The mass persecution known as the Great Witch Hunt ravaged Europe between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries, killing more than 80,000 victims. Rogozinski’s analysis of the Witch Hunt draws on Foucault’s theory of power machineries, adding to the exclusion and discipline machineries described by Foucault a persecution machinery, the function of which is not to exclude or to normalize but to designate a group in order to exterminate it. He analyzes the role of the “Question” (the “interrogative” torture), of confession, and of exorcism in the Witch Hunt, and shows how the transformation of judicial procedures in the hunt were a consequence of the secularization of the Law and the idea of Truth.

Jacob Rogozinski is a Professor at the University of Strasbourg. His publications include Le moi et la chair (available in English as The Ego and the Flesh), Guérir la vie - la Passion de’Antonin Artaud and Cryptes de Derrida. Some of his essays have been published in English in the collections Bodies of Resistance, Heidegger and Practical Philosophy, Rethinking Facticity, Law and Evil, and The Sublime and its Teleology. His research focuses on phenomenology and “Body Politics.”

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