in her early essay "On Psychological Oppression," where she draws parallels between the mechanisms used for maintaining systems of race and gender oppression.) I strongly recommend that all feminist students and scholars read *Femininity and Domination.*

LESLIE THIELEN-WILSON

Thomas Trezise. *Into The Breach: Samuel Beckett and the Ends of Literature.* Princeton: Princeton UP, 1990. pp. xi, 176. $27.50.

The title of Trezise's study of Beckett's trilogy does not allude to the battle-cry "once more unto the breach, dear friends," from *Henry V* (in which case the title might seem to call for a renewed critical assault upon Beckett's fortified position), but refers instead to a breach within the self, the constitutive lack for which both Georges Bataille and Gilles Deleuze use the term *fêlure* (fault). Trezise's topic is the conception of subjectivity implicit within the trilogy *Molloy, Malone Dies, The Unnamable.* An understanding of this issue, he argues, challenges one entire line of Beckett criticism: that which sees Beckett's work as a roundabout affirmation of the human spirit in spite of all the difficulties of knowing, representing, and communicating which loom so large in the plays and the fiction. The goal of re-establishing Beckett criticism on the basis of a non-essentialist idea of the subject forms the core of Trezise's concern with "the ends of literature" (or the ends it has been made to serve). He argues that "the various ways in which Beckett's fundamentally critical work has been recuperated all rely on an unexamined notion of the human subject," thus becoming "exercises in ideology" (ix). To offer a more thoroughly examined view of the human subject, Trezise draws upon such theorists of the self, language, and literature as Freud, Bataille, Blanchot, Deleuze, and Derrida.

This focus on subjectivity is appropriate since in his trilogy of novels Beckett explores a first-person narrator- protagonist who "writes himself" to make up the text. Trezise's study traces the resemblance between the (for Beckett's protagonist) "problematic origin" of such a first person, and the "strange structure of the supplement" within the Derridean economy of signification. Briefly, just as signification produces "consciousness or the for-itself" and yet appears to be an effect of consciousness, so intersubjectivity produces the effect of a separated subject, who then construes intersubjectivity as a space between separated subjects. The space between, in this view, is a projection of an inner incompleteness, while the other "outside" ourselves points up the other within. This non-self-identity has been given various names: it may be called a central lack, or a *fêlure.* For Trezise, it is this "breach" into which Beckett's writing attempts to move, as it explores the speaking first person, who, as the "subject of discourse," has become the centre of so much critical theory.

Into The Breach has three main parts. The first, "Dispossession," deals with time, specifically the way that, according to the economy of signifi-

cation and supplementarity, "the temporality of signification dispossesses the historical time of the first person," yielding "the pre-originary impersonality of the first person itself" (66). This has implications for both narratives and speakers, since if we are not (simply) ourselves, our stories are not themselves, or our own either. The second part, entitled "Impersonality," presents in some detail the "functional analogy" between the implicit conception of subjectivity in Beckett's fiction, and the accounts of subjectivity offered by Freud and Bataille, for whom *inter*subjectivity "at once condition[s] and exceed[s] subjectivity as separation" (95). The third section, "Error," takes up the question of space (raised in the Introduction), which in Beckett often becomes as indistinctly "gray" as the time of the narrative. Indeed Trezise points out that "the undoing of the distinction between time and space is at once that of the separation of inside and outside" (125), a separation upon which the idea of the "expressive" subject is based.

Trezise's short book stops far short of exhausting the possibilities that he opens up. Within its 176 pages, he offers illuminating discussions of such aspects of the trilogy as *Molloy*'s play with chronology, the aptness of Moran's status as *petit propriétaire*, and the trilogy's many metaphors of interior and exterior space, especially those linked to the narrator's position as one who speaks as if "from within" yet remains at the same time homeless and "outside." It is a shame that readers can enjoy such insights only after reading pages of the most forbidding theory-speak. Trezise's recurring need to restate his points, in a bid for the sort of clarity which does occasionally emerge, leads the reader to dread the words "or" and "in other words." The book also raises the issue of communication between French- and English-speaking Beckett scholars. Although this study addresses itself to a sophisticated, probably multilingual, readership, *Into the Breach* makes few references to relevant French criticism and theory apart from Trezise's primary interests here, Blanchot and Bataille. For instance, the utter absence of Jacques Lacan from such a study begs for some comment. In short, a larger sense of context would enrich the book, and it would be very useful to have a fuller bibliography of work, in *both* English and French, which approaches Beckett from a similar angle. However, Trezise does English-only readers of Beckett a service, by demonstrating so clearly the fundamental relevance to Beckett's work of French theorists and critics, especially Blanchot.

HARRY VANDERVLIST

Salman Rushdie. *Imaginary Homelands: Essays and Criticism 1981-1991*. London: Granta Books, 1991. pp. 432. $24.95.

The title essay of this collection, written in 1982 by a Rushdie still flush from the spectacular success of *Midnight's Children*, addresses the situation of exiled, emigrant, or expatriate writers, who, subject to the disorienting but liberating impossibility "of reclaiming precisely the