BOOK REVIEWS

*BRIAN T. FITCH. *À l'ombre de la littérature. Pour une théorie de la critique littéraire*. Montréal: XYZ éditeur, 2000. Pp. 354. CAN $27.95.

À l'ombre de la littérature est un ouvrage théorique dense, d'une grande érudition. L'essai, dont le titre fait allusion à *L'Ecrivain et son ombre* (1953) de Gaëtan Picon, porte sur l'activité critique, sur les rapports entre le lecteur et le texte littéraire et présente une variété de concepts fondamentaux au développement d'une herméneutique ontologique.

L'essai comprend quatre parties. La première constitue une révision d'une publication antérieure et présente un argument très convaincant sur *l'altérité du texte littéraire* et sur ses rapports avec le processus herméneutique. Fitch se penche ici sur le travail d'Emmanuel Lévinas, de Hans-Georg Gadamer et, plus important encore, de F. D. E. Schleiermacher. Fasciné par l'altérité du texte, par la résistance qu'il oppose à nos efforts pour le comprendre, le lecteur est appelé à interroger le texte. Mais l'altérité du texte provient moins de son auteur que de la nature ontologique du langage même. Or le terme *altérité* est en lui-même assez problématique et Fitch fait ressortir les diverses conceptions de *l'altérité* présentes chez Lévinas, chez Gadamer et chez Blanchot. Il utilise d'ailleurs un passage du roman *Thomas l'obscur* (Blanchot) pour illustrer de façon intéressante *l'altérité anonyme* du langage.

Fitch affirme que l'altérité du texte suscite chez le lecteur à la fois une distanciation temporelle (traditionnellement privilégiée par les herméneutiques face à des textes du passé) et une distanciation spatiale ou ontologique trop souvent négligée. La lecture constitue une *intériorisation* du langage, créant les conditions nécessaires pour un dialogue entre le lecteur et le texte. Fitch distingue entre *compréhension* et *interprétation* avant d'examiner le principe de la *pertinence* chez Todorov et de lui reprocher l'oubli de ce que Fitch appelle le critère de la *compréhensibilité*. À la fin de cette première partie, il insiste sur *l'organicité* de l'oeuvre littéraire et sur l'exclusion nécessaire de tout psychologisme et de tout élément extratextuel.

La deuxième partie, de loin la plus longue, expose les fondements historiques d'une herméneutique de la distanciation ontologique. Ainsi *Herméneutique* de Schleiermacher constitue un tournant dans l'évolution de l'herméneutique dont le domaine s'étend au texte contemporain et où l'on accorde la priorité au discours oral. Schleiermacher se détourne de la distanciation historique en faveur d'une herméneutique ontologique où la *non-compréhension* s'applique à tout texte dans son ensemble, et non à quelques mots ou passages difficiles. Fitch étudie le concept de *style* (dépendant de l'indissociabilité entre le langage et la pensée) et la distinction chez

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Schleiermacher entre *l'interprétation technique* qui demeure à l'intérieur du domaine du discours, et *l'interprétation psychologique* qui dépasse le domaine exclusivement (intra)textuel (90).

Dans le deuxième chapitre, on aborde la question de l'interprétation psychologique de Schleiermacher telle que présentée par Georges Poulet avant de traiter de façon plus approfondie l'étude de Todorov sur Schleiermacher. Selon Fitch, l'intérêt principal de la lecture de Todorov "réside dans le fait qu'elle permet d'apprécier le degré de compatibilité entre les textes de Schleiermacher et la méthodologie de la poétique moderne" (101). Mais Fitch reproche à Todorov d'avoir perdu de vue le fait que chez Schleiermacher le langage est indissociable de la pensée (108). Avec cette observation, Fitch revisite la question du style pour se pencher cette fois sur la stylistique de Spitzer dont les théories, notamment sur le langage et la pensée ainsi que sur la priorité accordée aux oeuvres contemporaines, permettent des rapprochements avec Schleiermacher. Il observe aussi que l'apport le plus important de Spitzer est d'avoir mis l'accent sur le sujet qui interroge le texte et sur le détail textuel lui fournissant un point d'entrée dans le texte tout en établissant une relation entre le texte et le critique.

