

Lancaster, Rosemary. Women Writing on the French Riviera: Travellers and Trendsetters, 1870-1970

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Louwagie handled Perce's "'Je n'ai pas de souvenirs d'enfance': je posais cette affirmation avec assurance, avec presque une sorte de défi" (Perce, *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*, 13) in her Chapitre 7: "Une fois pour toutes: *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* de Georges Perce", Louwagie explains:

Si Perce n'adhère désormais plus à cette approche et se décide à surmonter son mutisme, c'est parce que le silence lui paraît désormais faussement innocent, une façon d'esquiver le passé et de se « protéger » de son histoire à lui, telle qu'il l'a vécue. Il s'engage donc à affronter cette dernière, suivant en cela l'exemple du narrateur adulte Gaspard Winckler qui se résout – lui aussi après un long silence – à parler de son voyage à W. (199)

In conclusion, *Témoignage et littérature d'après Auschwitz* brings much needed attention to lesser-known survivor testimony and brings to the forefront the importance of supporting the examination of second-generation survivor testimony. The analysis of the second-generation survivor testimony plays a pivotal role in understanding the relationship between survivor and second-generation testimonies. It is hoped that Louwagie's efforts with *Témoignage et littérature d'après Auschwitz* will lead to a more inclusive examination of survivor testimony and the corresponding second-generation testimony so that greater representation by female writers is included in the canon of Holocaust literature.

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Lancaster, Rosemary. *Women Writing on the French Riviera: Travellers and Trendsetters, 1870-1970*. The Netherlands: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2020. 275 p. + XI introductory matter.

Beginning with an inspirational quote by Edith Wharton ["...the more eastern position of the Riviera, has a peculiar nobility, a Virgilian breadth of composition, in marked contrast to the red-rocked precipitous landscape beyond" (1)] and immediately followed by a stunning photograph of Parc Sainte-Claire, Wharton's garden, Rosemary Lancaster sets the stage perfectly for her stimulating analysis of the work of nine women writers who came to the French Riviera between 1870 and 1970 (thus, encapsulating the Belle Époque, the "roaring twenties," and the emancipatory post-war years) from Russia, Britain, American, and metropolitan France. Lancaster explains:

Like Edith Wharton, the women writers addressed in this book came to the Riviera with their own ambitions, travel anticipations, and personality traits. Some had strong reasons to travel; some came to holiday or convalesce; some to seek writing time or forge new careers; some held strong social and political opinions; two came as dependents, not knowing what lay ahead. Yet, for all, the Riviera promised adventure, discovery, opportunity, a new lifestyle, a change of pace. And like Wharton, whose garden typified her ability to take what the South offered while leaving upon it the imprint of her feminine person and creative genius, all – charged or recharged by their experience – helped fashion the identity of the Riviera, affirmed in their written records and the remarkable lives they led. (2)

Divided into three sections (Part I - Art and Illness: 1. Marie Bashkirtseff's Quest for Glory: The Nice Years and After and 2. "Ordered South": Katherine Mansfield in Menton; Part II - High Life on the Riviera: 3. Fact and Fiction: Alice Williamson's Monte Carlo, 4. Bronislava Nijinska: The Ballets Russes Years, and 5. The Riviera and the Rich: Rebecca West's *The Thinking Reed* (1936); and, Part III: The Mediterranean Idyll: 6. Rebirth in

Saint-Tropez: Colette's *Break of Day*, 7. An Invented Childhood: Honoria Murphy in Antibes, and 8. Flavours of the South: the Culinary Revolutions of Elizabeth David and Julia Child), the works of the nine authors constitute an unusual range of genres (e.g., fiction, memoir, diary, letters, cookbooks, and choreographies) but typify the social and innovative artistic changes by daring females of these times. By bringing together the works of authors one would not normally associate together, Lancaster demonstrates clearly the especially unique impact of the French Riviera. For example, in Chapter Eight, "Flavours of the South: The Culinary Revolutions of Elizabeth David and Julia Child," Lancaster deftly brings the reader into the exciting world of David and Child and how both became legendary because of their cookbooks that continue to sell well and be the gold standard for cooking ["both, insisted on the joy of cooking and eating, proffering receipts that were flavoursome, time-honoured, and, for most readers, intriguingly new; some of Child's, particularly, required encouragement and time to master; many, iconically David's, were easy to prepare." (238)] As she does in her examination of what brought each woman to the French Riviera and what propelled each one to stay and/or return as well as how each one's writing was inspired by her surroundings, Lancaster draws the reader into the fascinating mindset of each woman. In the case of David, Lancaster brings attention to the opening pages of *French Provincial Cooking* where David confides:

Provence is a country to which I am always returning, next week, next year, any day now, as soon as I can get on to a train. Here in London it is an effort of will to believe in the existence of such a place at all. But now and again the vision of golden tiles on a round southern roof, or of some warm, stony, herb-scented hillside will rise out of my kitchen pots with the smell of a piece of orange peel scenting a beef stew. (250)

Or in the case of Child, Lancaster explains how Child was often at odds with her fellow authors because of what would become her trademark rule of "operational proof":

In Marseille, poised to write the "fish" chapter of "the Book" she went onto the streets to understand what sold and why. The port's open-air market and the colourful Crieé aux Poissons, Marseille's major fish market, became her laboratories. "I loved the fishwives," she recalls ...

... They were a breed apart: big, loud, and territorial, they screamed at each other in nasal accents ... [They] were a great resource for me, even though they didn't always agree with each other. A large *rascasse* (an ugly thing, like a sculpin) was called a *chapon*, accruing to some of the ladies. But other ladies pointed to another fish – flat and red and big, with a watery eye, and identified that as a *rascasse*. Hm. (253)

Moreover, each chapter is supported by carefully selected illustrations and photographs as well as a satisfying epilogue that prevents the reader from thinking "what happened next."

In conclusion, *Women Writing on the French Riviera: Travellers and Trendsetters, 1870-1970* is ideal for those interested in women's travels and travel literatures of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Reflecting Lancaster's meticulous research, each individual chapter is a gold mine for anyone seeking detailed and precise information on that specific writer as well as to be wholeheartedly engaged in a discussion of what at first appears to be an eclectic mix of authors but, in reality, is an excellent analysis of feminine writings from 1870 to 1970 that reflect the social and cultural history of the French Riviera.

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