy of social science; and psychological studies. These homages reflect on each author's encounter with Girard and on the personal and intellectual aftershocks that resulted from coming under the influence of both the man and his theory of violent human origins.

■ **Sandor Goodhart** is Professor of English and Jewish Studies at Purdue University, former President of the Colloquium on Violence and Religion (COV&R), and author of *Sacrificing Commentary*, as well as more than ninety essays. ■ **Jørgen Jørgensen** edited a collection of essays on Girard titled *Syndens sold*. ■ **Tom Ryba** is Notre Dame Theologian-in-Residence at the Saint Thomas Aquinas Catholic Center at Purdue University. ■ **James Williams** is the author of *The Bible, Violence, and the Sacred* and editor of *The Girard Reader*.

Politics and Apocalypse

Edited by Robert Hamerton-Kelly

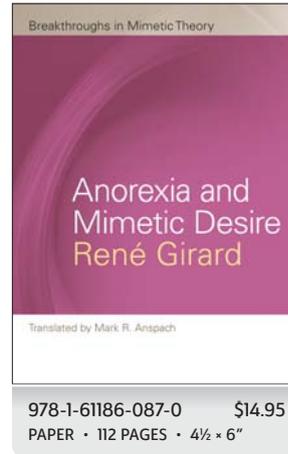


Schmitt. Featuring an important new essay by Girard, *Politics and Apocalypse* asks how to think about politics—and deal with violence—now that terrorism threatens to upend the norms of the liberal West.

■ **Robert Hamerton-Kelly** (1938–2013) was a founding member of the Colloquium on Violence and Religion, Senior Research Scholar at the Center for International Security and Arms Control at Stanford University, and pastor of the Woodside Village Church in Woodside, California.

Anorexia and Mimetic Desire

René Girard



sophistication with irreverent common sense, Girard denounces a “culture of anorexia” and analyzes the competitive impulses fueling the game of conspicuous non-consumption. Featuring a foreword by psychiatrist Jean-Michel Oughourlian and an introductory essay by anthropologist Mark R. Anspach, the volume concludes with a conversation between René Girard, Mark R. Anspach, and Laurence Tacou.

“A hypothesis that explodes all the psychiatric and psychoanalytic interpretations of anorexia. . . . Sheds new light on the way we humans behave.” —Paul-Henri Moinet, *Le Nouvel Économiste*

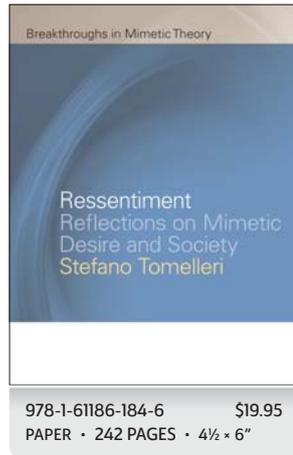
“The great philosopher René Girard dissects with breathtaking skill the mechanisms of eating disorders, turning this affliction into a mirror of an entire society, and scrutinizing modern feminine beauty, from Kate Moss to Carla Bruni-Sarkozy.” —*Diva e Donna*

■ **René Girard** is a member of the French Academy and Emeritus Professor at Stanford University. His books have been translated and acclaimed worldwide.

Ressentiment

Reflections on Mimetic Desire and Society

Stefano Tomelleri



Nietzsche's notion of resentment accounted for the way feelings of thwarted revenge shape human values. The concept would soon gain traction as a means of defining a certain type of quintessentially democratic man, permanently frustrated by his victorious rivals. Stefano Tomelleri revisits Nietzsche's idea and shows how an analysis based on mimetic desire rather than the will to power unbinds resentment from spurious master-slave hierarchies and allows us to do what Nietzsche himself was incapable of doing: acknowledge the role that this insidious emotion plays in shaping our

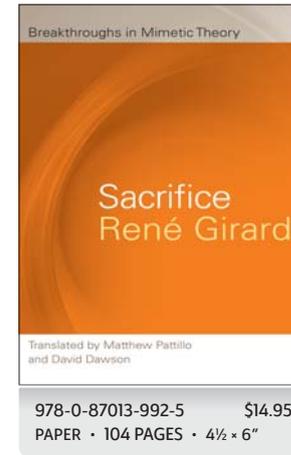
own lives. From this new vantage point, made possible by René Girard's religious anthropology, democracy and democratic values appear not only as the institutional means by which envious losers deprive the powerful of their privilege, but also as compassionate safeguards against exploitation and tyranny.

"Stefano Tomelleri shows with clarity and insight how resentment came to be the dominant passion of modern societies. At the core of the process of democratization . . . lies the perpetual combustion of this "sad passion," with all the ambivalent complexity that Tomelleri brilliantly teases out." —Pierpaolo Antonello, University of Cambridge

■ **Stefano Tomelleri** is Professor of Sociology in the Department of Human and Social Sciences at University of Bergamo, Italy.

Sacrifice

René Girard



The word *veda* means "knowledge," "science." And the object of Vedic science, as René Girard shows in this elegant essay, is nothing other than sacrifice, the immolation of victims universally present at the heart of archaic religion. Girard focuses not on the more widely known Rig Veda but on the compendium of rituals and commentaries on sacrifice contained in the second stratum of the Vedas: the Brahmanas. Taking inspiration from Sylvain Lévi's anthology of Vedic scripture, he analyzes the rivalry between gods and demons, which the texts themselves interpret in light of imitative dynam-

ics, and shows that the dramatic stories of the Brahmanas invariably conclude with a decisive sacrifice. Girard's reading vindicates the intellectual power of the great Vedic texts, demonstrating their coherence as well as their capacity for turning back against themselves to offer a striking critique of ritual sacrifice.

"In giving attention to the overlooked subject of Vedic sacrifice in Indian religious tradition, this Stanford Emeritus Professor and member of the French Academy deepens understanding of the universal practice of sacrifice." —Henry Berry, *Midwest Book Review*

■ **René Girard** is a member of the French Academy and Emeritus Professor at Stanford University. His books have been translated and acclaimed worldwide.



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