Au quatrième chapitre, la discussion sur Bakhtine se fonde sur le concept de l'altérité du langage (les mots d'autrui) et sur l'unicité de tout texte/énoncé considéré comme un acte d'énonciation, unique et non-reproductible. Cette *unicité* du texte mène à une nouvelle discussion sur le style, sur l'indissociabilité de la pensée et du langage et sur la nature dialogique de la compréhension et donc de toute activité herméneutique.

Le cinquième chapitre est consacré à la valorisation de la *conscience esthétique* chez Gaëtan Picon qui dépsychologise le concept de *conscience* et prive l'auteur de toute intentionnalité. Selon Picon, la seule conscience à reconnaître est celle du lecteur (157) et il ne s'agit pas d'une conscience psychologique mais plutôt esthétique. Fitch constate chez lui la dissociation entre le langage et la pensée tout comme l'effacement de l'ontologique en faveur de l'esthétique. Il remarque que les idées de Picon mettent en cause les fondements mêmes des études génétiques.

Dans le chapitre suivant, Fitch constate que l'originalité de Rousset est d'introduire la dimension ontologique dans la discussion sur le rapport qu'entretiennent la critique et le lecteur avec le texte littéraire. Rousset, comme Schleiermacher, conçoit l'oeuvre comme un organisme et refuse donc de dépasser les limites du texte tout comme il refuse tout psychologisme. Il s'intéresse à la morphologie et au style du texte individuel dans sa singularité. Le style chez lui concerne non le détail linguistique (Spitzer) mais la structuration de l'ensemble du texte. Fitch retrouve dans cette prémisse une réécriture de l'indissociabilité du langage et de la pensée (présente aussi chez Schleiermacher et chez Spitzer).

Dans la conclusion de cette partie de l'essai, Fitch nous rappelle que c'est après Schleiermacher et donc chez ses successeurs que se fit la scission entre l'interprétation grammaticale et l'interprétation technique donnant naissance à deux grandes tendances: la poétique et le structuralisme d'une part et l'herméneutique de l'autre.

Consacrée au processus herméneutique, la troisième partie de *À l'ombre de la littérature* vise à identifier les concepts opératoires qui permettent l'analyse du métatexte critique. Cette partie débute par une étude du concept d'*horizon*, d'abord chez Pingaud où il désigne le monde du lecteur et ensuite chez Gadamer, chez Jauss et chez Iser. Gadamer fut le premier à développer ce concept d'horizon en herméneutique. Mais son horizon est relié à la temporalité, aux textes du passé et non aux textes contemporains. Et Gadamer ne s'intéresse pas au texte littéraire. Jauss, par contre, a développé le concept "d'horizon d'attente" et s'intéresse au rôle de ce dernier dans la réception des textes littéraires. Contrairement à Gadamer et à Jauss, Iser n'écarte pas la distanciation ontologique en faveur de la distanciation historique: la seule temporalité qui compte pour Iser est celle de l'acte de lecture lui-même et les continuels changements d'horizon effectués à l'intérieur de cette période de temps.

Dans le troisième chapitre, Fitch s'attarde sur le *dialogique* et examine les éléments entourant ce noyau conceptuel (*question/réponse*, *contextualisation*, *instance d'énonciation*, *horizon, avant-plan/arrière plan, familiarisation/ défamiliarisation*) afin d'en faire ressortir la parenté. Le texte est un sujet, une conscience, qui entre dans un rapport de réciprocité avec la conscience du lecteur.

