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The Ethics of Citation in Patrick Modiano's *Dora Bruder* and Georges Perec's *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*

Abstract

This article compares the representations of the Holocaust in Georges Perec's *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* (*W or the Memory of Childhood*) and Patrick Modiano's *Dora Bruder*. I concentrate on the two authors' use of citation, in both cases of texts written by victims of the deportations, and identify a respective ethics of citation in each work by drawing on Antoine Compagnon's theory. Modiano's is best characterized through the term 'responsibility,' a responsibility he urges the reader to share with him in memorializing the wartime past. In the case of Perec, 'resonance' describes the manner in which he articulates the two halves of his book, as well as the wider historical lessons of the Shoah, around a citation from David Rousset. I conclude by suggesting that the ethical distinction between responsibility and resonance is connected to the generational difference between the two writers, famous examples of (in Perec's case) Susan Suleiman's '1.5 generation' and, in Modiano's, Marianne Hirsch's generation of postmemory.

Keywords

Perec, Modiano, Holocaust, *Dora Bruder*, *W or the Memory of Childhood*, Ethics, Citation, Compagnon, Suleiman, Hirsch

The Ethics of Citation in Patrick Modiano's *Dora Bruder* and Georges Perec's
W ou le souvenir d'enfance

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Both Patrick Modiano's *Dora Bruder* (1997) and Georges Perec's *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* (*W or The Memory of Childhood*, 1975) have been examined by a wide range of scholars, their creative dimensions and historical references elucidated and, in numerous cases, the connections between the two works demonstrated. Alongside Annelies Schulte Nordholt's *Perec, Modiano, Racymow* (2008), articles and book chapters by critics such as Max Silverman, Charlotte Wardi, and Jeanne Bem treat the two works in conjunction, and one writer can often be found featured prominently in studies primarily devoted to the other. Dervila Cooke's *Present Pasts: Patrick Modiano's (Auto)Biographical Fictions* (2005), on the one hand, and Roland Brasseur's *Je me souviens de Je me souviens* ('*I Remember I Remember*,' 1998), on the other, are notable examples. Modiano himself acknowledged Perec's status as a precursor to his own writing on *Dora Bruder* when referring to the decisive influence of Serge Klarsfeld's 1978 *Mémorial de la déportation des Juifs de France* (*Memorial to the Jews Deported from France*), explaining that "je n'ai pas osé, à l'époque, prendre contact avec lui, ni avec l'écrivain dont l'œuvre est souvent une illustration de ce mémorial: Georges Perec" ('*Avec Klarsfeld, contre l'oubli*' 176) 'I did not, at that time, dare contact him, nor the author whose writing is often an illustration of that memorial: Georges Perec.'¹

What can be added to the range of insights this bibliography has provided us? The following pages will examine a particular point of intersection between Perec's and Modiano's works that has, despite some critical attention, not yet fully been explicated. At important moments in both *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* and *Dora Bruder*, the two authors turn to the words of others, specifically war victims who were eyewitnesses to the deportations and the camps, in order to craft their own texts. I will propose, in each case, a characterization of the author's ethical stance in using these citations, suggesting that where Modiano's falls under the concept of "responsibility," Perec's is best described as "resonance." These are terms that each author himself uses in context, but which merit prolonged comparative analysis to draw out their full implications. The two stances inform a reading of the connections between the citations themselves and the rest of the works in which they reside. In concluding, it will emerge that these two distinct ethics of citation both confirm and complicate the common association between, firstly, Modiano's writing and Marianne Hirsch's theory of postmemory, and

secondly, Perec's status and what Susan Suleiman has called "the 1.5 generation" of survivors ("The 1.5 Generation" 373).

In a series of works that began with her analysis of Art Spiegelman's *Maus*, Hirsch has developed postmemory as a means of conceiving the secondary effects of trauma on subsequent generations. As a result, she defines postmemory differentially from survivor memory, stressing:

its temporal and qualitative difference from survivor memory, its secondary or second-generation memory quality, its basis in displacement, its vicariousness and belatedness. Postmemory is a powerful form of memory precisely because its connection to its object or source is mediated not through recollection but through representation, projection, and creation Postmemory characterizes the experience of those who . . . have grown up dominated by narratives that preceded their birth, whose own belated stories are displaced by the powerful stories of the previous generation, shaped by monumental traumatic events that resist understanding and integration. ("Surviving Images" 9-12)

As scholars from Cooke to Sven-Erik Rose have remarked, Modiano's life and oeuvre are marked by just such traits, and many of his own narratives have grappled with those that preceded his birth.

Suleiman, for her part, elaborated the concept of the 1.5 generation in the wake of Hirsch's theorization of postmemory. It describes those writers and other individuals who survived the genocide as children too young to grasp the full truth of what was occurring at the time they experienced it. She has directly applied it to Perec and his writing, affirming in an article on *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* that "unlike the second generation, whose most common shared experience is that of belatedness—perhaps best summed up in the French writer Henri Racymow's rueful statement 'We cannot even say that we were *almost* deported'—the 1.5 generation's shared experience is that of premature bewilderment and helplessness" ("The 1.5 Generation" 372-73, emphasis in original). In analyzing Perec's use of a citation from David Rousset at the end of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*, I will argue that the defining features of bewilderment and helplessness evident across the rest of the text combine with the practice of citation to create an uneasy ethical stance.

Where Modiano's work tends to be treated individually, rather than by identification with wider literary movements, Perec was famously a member of the Oulipo group (short for "Ouvroir de Littérature Potentielle" 'Workroom of Potential Literature'), alongside both mathematicians and writers such as Raymond Queneau and Italo Calvino. The notion of constrained writing, evident in works such as the 1969 *La Disparition (A Void)*, a novel from which the letter "e" is entirely absent, also informs the split structure of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* and

plays a role in accounting for the difference in ethical stances between Perec and Modiano.

While contrasting the specific experiences of Modiano and Perec as writers of the Holocaust in the light of Hirsch's and Suleiman's work, this article also reads their citational practices against the broader notion of literary citation. Perhaps the most prominent theoretical reflection on the practice is Antoine Compagnon's 1979 *La Seconde main ou le travail de la citation* ('The Second Hand or The Work of Citation'). His approach considers citation from three different angles, first as a phenomenology, then as a semiotics, and finally as a set of genealogies, using examples ranging from Scripture to Montaigne to substantiate these approaches. The first of these, the phenomenological approach, is most pertinent here. In elaborating it, Compagnon uses two key elements. The first is the notion of *sollicitation* ('solicitation'), which he presents as the impulse for the process as a whole² and as a component of citation's meaning within the new text: "La sollicitation fait partie du sens, de la valeur dont j'investis le texte: elle en est une composante authentique, produite par l'acte de lecture" (26) 'Solicitation is a part of the meaning, the value I assign to the text: it is an authentic component of sense and meaning, produced by the act of reading.'³ As will be seen below, Modiano's use of citation in particular relies on the same deep structure identified by Compagnon, but requires substantial modification of its surface features in order fruitfully to be applied to *Dora Bruder*.

