In this powerful new study Edward Baring sheds fresh light on Jacques Derrida, one of the most influential yet controversial intellectuals of the twentieth century. Reading Derrida from a historical perspective and drawing on new archival sources, The Young Derrida and French Philosophy shows how Derrida’s thought arose in the closely contested space of postwar French intellectual life, developing in response to Sartrean existentialism, religious philosophy, and the structuralism that found its base at the Ecole Normale Supérieure. In a history of the philosophical movements and academic institutions of postwar France, Baring paints a portrait of a community caught between humanism and antihumanism, providing a radically new interpretation of the genesis of deconstruction and of one of the most vibrant intellectual moments of modern times.

Edward Baring is Assistant Professor of Modern European Intellectual and Cultural History at Drew University. Educated at the University of Cambridge and Harvard University, his work was awarded the Harold K. Gross Prize by Harvard University in 2010. He has won fellowships from the DAAD, ACLS, and Mellon Foundation.
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The books in this series will discuss the emergence of intellectual traditions and of related new disciplines. The procedures, aims and vocabularies that were generated will be set in the context of the alternatives available within the contemporary frameworks of ideas and institutions. Through detailed studies of the evolution of such traditions, and their modification by different audiences, it is hoped that a new picture will form of the development of ideas in their concrete contexts. By this means, artificial distinctions between the history of philosophy, of the various sciences, of society and politics, and of literature may be seen to dissolve.

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A list of books in the series will be found at the end of the volume.
THE YOUNG DERRIDA AND FRENCH PHILOSOPHY,
1945–1968

EDWARD BARING
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A note on translations and reproductions

Throughout the book and where possible, I use and modify standard translations for the major texts I discuss. In doing so, I hope that a broader group of scholars will be able to engage substantively with my argument. All other translations are my own. I would also like to thank the editors of *Modern Intellectual History* for permission to reproduce “Humanist Pretensions: Catholics, Communists, and Sartre’s Struggle for Existentialism in Postwar France,” which appears here in revised form.