Le concept de *l'appropriation* prédomine au quatrième chapitre où Fitch affirme que "tout commentaire de texte est un acte d'appropriation." L'auteur (ou le critique) attire l'attention sur Chladenius (1742) et sur son concept de *l'application* à distinguer de celui plus large de l'appropriation. Le mérite de Chladenius est de s'intéresser à tous les types de textes (juridiques, religieux, historiques et littéraires) et aux effets du langage sur le lecteur (sur sa volonté et sur son action). Le concept d'application est doté d'une acception plus large chez Gadamer que chez Chladenius. Mais en s'attachant au modèle herméneutique juridique, Gadamer oublie la matérialité du texte. Selon lui, l'acte d'application consiste en une sorte de recontextualisation du texte passé dans la situation actuelle du lecteur. Quant à Paul Ricoeur, celui-ci conçoit la *concrétisation* d'un monde imaginaire comme constituant le véritable objet de l'appropriation.

La dernière partie de *À l'ombre de la littérature* porte sur le métatexte critique. C'est ici que Fitch délaisse les concepts des autres pour apporter sa propre contribution, intéressante mais dont la moitié fut déjà publiée ailleurs. Ayant affirmé les difficultés inhérentes au terme *méta* et au terme *texte*, Fitch étudie l'interaction entre le texte premier et le *métatexte* (son commentaire) tout en insistant sur le fait que le métatexte est délimité mais pas autonome: son existence dépend de l'oeuvre littéraire commentée. Fitch note plusieurs rapports possibles entre le métatexte et le texte mais choisit de privilégier le rapport dialogique, celui où deux voix se rencontrent sur un pied d'égalité. Il se penche ensuite sur le caractère métatextuel du pastiche et de la traduction avant de se concentrer sur le métatexte critique. L'étude du pastiche démontre qu'il opère au niveau du *style d'auteur* et que le rapport entre le pastiche et le texte pastiché est de l'ordre mimétique. Fitch distingue ici entre *le style d'auteur* et *le style d'ouvrage* avant de conclure que le pastiche, par sa seule existence, élargit le domaine du *reproductible* bakhtinien (la langue) tout en révélant la reproductibilité de la part non linguistique du texte.

Consacré à la traduction, le quatrième chapitre examine l'interdépendance entre le texte-cible de la traduction et le texte-source. Fitch observe que le texte-cible est l'un des rares métatextes à attirer l'attention sur lui-même plutôt que sur le texte d'origine. Cette observation mène à une discussion sur des sujets aussi divers que la paraphrase, l'autotraduction chez Beckett, l'interaction entre l'encodage et le décodage, les stratégies onomasiologique et sémasiologique de la traduction et le parallèle que tente d'établir Paul De Man entre la traduction et la critique. C'est ici que le lecteur devient plus conscient des nombreuses digressions théoriques et conceptuelles (nécessaires ou peut-être gratuites) qui nuisent à la compréhension de l'essai de Fitch en l'alourdissant.

Le dernier chapitre porte sur le statut du métatexte critique, sur son rapport avec le texte dont il traite et sur sa réception. Fitch s'attarde sur le rôle et le statut de la citation à l'intérieur du métatexte. La citation est un métatexte à l'intérieur d'un autre métatexte et son contenu sémantique varie selon la situation d'énonciation. La citation devient ainsi "un lieu privilégié pour l'étude de la *fusion d'horizons* qui se trouve au coeur de l'acte critique comme de tout acte de lecture."

À l'ombre de la littérature présente un sujet complexe, composé d'éléments multiples et disparates et dont *l'appropriation* est parfois gênée par une certaine verbosité qui tout en visant la clarté provoque l'effet contraire. Ainsi les reprises, les redites, les mises au point en fin de chapitre, les rapprochements et les comparaisons, etc. témoignent autant de la parenté entre plusieurs concepts que des efforts faits par l'auteur pour faciliter la lecture de son texte. Pour terminer sans plus tarder notre propre *métatexte*, nous recourons à une citation de Fitch au sujet des efforts de Gaëton Picon: "l'activité critique a beaucoup en commun avec l'expérience esthétique. Ayant trait, elle aussi, au particulier que représente toute oeuvre littéraire dans son unicité, elle ne se prête pas plus, sans doute, à la théorisation — d'où, d'ailleurs, la forme hétérogène du présent ouvrage" (169). (ANNE MARIE MIRAGLIA, UNIVERSITÉ DE WATERLOO)

[*]JODEY CASTRICANO. *Cryptomimesis: The Gothic and Jacques Derrida's Ghost Writing*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001. Pp. x+166. Biblio-graphy. Index. CAN $65.00 cloth.