Perec's publication of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* in 1975 was the culmination of decades of personal fabulation (starting as the author informs us at age twelve) about a land named W that is ostensibly devoted to the glory of sporting competition. The famously alternating chapter structure of the book interweaves this account of W (and, in the first section, of the character Gaspard Winckler, who is induced to search for it) with autobiographical passages that constitute Perec's attempt to reclaim and reconstruct his elusive early childhood memories of the war and of his parents, who both perished during it, his father at the front, his mother at Auschwitz.

In contrast, *Dora Bruder* appears to feature greater unity; it recounts Modiano's search for the wartime life of the eponymous girl, of whom he first became aware in 1988 during archival research (the author happened across a missing persons ad placed by Dora's father). The book chronicles Modiano's more or less successful quest for the details of her existence under the Occupation, which ended with her deportation, also to Auschwitz, in September 1942. Yet this focus is complicated by Modiano's frequent digressions to his own youth and early adulthood, as well as his reflections on his father Albert, in the context both of their relationship and of his father's wartime experiences. Nor is Modiano's engagement with Dora's life bounded by the covers of the book that bears her name: the character of Ingrid Terysen in the 1990 *Voyage de Noces* (*Honeymoon*) was a

fictionalization of Dora Bruder created years before Modiano had acquired most of the details of her existence (Cooke 269). Noting this, and recognizing that the majority of Modiano's novelistic output draws on techniques of fictional projection, will allow us to understand the ways in which *Dora Bruder* is distinct from most of his corpus. Paradoxically, although Modiano's use of fictionalization is a point of kinship with much of what Perec does in *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*, *Dora Bruder* itself features a reduction in these fictional techniques, standing as a "cautious form of biography" (Cooke 283). Although the subject matter relates closely to Perec's book, the means of treating material concerning the war are different, and we will observe that this difference also applies to the ethical stances used in citing the words of the victims.

In order to consider the first such citation Modiano makes in *Dora Bruder*, we should draw on Cooke's observation that on several other occasions in the book, Modiano employs the pronoun *vous* (formal or plural "you") as "an appeal for identification on the reader's part" (297). He typically inserts them into commentary on the administrative oppression visited on the Bruder family. The first time this use of *vous* appears, the contrast between the suffering of the innocent individual and the callousness of the statist authority responsible is manifested in the grammatical friction between *vous*, which calls out to the reader, and a faceless *on* (the impersonal third person singular subject pronoun, in this case best translated by "they") which Modiano employs anaphorically as a subject pronoun opening three successive sentences: "On vous classe dans des catégories bizarres dont vous n'avez jamais entendu parler et qui ne correspondent pas à ce que vous êtes réellement. On vous convoque. On vous interne. Vous aimeriez bien comprendre pourquoi" (50) 'They file you in strange categories of which you've never heard and which don't correspond to what you really are. They summon you. They detain you. You'd like to understand why.'

Immediately thereafter, Modiano's narratorial voice asks of the boarding school to which the Bruders sent their daughter: "Qui leur avait donné le conseil d'y inscrire Dora?" (50) 'Who had advised them to enroll Dora there?' The imagined incomprehension of the Bruders at their treatment is echoed in Modiano's struggle to grasp the full truth of their wartime lives, and—if the reader has acquiesced to the author's appeal—all three parties find themselves in a similar affective space with respect to the same events. The literary technique thus creates a tripartite community in which the reader's place is essential, combining with both the author himself and his objects of enquiry.

Suleiman observes that Modiano's use of *vous* in this manner "is not only an invitation to empathetic identification on the part of the reader, but is also a way of opening up and directing Modiano's own discourse toward . . . ethical consciousness and mourning" ("Oneself as Other" 338). Commenting on Modiano's use of a range of archival material, she further underlines that "the flurry

of documentation and the proliferation of names that follows the account of Ernest Bruder's arrest put the individual story into a collective context. And it paves the way for the concluding reflections in the book, which involve the question of collective remembrance and obligation to the dead—especially to those who have left absolutely no trace behind them” (339).

A synthesis between these two observations, one on ethical consciousness and the other on the collective space created by the archive, can be identified through attention to a pertinent passage from *Dora Bruder* that Suleiman does not single out. In order to do so, I must disagree in one respect with Annelies Schulte Nordholt's characterization of Modiano's archival work:

Dora Bruder est donc bien une enquête, mais c'est une enquête de romancier, non d'historien. Par les méthodes employées d'abord: si le narrateur, en cela pareil à l'historien, fait bien des recherches en archives, il fait cependant un tout autre usage des documents qui en résultent. Ces documents, il ne les cite pas mais il les transforme en intertextes, il les tisse dans son texte, les intègre à lui. (86)

Dora Bruder is indeed an investigation, but one conducted by a novelist, not a historian. This is first clear in its methods: although the narrator, just like the historian, performs archival research, he uses the documents found there very differently. He does not cite those documents, but rather transforms them into intertexts, weaves them into his own text, incorporates them into it.

Although there are important differences between Modiano's deployment of the wartime archive and those of professional historians—and as already suggested those differences do indeed reside in the specifically literary aspects of his writing—it is inaccurate to say that he never cites the documents unearthed in the research that preceded *Dora Bruder*'s composition. There are two instances when he provides the text of letters written by Jews affected by the deportations, and they are presented with clear acknowledgment of their difference from his own writing and subjectivity: in other words, they are not literary intertexts whose hallmark tends to be the transformative, integrative process Schulte Nordholt describes. Close attention to these passages will provide a new illustration of the central importance of responsibility in Modiano's writing and will also then enable us to discuss *Dora Bruder* in joint context with *W* ou le souvenir d'enfance.