Since the publication of Derrida's *Specters of Marx* in 1993, part of the huge critical industry around deconstruction has devoted itself to tracing a certain thematic of ghosts and revenants in Derrida's work. There has been numerous international conferences, a book of responses to Derrida's spectral Marx, *Ghostly Demarcations,* and essay collections in literature and cultural theory, such as *Ghosts: Psychoanalysis Deconstruction History* (edited by Peter Buse and Andrew Stott). Mark Wigley and Anthony Vidler have connected Derrida's thought on the uncanny and haunting to architecture, and a lot of recent work on Gothic fiction has been informed by the present/absent, ethereal/material transgressions of Derrida's thinking about the ghost. So pervasive has this concern with spectrality been that Martin Jay recently titled a summative essay "The Uncanny Nineties." Jodey Castricano is thus contributing to a burgeoning literature.

Her title derives from what had been a relatively obscure essay by Derrida until the ghost in his work stepped out of the wings. "Fors," Derrida's 1976 introduction to Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok's *The Wolf Man's Magic Word*, explored their psychoanalytic notion of the crypt. For Abraham and Torok, the psyche could become a cemetery in which the dead could be sealed up in crypts, hidden in the unconscious mind. A kind of melancholic denial of death or loss, these living-dead could always slip round the edges of the tomb-stone, producing uncanny effects, hauntings, strange and frightening symptoms of the occupation of the self by unknown others. They later developed the idea of "transgenerational haunting," in which the secrets of one generation could be encrypted in the minds of another. This has been influential on analysts working with the children of Holocaust survivors, for instance. The ways in which Abraham and Torok developed what they called "cryptonomic" readings of texts involved the equivalent of tomb-raiding or vampire-slaying — a violent hermeneutic which broke open graves to expose the secrets of the living dead. Cryptonomics constituted a violent assault on texts too: Freud's case history of the Wolf Man was energetically de-formed and de-composed, and a different secret wrenched from the page. Derrida was less interested in the crypt as a pathology or hermeneutic of violence than as a structure in which the other always already occupies the self: that to be is to be *haunted*, and from the very beginning. This coming into being is a mournful one, and the death and memorialisation of the other has since become an important strand in Derrida's thinking.

Castricano's coinage, "cryptomimesis," exists somewhere between the metapsychology of Abraham and Torok and Derrida's more ethical and philosophical interest in the crypt. She suggests that "cryptomimesis concerns itself with the collapse, or the permeability, of the border between inside and outside, between attraction and repulsion" (27). Her basic insight is that "familiar Gothic tropes and topoi have appeared in … Derridean deconstruction" (6), and so suggests a project that might see Derrida and popular American Gothic fiction — and their very different obsessions with the return of the living dead — mutually read each other, and open new avenues. She is tempted, but just about holds back, from proposing that Derrida might be thought of as a "Gothic novelist" (26).

Castricano's claims that this is a radical new departure and that it is inherently transgressive to think Derrida and the low pleasures of the Gothic together are both over-stated. Indeed, given the fascinatingly spooky materials at hand, *Cryptomimesis* proves a disappointing and frustrating book. The principal problem, for this reviewer, was the attempt to mimic Derrida's style — or rather the particularly ludic Derridean style adopted in texts like *The Post Card* or *Glas*. Castricano tends to avoid the expository or discursive mode for a strategy that inhabits terms and plays around with them for extended passages. From the opening "Convocation," which replaces the expository introduction that outlines a thesis, Castricano tends to resort to extensive citation and lengthy re-statement of key concepts. Every occasion is taken to draw out puns and explore etymologies to exhaustive lengths — a Derridean tic given a further manic turn by Abraham and Torok's hounding of words to give up their encrypted meaning. There is even a short section that over-ambitiously attempts to reproduce the double columns of Derrida's *Glas* (although Castricano's version defeats the whole point of "simultaneous" columns by inserting footnotes that clearly direct you to dutifully read the left hand column first).

An observation by Derrida kept returning to me as I read these attempts: "a certain mimeticism is at once a duty ... and the worst of temptations" ("The Deaths of Roland Barthes" in *The Work of Mourning,* 38). Castricano nearly always gives in to the temptation, where a more conventional "secondary" academic commentary would probably have yielded more productive results. Whilst *Glas* directly concerns possible and impossible mourning, the per-formative encryption of this in the structure and even design of the book was a singular thing. Derrida has spoken of his strategic decision to write texts that deformed linear, logical and topical and typographical forms of writing, but limited this to a phase between 1968 and 1974 ("The Time of a Thesis," an essay not in Castricano's bibliography). We might also think of the North American and British literary/cultural academy playing with these devices in the time-lag of translation to a decade or so later, reaching heights in the late 80s. Castricano's book does feel curiously anachronistic in its style. Even ardent Derrideans now tend more towards the "thetic" than the "ludic" pole.

Of course, being "out of joint" with the contemporary is in the nature of the ghost, and none of these concerns would matter if *Cryptomimesis* offered up some new and exciting readings of the American Gothic. Yet the book deals with only two Gothic texts at any length — Poe's "The Fall of the House of Usher" and Stephen King's *Pet Sematary* — and the heavy investment in Derridean stock gives only limited returns. Both certainly deal with *revenance*, the breaching of borders of life and death, inside and outside, the domestic space contaminated by the returns of those who have been illegitimately expelled. This is about the extent of the insight, however, since Castricano is more concerned in folding these texts into a generalised discourse on the strange topopgraphy of the crypt. The moment of the spectre returning in both texts is again exhaustively cited and re-translated into Derridean terms. With King, there is some attempt to use the more radical mode of de-composition and fragmentation of texts used by Abraham and Torok — but this yields up only a set of etymological reflections on King's mis-spelt "sematary" and a few anagrams of King's name that offer no help in generating new readings. An early promise that there might be something distinct to say about the American Gothic, or that the American Gothic might interestingly transform the conceptual matrix of cryptonomy, is never pursued. There is no interest in the historical or textual specificity of Poe or King. Needless to say, two texts from such different moments do not make a convincing case.

It is a further misfortune that Castricano's book should appear at the same time as Derrida's collection, *The Work of Mourning* (University of Chicago Press, 2001). This is a volume of fourteen speeches, texts, orations or essays on friends and colleagues who have died, beginning with Barthes in 1980 and concluding with Jean-Francois Lyotard in 1998. Derrida is left living on each time and is torn every time between wondering whether silence respects or betrays, or speaking memorialises or obscenely appropriates, the dead. It is full of reflections on the way in which the dead live on in us and indeed help constitute the notion of an "us." The editors, Pascale-Anne Brault and Michael Naas, have written an introduction that, for me, works far more successfully than Castricano's mimicry of the

Derridean style. It is a suitably Derridean paradox to note that a style or tone of writing is inimitable exactly to the extent that it is imitable. Even so, if the reader wants to pursue the issue of mourning and melancholia, crypts and ghosts, then I'd urge you: read the original. (ROGER LUCKHURST, BIRKBECK COLLEGE, UNIVERSITY OF LONDON)

*DOMINIQUE LECOURT. *The Mediocracy: French Philosophy Since the Mid-1970s*. Trans. Gregory Elliott. London, New York:Verso, 2001. Pp. 240. US $27, CAN $37 cloth.