In *Dora Bruder*, Modiano's primary use of the city of Paris is to show the interpenetration of past and present, an interpenetration that exists within the author's own mind but that finds an external (I will not say objective) grounding in the streets and structures he discusses. He reminds or informs us that “la Préfecture

de police de l'Occupation n'est plus qu'une grande caserne spectrale au bord de la Seine. Elle nous apparait, au moment où nous évoquons le passé, un peu comme la maison Usher" (104) 'The police headquarters used during the Occupation are now nothing more than a great spectral barracks on the bank of the Seine. They appear to us when we evoke the past, a little like the House of Usher.' We can, in passing, note two features of this reminder: one, that the first person plural (both as indirect object and as subject pronoun, in other words in both passive and active roles) is at its textual core; and two, that it is, in fact, undergirded by a literary intertext, to Edgar Allan Poe.

Yet, *pace* Schulte Nordholt, this intertext does not function in lieu of citation, but rather prepares the ground for it. Modiano segues into a lament on the disappearance of most of the police files that once resided in that building, asserting that the names of the detectives who wrote them "résonnent d'un écho lugubre et sentent une odeur de cuir pourri et tabac froid: Permilleux, François, Schweblin, Koerperich, Cougoule. . . ." (104) 'reverberate with a mournful echo and give off the smell of rotten leather and cold tobacco: Permilleux, François, Schweblin, Koerperich, Cougoule. . . .' The place and its history are linked by the combination of metonymy and onomastics, with the sense impressions emanating from the building imprinted on the surnames of those who worked there.

Both literary techniques—metonymy and onomastics—are pervasive in *Dora Bruder*, and both are highly suited to Modiano's postmemorial project in its pages. Faced with the fragmentary and lacunary nature of his archive despite years of trying to assemble the details of Dora's wartime existence, the author dwells on those names that have appeared in his historical searches, inscribing them with odors ("rotten," "cold") that are inflected by the moral failings of the men bearing them. And, since names and places have survived the war more concretely than the lived experiences of those caught in the Nazi trap, he performs metonymic work on the former in order to recreate the latter.

Modiano immediately compensates the reader with an alternative to the lost police files:

Toutes ces dizaines de milliers de procès-verbaux ont été détruites et on ne connaîtra jamais les noms des "agents capteurs." Mais il reste, dans les archives, des centaines et des centaines de lettres adressées au préfet de police de l'époque et auxquelles il n'a jamais répondu . . . Aujourd'hui nous pouvons les lire. Ceux à qui elles étaient adressées n'ont pas voulu en tenir compte et maintenant, c'est nous, qui n'étions pas encore nés à cette époque, qui en sommes les destinataires et les gardiens. (105)

All of those tens of thousands of reports have been destroyed and we will never know the names of the "arresting officers." But there remain, in the

archives, hundreds upon hundreds of letters written to the police chief of the time and to which he never responded . . . Today we can read them. Those to whom they were addressed were unwilling to heed them and now it is we, who were not yet born then, who are their addressees and their guardians.

Recall the passage cited above in which Modiano opposes *vous* with a faceless *on* to drive home the ethical contrast between the victims and the perpetrators of the Shoah and to compel the reader's engagement with that contrast. Here, the *on* has taken on a semblance of form, in the echoing and musty names of Permillieux, et al. And the ethical contrast, and more precisely the vital role of the reader in drawing and memorializing it, has heightened. The onomastic work applied to the police agents is, therefore, connected to Modiano's ethics of citation because it subtly underlines their own ethical transgressions, preparing the reader belatedly to take on a portion of the moral responsibility that those in authority actively disdained.

Where Modiano set out to find the words of the perpetrators, he finds instead those of the victims' families. He goes on to cite the opening sentences of seven different letters, each of them written by a Jew requesting news of their interned relative or relatives—and, as Modiano stresses, these letters have been ignored “for more than half a century” (105), with no one even taking the trouble to destroy them as they did the reports. As the above citation indicates, Modiano himself does not characterize the authors in any manner, not even by a subject pronoun (the letters are “addressed” but he identifies no one as having done the addressing), displacing his discussion of their writing entirely onto the documents themselves, a further manifestation of the ethics of responsibility. Each of these letters begins respectfully with either “Monsieur le Préfet” ‘Dear Commissioner’ or “Monsieur le directeur” ‘Dear Sir/Dear Mr. Director’ (105-06). The requests they introduce have an intense, forlorn politeness, phrased in terms such as “J’ai l’honneur de solliciter de votre haute bienveillance et de votre générosité. . . .” (105) ‘It’s an honor to request, from your great goodwill and your generosity. . . .’ and concern primarily arrested children, from Albert Graudens to Paulette Gothelf. Citing them helps both to situate Dora’s arrest within those of the thousands of other children who met the same fate and painfully to accentuate the contrast between the behavior of the letter writers and that of their tormentors.

By the vicissitudes of the archive, then, the words of the police have been overwritten by the words of their victims. The term “victims” applies because, even though these letters are written by individuals asking after their relatives, the Bruders’ own story underlines that the letter writers will almost certainly have been arrested in their turn, and we must conclude that few if any will have survived the war. Yet the fact that Modiano chooses these particular documents to cite is especially significant on the level of subject position. The letter writers combine

aspects of Modiano's own role in the text and that of Dora Bruder. Like the author, they seek the truth of the disappeared, and their emotional investment in that search is even greater than his own. But like Dora, they are themselves Parisian Jews during World War II, at the mercy of the authorities, and have all but vanished from the historical record except in brief fragments such as those Modiano shares with us.

Both seekers and sought, the seven letter writers bridge the divide between Modiano and the objects of his inquiries, condensing their roles in the text of *Dora Bruder* into a single identity and subject position. Thus they offer an alternative to the destruction of the police reports and constitute a different archive more suited to the postmemorial work of the professional novelist. Hirsch's description of artists' archives indirectly captures the nature of Modiano's citation: "In a consciously reparative move, they assemble collections that function as correctives and additions, rather than counters, to the historical archive, attempting to undo the ruptures caused by war and genocide" (228). In giving his pages over to the letters of the forgotten, Modiano combats the feeling that had afflicted him in writing *Dora Bruder*, "l'impression d'être tout seul à faire le lien entre le Paris de ce temps-là et celui d'aujourd'hui, le seul à me souvenir de tous ces détails" (76) 'the feeling of being all alone in making the link between the Paris of that time and the Paris of today, the only one to remember all these details.'

Although the focus of this article is the texts of Jewish letter writers, *Dora Bruder* is laden with citations of other kinds throughout. To take but one example, Alan Morris, in analyzing the substantial changes between the original 1997 edition and the 1999 paperback, has pointed out that the original brief mention of the Bruder parents' marriage has, in the latter edition, "been replaced by a statement of where the ceremony actually did take place plus a full (20-line) transcription of the *acte de mariage*" (272). The relationship between the letters and the other citations cannot properly be examined here, but my reason for focusing on the former is the additional set of subjectivities they contribute to the text, which allows us to explore the phenomenology of citation and its ethical implications.