The English edition of Lecourt's *The Mediocracy* comprises two separately published texts. The first, *Les piètres penseurs* was published in 1999; the second, published here as an appendix — *Dissidence ou revolution?* — was first published in France in 1978. The English translation of these works will air a dissenting voice to the growing schematic doctrine surrounding the post '68 French philosophical scene and in particular the allegation that the philosophers of '68, even those without a formal allegiance to the communist party, were courting totalitarianism.[1] In each part Lecourt describes the emergence and consolidation of an intellectual constellation in France that is hostile to revolutionary, novel and ambitious thought. It wins from him the title of a "mediocracy" for its weakly reasoned defence of the liberal parliamentary state. Lecourt, who has written studies of French epistemology, Marxism and the Lysenko affair is sensitive to the need for political analysis to be conducted in terms appropriate to its contemporary historical conditions. Accordingly, while Lecourt notes the difficulty in treating insubstantial ideas as a "movement," his book derives its force from the fact that the so-called *nouvelle philosophes* resuscitate a classical philosophical vocabulary that acts as an obstacle to an adequate understanding of the stakes of contemporary politics. The link between Lecourt's book and the diverse body of works that dissent from the current liberal consensus is the idea that force is a constitutive feature of the politics of the liberal state (see also Rancière, Negri, Foucault).

It is in this context that *The Mediocracy* engages in a defence of the turns taken in post WW2 French philosophy and recently vilified under the pressure of the so-called New Philosophers, many of whom use philosophy to recant their Marxist pasts (Lévy, Glucksmann) and deprive the confrontational politics of '68 of any relevance. If Lecourt's target is the "movement" associated with figures such as Luc Ferry, Alain Renaut, André Glucksmann, Bernard Henri-Lévy and André Comte-Sponville, his problem is that of defining the nature of the political alternative this movement purports to represent. In Lecourt's account of this "movement" certain themes are emphasised: its strategic collapse of Marxism and fascism into the shared category of "totalitarianism"; the retreat from the cause of "revolution" now tied to

1 See Mark Lilla's recent articles in the *New York Review of Books* for an attempt to tarnish Derrida's work in this fashion.

totalitarianism; and the view that political thinking can be conducted by the "activity" of a journalistic-style commentary on current affairs.

The value of his book lies in its capture of the paradoxes of the mood and pretensions of the mediocracy. The mediocracy fuses a classical conception of the subject with a politics that defends the status-quo and a "philosophy" that is little more than a vehicle for journalistic-style opinions. The rehabilitation of the fiction of the sovereign subject accompanies the deluded self-conception of the philosopher as the one able to dictate terms in a Godless world: Ferry and Comte-Sponville are willing to "play life instructors" but do so while asserting the radical finitude and scepticism of the human condition in which they themselves recognize no Gods or Masters. And the return to the classical themes that remain unaltered by current historical circumstances coexists with a philosophical expression whose privileged medium is that of TV. The uncritical relation to spectacles of misery that are presented without their historical and particularly colonial context is one which elicits a sentimental performance by our new philosophical heroes. What captivates their attention is the authenticity of the emotional response to the spectacle and politics thereby receives a double determination: first, as an aesthetic relation which gratifies those who respond to misery in terms of the abstract ideals of love and ethics; and second, as a moralization of politics that facilitates an acceptance of the destitution of the majority. Against it Lecourt advocates a clear separation of ethics and politics. The ahistoricism of the "mediocracy" is supported by a dependence on the central terms of the philosophical tradition (the sacred, love, happiness etc.) and the established doctrines (materialism, idealism, hedonism, ascetism). However these classical references cannot pursue the task of analysing the determinants that bring the subject into existence, whether in the guise of a miserable spectacle for consumption or in the guise favoured by the mediocracy to respond to it: the moral subject.