Modiano is, then, potentially no longer alone for two reasons: the voices of the letter writers still echo across the decades, and he himself is appealing to the contemporary reader's aid in receiving and preserving those echoes. For this reason, Modiano's ethics of citation as it pertains to these letters, and to one other wartime letter to be discussed below, is best characterized through the term "responsibility." It is by no means novel to emphasize responsibility's preeminence in *Dora Bruder*. Notably, Cooke has shown that "the voice of the narrating 'je' ['I'] is very conscious of the responsibility invested in it, and of the fact that it is functioning as a delegate for voices that have been silenced" (284). Applying the concept to these citations has three outcomes on my reading: it provides the clearest evidence of the ethics of responsibility pervading the text, highlights the contrast between this

ethical stance and the one that had been adopted by Perec, and also urges reflection on the relationship between responsibility and postmemory.

There is a dual responsibility in passages such as those of the relatives' letters. The first is the author's responsibility to reproduce the relatives' words, to combat the historical erasure applied to these people by, as the book's final words say regarding Dora, "tout ce qui vous souille et vous détruit" (167) 'everything that soils and destroys you.' Yet, as this one final use of the second person plural further emphasizes, Modiano never allows the past to be sundered from the present in *Dora Bruder*, and part of that refusal is the involvement of the reader's own responsibility towards the dead: "it is we, who were not yet born then, who are their addressees and their guardians" (105).

To return to Compagnon's theory of citation, as discussed above, its two chief phenomenological components are the original text's power to compel inclusion in the new work through solicitation and the attendant mental states involved. It should be clear that the former is highly descriptive of Modiano's enrollment of the Jewish letter writers: their writings call out to him once discovered, and the long sequence of citations that he includes in *Dora Bruder* is evidence of their hold over him. Furthermore, without the appellate power of his citations, the work of bringing the reader into the postmemorial process would be severely vitiated. Therefore in *Dora Bruder*, unlike in the abstract case Compagnon discusses, the solicitation is both direct and indirect. The archival citations Modiano inserts into his text have already solicited his attention and investment (the level of reading phenomenology described in *La Seconde main*), and he is now transmitting them to his readership in the hope and expectation that the process will repeat itself. In this sense, solicitation can be identified as an essential part of the particular ethics of citation in *Dora Bruder*. Compagnon's ideas inform our understanding of the text by emphasizing the importance of phenomenology to the work of citation; in consequence, the uniqueness of the tripartite phenomenological community—Shoah victims, author, and readers—created in *Dora Bruder* stands out more clearly.

Solicitation does not operate in a vacuum. Compagnon garlands its discussion with terms such as "passion," "plaisir," and even "extase" ('passion,' 'pleasure,' and 'ecstasy,' 26), suggesting that solicitation functions, for orthodox literary citation, on a libidinal level. However, the libidinal shadings Compagnon gives this process are completely inappropriate to the case of Modiano. Emotion and affect of other varieties must be substituted for passion, pleasure, and ecstasy. For Modiano is undoubtedly, despite the sparseness of an explicitly affective lexicon in *Dora Bruder*, intent on provoking and sustaining such reactions in the reader and on conjuring some echo of Dora's own feelings in 1941 and 1942. The reader's desire has nothing in common with *eros*, but it is a form of desire. Grounded in the empathetic embrace of the lost, it is what drives the reading process

in *Dora Bruder* in the absence of a conventional plot. (At the very least, we can say that this is the reaction of Modiano's ideal reader, though individual responses may vary in practice.)

When pleasure and ecstasy are supplanted by empathy and responsibility, the basis for a phenomenology of reading in *Dora Bruder* is established. In the process, *eros* is supplanted by *pathos* with respect to Compagnon's original theory. (He does not use these terms, but such is the difference between his account and the one that makes sense of *Dora Bruder*.) In other words, by virtue of its subject matter and the specific appeal it makes to its readers, Modiano has produced a work that transcends Compagnon's phenomenology of citation, adding a dimension of responsibility and empathy. The process of citation, and the hold that the cited text has over the writer, align here with what Compagnon observed in his study. But, because of the singularity of the subject matter and the particular relationship between Modiano and those he writes about, the mental states that accompany the work of citation are radically different.

The other major eyewitness citation in the pages of *Dora Bruder* is another letter, written by a prisoner called Robert Tartakovsky in the Drancy internment camp in 1942. Unlike the seven other letters already discussed, Modiano cites it in full. Its composition spans two consecutive days, the 19th and 20th of July 1942, and it is addressed to Tartakovsky's wife while also including numerous comments and thoughts intended for other members of his family. The letter thus presents significant differences with those cited earlier by Modiano. It is not an ignored entreaty to the authorities, but rather a missive to loved ones that, while attempting to reassure them about the author's plight, captures the mounting dread in the camp, feelings more poignant for the reader because of the knowledge of what followed. And here, Modiano does not offer any ethical commentary whatsoever: as with the seven earlier letters, he explains where he found the document (in this case a bookseller by the Seine), but unlike with those citations, does not discuss either the reader's or his own relation to it. He simply states: "Je recopie sa lettre, ce mercredi 29 janvier 1997, cinquante-cinq ans après" (148) 'I am reproducing his letter, this Wednesday the 29th of January 1997, fifty-five years later.'

But is this formal, textual difference also an ethical one? Are we to regard this letter differently from the others on account of its distinct presentation? We should not, and Modiano does not intend us to. The fact that he would devote around five pages of a short book to the transcription of another writer's words immediately suggests that responsibility is, once again, at the forefront of his writing, this time on a structural rather than a rhetorical level. The quiet dignity and composure of Tartakovsky's words unwittingly launch an ethical entreaty to Modiano's readers in a manner that needs no framing, but the novelist's insistence on noting the date on which he transposed them into *Dora Bruder* nevertheless provides a memorializing function.

This is not the only significance of the Tartakovsky letter. Although it does not directly relate to a discussion of the ethics of citation, an essential part of *Dora Bruder* is Modiano's quest to understand his father. As Cooke notes, "Albert appears in roughly one third of the sections" (286), and Denis Cosnard suggests that "l'écrivain recherche presque autant son père que Dora" (231) 'The author is searching for his father almost as much as he seeks Dora.' Neither the documents relating to Dora nor the letters analyzed here assist directly in this quest. However, Robert Tartakovsky provides a painful counterpart/counterexample to Albert Modiano as he is portrayed by his son, in other words an emotionally cold and distant man who eventually disappeared from Patrick's life. Tartakovsky's letter, as noted, addresses his wife and family, and despite the extreme nature of his circumstances, the deportee movingly maintains a tone of calm reassurance in describing his plight in sentences such as "si vous n'avez pas de nouvelles, ne vous inquiétez pas, au besoin adressez-vous à la Croix-Rouge" (149) 'If you receive no news, don't worry, and if necessary ask the Red Cross.' As such, he marks a difference with Albert Modiano, who himself escaped the deportations, according to his son, through a combination of luck, initiative, and, perhaps, sympathetic contacts with the authorities. Tartakovsky fulfills his responsibilities towards his family even though almost every other aspect of his agency has been taken away. In contrast, Modiano makes space in *Dora Bruder* to recall a domestic incident from his teenage years, in which his father called the Parisian police on him and gloweringly accompanied him to the station in much the same *panier à salade* (slang for 'police wagon') used to round up Jews and others during the war. Tartakovsky fulfills his duties as paterfamilias despite police persecution; Modiano *père* unleashes a (much lesser) version of it on his son as a means of discipline.

Thus, applying the ethical concept of responsibility to the Tartakovsky letter reveals that this document is the clearest example of the double nature of responsibility in Modiano's citations and that Albert Modiano can be detected in counter-relief even in passages of *Dora Bruder* in which he does not figure explicitly. He is, in Johnnie Gratton's words, "a persistent if ever-ghostly presence" (41). As we read Tartakovsky's words to his family, Modiano challenges us to assume the lesser, but still vital, responsibility of preserving his memory and those of the other victims.

Compagnon remarks that "la substance de la lecture (solicitation et excitation) est la citation; la substance de l'écriture (réécriture) est encore la citation. Toute pratique du texte est toujours citation, et c'est pourquoi, de la citation, aucune définition n'est possible. Elle appartient à l'origine, elle est une souvenance de l'origine" (34) 'The substance of reading (solicitation and excitation) is citation; the substance of writing (rewriting) is also citation. Every textual practice is always citation, and this is why, for citation, no definition is possible. It belongs to the origin, it is a remembrance of the origin.' These words are noteworthy, for our

purposes, in two ways. Compagnon's claim of the impossibility of defining citation may seem easily refutable by picking up the *Larousse*, but it does lead into a question that the present analysis cannot leave unanswered: do letters such as Tartakovsky's represent conventional citation? *La Seconde main* takes as its focus the explanation of literary citation, of the use of one published text in a later one. But, of course, those writing letters to the authorities, or to loved ones, during the Occupation never intended for their words to end up in print more than a half-century later.

This difference helps explain why Compagnon's reflections on citation require adaptation before they can make sense of *Dora Bruder*. Because the words of Tartakovsky and the other letter writers must be brought into the transhistorical network of publication by Modiano himself, the "remembrance of the origin" alluded to by Compagnon no longer refers to a literary origin. Instead, it refers to the lives lived in, and in many cases cut short by, the shadow of Nazism. The foremost among these, Dora's, is the origin of the text through another citation, the missing person notice that features on the first page of the book and that is the impulse for the entire, more than decade-long, project.⁴ The author's citations of the letters serve to connect his writing not only to the original texts, but also, and more importantly, to the lives of the dead who wrote them. At every turn, he is attempting to resurrect the lost origins (the traces of lives) from which the book began and, in the process, to combat his fear regarding the link between present and wartime past: "Par moments, le lien s'amenuise et risque de se rompre, d'autres soirs la ville d'hier m'apparaît en reflets furtifs derrière celle d'aujourd'hui" (76) 'At times, the link weakens and is in danger of breaking, but on other evenings the city of yesteryear reveals itself to me in furtive glimmers behind the city of today.' The work of citation joins his peregrinations in the relevant sites of Paris as a means of grasping those "furtive glimmers." Akane Kawakami has described the physical locations of the city in which the link between past and present is strongest for Modiano as "gateways" (260), and we might read the letters as another form of gateway, one which must be kept open through the ethics of responsibility.

A very different set of concerns informs Georges Perec's use of citation in the final chapter, numbered XXXVII, of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*. There, he introduces a citation from David Rousset's *L'Univers concentrationnaire (The Other Kingdom)*, published in 1946 and, as such, one of the first analyses and testimonies of the Nazi camps. As with the wartime letters employed by Modiano, Rousset infuses the authority of an eyewitness deportee in a work whose author stands in a complex and distanced relationship to the crimes described. However, in sharp contrast, Rousset's book won the Prix Renaudot, one of France's most prestigious literary awards, and continues to be read today for the power of its portrayal and the nature of its insights. Moreover (and, as will be seen, this difference is essential to understanding what Perec does with the citation), Rousset

was not Jewish: he was deported for his participation in the Resistance and held primarily in Buchenwald and Neuengamme. Therefore, Perec is citing a published author rather than a private individual, a political prisoner rather than a Shoah victim, and a survivor rather than someone who lost their life in the camps. This set of differences produces, in its turn, a different ethics of citation.

In the first chapter on his childhood, Perec had informed the reader that: “À treize ans, j’inventai, racontai et dessinai une histoire. Plus tard, je l’oubliai. Il y a sept ans, un soir, à Venise, je me souvins tout à coup que cette histoire s’appelait ‘W’ et qu’elle était, d’une certaine façon, sinon l’histoire, du moins une histoire de mon enfance” (17-18) ‘At the age of thirteen, I invented, told and illustrated a story. Later on, I forgot it. Seven years ago, one evening in Venice, I suddenly remembered that the story was called “W” and that it was, after a fashion, if not the story, then at least a story of my childhood.’ The fictional, pseudo-ethnographic half of the book is thus presented as the resurrection of a long-forgotten story, which, for the author, contains some elements of the truth of his own childhood. Consequently, *W ou le souvenir d’enfance* is, more generally, a work of self-citation, of the adolescent Perec’s inchoate version of the same story. Rousset’s writing contrasts significantly with this previously lost origin.

This is the context for the late appearance of *L’Univers concentrationnaire* in Perec’s text. The thirty-six preceding chapters have, save for the passage just cited, rigorously divided the autobiographical and W sections of the book, allowing them no points of contact. Of course, few readers are taken in by this division, recognizing the allegorical nature of the account of W and its disguised references to the camps. Citing Rousset makes the allegory explicit, for he describes the practices he witnessed and endured there in structural terms: “La structure des camps de répression est commandée par deux orientations fondamentales: pas de travail, du ‘sport,’ une dérision de nourriture” (221) ‘The structure of the repression camps is dictated by two fundamental orientations: no work, but rather “sport,” and derisory nutrition.’