The scenario Lecourt depicts of philosophy from the mid-1970s is an effective riposte to Sokal: indeed Sokal misses his target if the current intellectual landscape in France is dominated less by the adventurous thinking of the post-68 generation than it is by the stylised moderation and wisdom of the New Philosophers. In noting the evident fit between the apotheosis of mediocrity in the contemporary media and the mood of resignation and renunciation that characterises this intellectual club Lecourt raises the problem of the actual novelty in the works of these figures. They adopt the language of human rights, parliamentary democracy and liberalism, but while their task consists in a defence of these goods it is conducted through the detour of a quarrel with Marxism. The ghost behind this quarrel is actually that of their French contemporaries. And it is here, in the rationale behind their polemic, that Lecourt locates their novelty: the view that human rights requires a verbal, humanist defence.

What justifies this defence and supports their tone of wisdom according to Lecourt is their idealist conception of Soviet history as a transcription and implementation of Marx's texts. In his "Dissidence or Revolution" Lecourt criticises the conflation of Marxism and revolution with actual states and, particularly, Stalinism. If the effect of this position is to stifle criticism of the Western state, its correlate presumption is that this latter embodies the ideas of liberalism and constitutes the proof of Marx's failure. This comparison between states, which masquerades as a comparison between ideas, leads to Glucksmann's bizarre view of the "intellectual immigrant" who disproves the Marxist thesis of the deskilling of labour and demonstrates instead the progress of the proletarian class outside of its Marxist category. ("... At the bottom of the ladder, in the most completely de-intellectualized kind of work, modern industry places ... the worker who of all the workers is the most intellectual, an individual who usually speaks several languages, has known several countries, has lived through several historical epochs, who does not let himself be shut up within a narrowly local horizon, and who often possesses a sense of community and solidarity unknown to those around him: namely, the immigrant" [Glucksmann, *Les maîtres penseurs*, cited in Lecourt 220-21]).

The currency of Marxist themes of exploitation to the analysis of the current labor market locates Lecourt's dissatisfaction with Foucault's work. Indeed Foucault is a pivotal figure in Lecourt's account of our new mediocre thinkers. While he does not fall into the category of the mediocracy, Foucault is doubly indicted by Lecourt: first, he departs from the explanatory framework of Marxism to develop what Lecourt derisively refers to as a "metaphysics of power"; and second, he thereby provides a 'theoretical guarantee" (Lecourt, 2001, 187) for the New Philosophers' departure from revolutionary politics. In both *The Mediocracy* and his appendix Lecourt seems tempted to locate Foucault as a figure who prefigures the tendencies of the New Philosophers. The proof of Foucault's intimacy with this movement is not just the defence of Glucksmann that formalises his break with Deleuze[2], but his own foray, on the occasion of the Revolution in Iran, into the journalistic style of thinking that typifies the contributions of figures such as Lévy to the new climate of "five minute thinking."

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2 For an alternative account of this break see Eribon.

While it is difficult to dispute Lecourt's characterisation of the impotent version of "criticism" represented by an abstract attachment to the category of human rights that is indifferent to the need to offer an historical account of the systemic geo-political and economic sources that encroach on it, the alternative offered by Lecourt in the appendix composed in the late 1970s is less satisfactory. His argument, in broad terms, is the following: the qualitative features of the 1960s French philosophy were its commitment to change, its pursuit of experi-mentation as a function, not of its drive for attention, but of its concern to think the problems of the age. In these latter respects Foucault and Deleuze are mentioned. However Lecourt's own preference for Althusser frames his account of contemporary French thought. Inspired by a defence of the Marxist conception of an "overall organization of the masses for emancipatory struggle" (201) against which Foucault's account of strategies of "minor repulsions" seems wanting Lecourt himself appears to be out of step with the times of '68 experimentation and the need identified by the events of '68 for a remodelling of Marxism and its categories under the pressure of feminist and other intellectual critical movements. This is clearest in Lecourt's critique of Foucault's capillary conception of power as a "metaphysics" that explains power as "spontaneous generation" and his further allegation that Foucault gives inadequate weight to the State. Lecourt overlooks Foucault's view that power's local conditions and effects are only intelligible and coherent as strategies motivated by specific intentions, as well as Foucault's own analysis of the relation between the modern state — which he analyses in part in relation to the blind rationale of an increase in force — to these local conditions and effects (see, for instance, *The History of Sexuality*, Vol 1). While Lecourt is correct in locating a lapse in rigorous thought in Foucault's short-lived fascination with the "spiritual politics" of Khomeini and his refusal to engage critics on this issue, it is nevertheless unfair to measure Foucault against a model of the intellectual as the author of the blueprint for revolution, when this model is clearly viewed by Foucault as outdated in its inflexible, legislative intent. Foucault's view that "everything is dangerous" captures well the risks our new mediocracy shields itself from as well as the unforeseeable implications of the "minor repulsions" that Lecourt disparages. Against Lecourt, then, the benefit of Foucault's refusal to sanctify the State as *the* target of opposition, is that he also refuses to endorse a fantasy of the State that is free of violence, a State outside of power. In the vocabulary of Bachelard, Lecourt's attachment to Althusser can perhaps be described as an epistemological obstacle, one which allows him to skirt the theoretical discomfit for classical Marxism and its Althusserian variant occasioned by the events of May 1968[3] as well as aspects of the inventive thought that was their accompaniment. (ALISON ROSS, MONASH UNIVERSITY, AUSTRALIA)