The awful parody of sporting activity and the insufficiency of food have already been underlined as vital to the imagined land of W: “Les Athlètes sont donc, d’une façon permanente, soumis à un régime de carence qui, à plus ou moins long terme, risque de compromettre sérieusement leur résistance à la fatigue musculaire” (127) ‘The Athletes are thus permanently subjected to a deficient diet which, over the medium to long term, is in danger of seriously compromising their resistance to muscle fatigue.’ Strikingly, Perec tells us that he discovered Rousset’s writing, which seems to provide the key not only to the structure of the Nazi camps but also to the structure of *W ou le souvenir d’enfance*, “des années et des années plus tard” (221) ‘years and years later’ after having devised his tale concerning W. As noted above, for Modiano, citing the Jewish letter writers allowed him to combine his own subject position with that of Dora Bruder, to fuse the two perspectives crucial

to the composition of his book. For Perec, the two halves of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* are much more clearly marked than in Modiano's considerably looser structural organization, which lacks clear chapters and moves much more fluidly between time frames, as Schulte Nordholt has observed: "Dans *Dora Bruder*, les glissements temporels sont incessants: au sein d'une meme phrase parfois, on glisse de 1941 à 1996, à 1957, 1965, 1988 . . ." (82) 'In *Dora Bruder*, the temporal slippages are incessant: sometimes within the same sentence, we slip from 1941 to 1996, to 1957, 1965, 1988 . . .'

Yet the citation of Rousset nevertheless creates a similar fusion within Perec's text. As with Modiano, it happens through the words of one who lived the events from which the author was himself separated. While Modiano was temporally distanced from the war by his birth in 1945, Perec was spatially distanced from it, having been sent into hiding in the Alps while his mother remained in Paris. Rousset's testimony as a survivor provides the authority of lived experience that Perec himself tries and ultimately fails to access through his own writing; in this sense it completes the work done in the autobiographical chapters of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*. Philippe Lejeune's genetic research into *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* has shown that chapter XXXVII is a late addition to the text, produced after "le manuscrit proprement dit" 'the manuscript proper' in a series of typewritten sheets; he comments that "la citation de David Rousset . . . nou[e] de manière fulgurante les différents fils du livre" (100) 'the citation of David Rousset . . . ties together the book's different strands in dazzling fashion.' One wishes that Lejeune had expanded on this comment, not least because *fulgurant*, derived from the Latin *fulgur* ('lightning flash'), has a range of literal and figurative meanings in French ranging from ocular blinding to searing pain to lightning speed, each of which could be taken as significant in this context. Similarly allusively, Warren Motte observes that "il s'opère dans le texte un phénomène de convergence, car le *telos* des deux récits est l'univers concentrationnaire" (76) 'a phenomenon of convergence is at work in the text, for the *telos* of both narratives is the concentrationary universe,' thereby acknowledging Rousset's presence without discussing it directly.

Using Rousset grounds the allegory of the W chapters in the historical actions of the Nazi regime: Jeanne Bem observes that "cette citation est comme un miroir qui redresserait l'image ambiguë des descriptions de l'île W" (39) 'this citation is like a mirror that somehow corrects the ambiguous image of the isle of W and its descriptions.' Max Silverman, meanwhile, has suggested that "the quote at the end of the text from David Rousset's famous *L'Univers concentrationnaire* can be read as a condensation of different contexts rather than the designation of the Holocaust as the only marker of dehumanization and loss" (423). Silverman's concern is to connect the Nazi camps to the wider history of imperialist practices, but this connection is, although thought-provoking, problematic if the

uniquely barbaric nature of the Holocaust is not reaffirmed. My concern is rather to underline the internal condensation that citing Rousset performs within the pages of Perec's work, a connection not primarily between historical atrocities but between textual elements.

Perec and Modiano alike, then, use citation of wartime victims to distill different aspects of their writing into the relevant passages. But this does not mean that Perec's ethics of citation in *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* is equivalent to Modiano's use of "responsibility" in *Dora Bruder*. Instead of "responsibility," we should substitute the term "resonance" to describe the status of Rousset's words in Perec's final chapter. As indicated, the citation was introduced by Perec's assertion that he discovered it late in the process of elaborating the world of *W*; in other words, it is presented as confirming a truth already arrived at by other means. And, once the Rousset excerpt has concluded, Perec ends with a short paragraph that brings his book into the present of its composition: "J'ai oublié les raisons qui, à douze ans, m'ont fait choisir la Terre du Feu pour y installer *W*: les fascistes de Pinochet se sont chargés de donner à mon fantasme une ultime résonance: plusieurs îlots de la Terre de Feu sont aujourd'hui des camps de déportation" (222) 'I have forgotten what drove me, at age twelve, to choose Tierra del Fuego as the location for *W*: Pinochet's fascists have taken it upon themselves to give my fantasy a final resonance: numerous islets of Tierra del Fuego are today being used as deportation camps.' Thus, just as Rousset has already provided an articulation point for the two halves of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*, the autobiography and the ethnography, the passage from *L'Univers concentrationnaire* itself becomes articulated with Pinochet's camps of the 1970s. The point of articulation is Perec's final failure to recall a detail from his childhood, this time why he chose Tierra del Fuego as the location for *W*. Perec is clearly not equating Pinochet's regime with that of Hitler, despite the use of *fascistes* to describe his henchmen. Nevertheless, the author seems struck by the fainter echo of World War II in contemporary human rights abuses, a "final resonance" to set alongside the biographical and structural examples found earlier in the book.

In two different ways, then, citing Rousset sets up resonances within the text of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*, and Perec explicitly uses the noun *résonance* in concluding the book. The internal resonance between the work's halves is joined by the resonance between Perec's fictional land and the abuses of the Chilean dictatorship, between the allegory of the Second World War and the contemporary history of South America. Not only does Perec describe these parallels as *résonance*, but he also refers to his *fantasme* ('fantasy'), which evokes another aspect of Compagnon's *La Seconde main*. There, the theorist states that "citant, faisant intervenir un dehors de l'écriture, introduisant un partenaire symbolique, je tente d'échapper, autant que possible, au fantasme et à l'imaginaire" (40) 'By citing, by involving an outside to my writing, by introducing a symbolic partner, I

am attempting to escape, as far as possible, from fantasy and the imaginary.’ Rousset, ‘symbolic partner’ to Perec in the final two pages of his book, confirms that the imaginary world of W is scarcely imaginary at all and that its lessons are both real and enduring. By including the words of an eyewitness at the last, Perec legitimates the allegorical treatment of the camps that had gone before, and by conjoining the citation with a reference to Pinochet, the allegory’s reference moves beyond the 1940s alone to find an echo in the present of composition.

Thus resonance becomes an ethical category. It allows transcendence of the particular to the general, moving from Perec’s own family history and the wartime years to other lives and other crises. Both Rousset’s structural analysis, which transcends his individual lived experience to instruct the reader in the grim mechanisms that produced it, and the historical reality of the 1970s which provide the backdrop to Perec’s final version of the W story, illustrate this movement from particular to general, and both are explicitly textually connected to the concept of resonance. Using *L’Univers concentrationnaire* in the final two pages allows Perec to refigure the structural divides that have characterized the first thirty-six chapters. No longer does *W ou le souvenir d’enfance* jump from autobiography to allegory and back on a strict schedule: the fusion of the lived experience of the war and the abstract analysis of the concentration camps occurs as an apotheosis made possible by using Rousset’s words rather than Perec’s own.

The supersession of the particular by the general is also detectable in Perec’s work of citation. For, in fact, Rousset did not write that “la structure des camps de répression est commandée par deux orientations fondamentales” (221). As David Bellos has underlined (551), the original text reads: “La structure des camps comme Neue-Bremm, près de Sarrebrück, de répression contre Aryens, est commandée par deux orientations fondamentales” (48) ‘The structure of torture camps designed for Aryans, such as Neue-Bremm near Saarbrücken, is dictated by two fundamental orientations.’ Perec modifies the opening sentence of the citation (which is otherwise transposed verbatim) to remove the reference both to Neue-Bremm and to “Aryans,” leaving the more global “camps de répression.”

To note the change is not to critique Perec; citation purists may find the lack of acknowledgement uncomfortable, but such is not my perspective. Rather, the difference between Perec’s version and Rousset’s original further foregrounds the importance of resonance as an ethical and hermeneutic category in *W ou le souvenir d’enfance*. Perec is willing to alter the specifics of *L’Univers concentrationnaire* in order to create a more resounding echo with his own family history and with the extermination camps, such as Auschwitz, rather than solely with torture camps such as Neue-Bremm, which were not used in the Holocaust. As with the reference to Pinochet’s camps, Perec uses Rousset to show that his fiction of W, just like his memories of childhood, has a resonance beyond the covers of his book or the branches of his family tree.

The additional universality that Perec adds to Rousset's words in transcribing them into *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* stands in sharp contrast to the fragmentary and often inconsistent memories that have featured in the preceding autobiographical chapters. Just as Modiano's ethical stance towards citation is also an attempt to bridge the divide separating him from his father, so Perec's appeal to resonance is not solely a universal question of connecting the different victims of totalitarianism. It is also a means of countering the insufficiency of his own memories, the pain of his separation from his mother at the Gare de Lyon. But, in citing a political detainee who survived the war and was never held in an extermination camp, and by using words that originally described the treatment of "Aryans," Perec also erases the specific torment and genocide of the Jewish people. In compensating for his lack of first-hand knowledge, he repeats the loss of his own Jewishness on the level of the book as a whole. The ethics of resonance thus bring with them a challenging ethical implication: that, for Perec, the Holocaust can only be described if its universalization effaces Jewishness, whether his own family story or the unique horrors of the extermination camps.

To return to Perec's membership in the Oulipo, we might conclude that citing Rousset is also an abandonment of the loosely Oulipian principles that had informed the composition of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* until that point. Perec himself refers to these principles as "l'artifice d'une écriture exclusivement préoccupée de dresser ses remparts" (58) 'the artifice of a text that is concerned solely with building its own ramparts.' Kristy Guneratne suggests that the notion of *clinamen*, originating in Lucretius's philosophy, can describe both some aspects of Perec's Oulipian writing and his "negotiation with traumatic memory" in *W ou le souvenir d'enfance* (29). Motte, meanwhile, has called Perec's oeuvre as a whole, in introducing a reading of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*, "une écriture du désastre qui traduit la catastrophe et la contrainte qu'elle impose" (75) 'A writing of disaster, which translates catastrophe and the constraints it imposes.' The separation of autobiography from allegory, the distinction between direct and indirect discussion of the war and the genocide, the boundary between clouded memory and dark fantasy, the alternation of chapters: these are all undermined and conflated in chapter XXXVII by the hybrid significance of the borrowings from *L'Univers concentrationnaire*. The search for resonance, therefore, further entails recusal of Perec's Oulipian literary identity along with his Jewish identity.

This is particularly striking because it is strikingly particular to Perec: in the years preceding the publication of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*, French historical consciousness had moved in the opposite direction. Samuel Moyn has explored the importance of Jean-François Steiner's incendiary 1966 book *Treblinka: la révolte d'un camp d'extermination* (*Treblinka: The Revolt of an Extermination Camp*). Moyn argues that Steiner helped trigger "a shift in French post-Holocaust culture . . . from a broadly universalist (and often antifascist) paradigm that assimilated the

Holocaust to other Nazi crimes . . . to a new regime of memory in which the Holocaust received specific attention as a phenomenon in its own right” (2). Almost a decade later, the modification of Rousset’s text to conflate concentration and extermination camps, and simultaneously to conflate the treatment of Jewish and “Aryan” prisoners, indicates that *Wou le souvenir d’enfance* resists the paradigm shift taking place in France, refusing to participate in the “new regime of memory.” The fact that Rousset proved to be Steiner’s “most vociferous antagonist” (Moyn 48) in the polemics that erupted after the publication of *Treblinka* helps to underline this point. Bellos points out that, for a range of reasons including his secular upbringing, tenuous childhood memories and espousal of left-wing culture, Perec “put his own Jewishness in the category of purely contingent facts,” and that in “*Wou le souvenir d’enfance*, the simultaneous assertion and denial of Jewishness is a fundamental if largely hidden feature of the book” (279). But consideration of the post-1966 cultural context in which the Holocaust was viewed as he completed *Wou le souvenir d’enfance* underlines just how much writerly effort was required to reaffirm that contingency and the extent to which the universalizing gestures of chapter XXXVII raise as many questions as they resolve.

A final question suggests itself: why the distinction between resonance and responsibility when Perec is contrasted with Modiano? As we have seen, Suleiman uses Perec as archetypal of the 1.5 generation in elaborating her definition of it. And, in a different piece on *Dora Bruder*, she suggests that “Modiano’s relation to the Holocaust, and to *Dora Bruder* . . . qualifies as a perfect example of postmemory as Hirsch defines it” (“Oneself as Other” 345 footnote 7). Suleiman is by no means the only critic to link *Dora Bruder* to Hirsch’s ideas: Sven-Erik Rose has done so by connecting postmemory with surrealist aesthetics, describing Modiano’s writing as “both paradigmatic of postmemory and highly evocative of, and indebted to, surrealist epistemo-esthetic experimentation.” Gratton sees Modiano’s engagement with postmemory as “metaphorizing personal memory via the memory of the other,” developing a concept he terms ‘paramemory’ to describe the process (43).

Is the answer to the distinction between the two authors as simple as the distinction between the 1.5 generation into which Perec falls and the generation of postmemory exemplified by Modiano? Put another way, is a citational ethics of resonance, on the one hand, and of responsibility, on the other, a natural or logical consequence of the two authors’ generational statuses? How do we infer the precise implications of their statuses for the practice of citation when writing on the Shoah? For Modiano, the ethics of responsibility is a confirmation of his postmemorial work elsewhere in the text, while also marking a departure from it. Recall that Hirsch characterizes the work of postmemory as being founded on “representation, projection, and creation.” In his citations of the letters, Modiano privileges the former, but questions of projection and creation are far less clear. The sparse language and commentary furnished by Modiano himself in these passages imply

a deliberate suppression of the creative impulse in order better to accomplish the custodial task he identifies. Furthermore, the notion of guardianship has an ambiguous relationship to projection, particularly where the letters are concerned. The writers are lost to the crimes of the past, and Modiano urges us to the relatively simpler task of preserving the memory of their documents, leaving unstated the fact that any projection of his or our consciousness into those of the letter writers is radically inadequate and incomplete: their trauma lies out of reach.

These citations, and their ethics of responsibility, are thus substantially different from those passages describing Modiano's visits to the Bruder family's former dwellings or speculating on Dora's mentality when fleeing her parents or her school. When surrendering his book to the words of the victims, Modiano also sets aside the claims made elsewhere in *Dora Bruder* to writerly *voyance* ('clairvoyance'), a term which, as Gratton has argued, is closely bound up with postmemory (44). In so doing, he opens up a wider space into which the reader might enter, to share the duty of remembrance.

As suggested above, Perec's final citation of Rousset, and the explicit ascription of "resonance" to it, also seem to distinguish this passage from the rest of the book, but in a very different way. Where Modiano's citations mark a step away from the postmemorial "creation" and "projection" diagnosed by Hirsch, Perec's use of Rousset is an attempt to transcend the "bewilderment" and "helplessness" Suleiman sees in him and other members of his generation. As Steven Jaron puts it, "the aporia . . . of not knowing how to express what one has experienced while at the same time needing to express that experience, is at the centre of Georges Perec's preoccupation with autobiography" (215). *L'Univers concentrationnaire* offers an escape from that aporia. Rousset's clinical analysis of the mechanisms of the camps combats bewilderment, and the authority of his status as a deportee, survivor, and writer defies the abuses of Nazism, reclaiming agency from helplessness. As noted, however, these reversals shift the emphasis of Perec's conclusion away from Jewish identity, both for himself as an individual and in the description of the Holocaust as a historical phenomenon.

Whether the reader chooses to view this conclusion as a successful supersession of trauma through the process of universalization, or conversely as a new form of loss that affirms the impossibility of using others' words to escape the predicament of the 1.5 generation, is perhaps an open question. What can be said is that, to a greater extent than Modiano's ethics of responsibility, Perec's ethics of resonance seem to concatenate new ethical questions that exceed the boundaries of the text, even as they purport to hold the key to the previous thirty-six chapters of *W ou le souvenir d'enfance*. Where Moyn stresses the importance of Steiner's *Treblinka* in 1966 as a catalyst for the shifting French view of the Holocaust that Perec resisted embracing, Rosemarie Scullion has argued (somewhat ironically for our purposes) that Modiano's equally incendiary first novel *La Place de l'étoile*

(*The Occupation Trilogy: La Place de l'étoile*) two years later played a similar role. Scullion points out that “Perec appears not to have been fazed by either Modiano’s writing or by the steady stream of revelations concerning French complicity in the Holocaust” (111), but close attention to the final chapter of *W ou le souvenir d’enfance* makes her point litotic in its mildness: Perec is not only unfazed, but performs a writerly operation that actively contravenes the historical revelations and reconceptions of the preceding decade.

We can conclude by noting that, for all their ambiguities and differences, these two works share a complex negotiation of the two distinct, but equally profound, divides that separate them from the objects of their literary inquiry. In relying on citations of non-literary origin that describe Nazi crimes firsthand, they complicate an orthodox understanding of literary citation as found in Compagnon’s work, underlining that the ethics of the process are contextual, highly sensitive to the subject being addressed and the author’s perspective thereon. The superficially similar, yet substantially different, motivations and techniques that each author brought to his work generate the respective ethics of responsibility and resonance: in so doing, they offer us a new means of apprehending how the contrast between Hirsch’s postmemory and Suleiman’s 1.5 generation plays out in the realm of literature. Further scholarship might address the question of whether other, as-yet-unexamined, ethical stances can be found in other works using citation to work through tragedy and what other mechanisms govern the interaction between the author’s psychology and the gravity of the events being described. The use of others’ texts (the Jewish victims for Modiano, Rousset’s analysis for Perec) allows a condensation of *Dora Bruder*’s and *W ou le souvenir d’enfance*’s divided structures, underlining that for both authors, the trauma of “the war, the camps” cannot be written alone.

Notes

1. While I am quoting from Modiano “Avec Klarsfeld,” this article was first published in *Libération*, Wednesday November 2, 1994.
2. Compagnon cites, as a striking example of solicitation, the minor scandal that erupted over the reader of a literary review in 1930s France. The man, a forest ranger, wrote in to declare that his library was composed not of major works but of excerpts that he had idiosyncratically cut out of them, including writings by Céline, Baudelaire, and Corneille (Compagnon 27-28; original letter published in *Le Bulletin des lettres* [*The Literary Bulletin*], January 25 1933). Respectively wry and disdainful responses from Céline himself and the literary critic Émile Zavie testify

to the questions generated when the personal solicitation underlying citation gives rise to discussion in the public sphere.

3. All translations are my own.

4. As Morris has shown, Modiano's work on *Dora Bruder* continued in revisions to the 1999 paperback, marking eleven years from when he discovered the notice.

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