Works Cited

3 See on this point Descombes 117-35.

Descombes, Vincent. *Modern French Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1980.

Eribon, Didier. *Michel Foucault*. Trans. Betsy Wing. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1992.

* RICHARD F. HARDIN. *Love in a Green Shade: Idyllic Romances Ancient to Modern*. Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 2000. Pp. 288. US $50.00 hardcover.

In a useful opening chapter Richard Hardin's *Love in a Green Shade* identifies what he means by idyllic romance, a form that occupies center stage in his new book. It is a tradition best described, he claims, as a simple love story of a couple in a pastoral setting. The impetus of the narrative is always marriage, unlike the ancient Greek pastorals of Virgil and Theocritus upon which it is modelled.

Hardin lists themes and motifs crucial to a type of narrative whose touchstone is Longus's *Daphnis and Chloe*. These include items familiar to most students of romance. Foundlings are raised as brother and sister, unable to name an emotion (love) that later overwhelms them, while their congruent actions and reactions are testament to a mutuality or sexual symmetry that is at the heart of the story. Setting is vital, often an island or remote household, and the landscape is always significant. Idyllic romance is, then, symbolic and meditative, centred on thought, imagery and design rather than action.

These motifs indicate an overlap — which Hardin acknowledges — with other romance forms, themselves often hybrids of folk, fable, fairy and hagiography. Romance has always been a fluid and permeable genre, an openness Hardin appears to ignore. Instead, apart from the identification of one unusual and defining trope — descriptions of a work of art or a set of paintings — idyllic romance seems to require no further elaboration in this book. True, he does explore differences in the narratives he analyzes, searching for allusion and echo rather than perfect correspondence to give an impressively far-reaching perspective. Yet this strength is simultaneously a weakness; what Hardin neglects is both intertextuality, the myriad ghosts of other stories, and hybridity, the blurring of generic boundaries.

To isolate an impermeable form known as idyllic romance is surely impossible. As such, his aim of searching for a line of development by beginning with the ancient tale of *Daphnis and Chloe* and tracking its reception history up to the present day, is immediately fraught with the danger of over-simplification. And how he falls into the trap he has himself set.

Hardin's charting of the influence of Longus's text is impressive in the breadth of its research and his sure grasp of the apparently defining features of its periodization. He argues that the crucial Renaissance rediscovery of *Daphnis and Chloe* (he offers no suggestions to explain its neglect in medieval times though romance was exceptionally popular during this period) marks a move towards "pastourelle" and a "need to transcend the created world" (51). His assertion that Longus directly influences Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, and through this a host of other texts, is persuasive. Additionally, he perceives echoes in works such as Sidney's *Arcadia*, Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* and Fletcher's *The Faithful Shepherdess* before continuing the tracing of a developmental line through the centuries.

Along the way, Hardin explores *Paradise Lost*, *Wuthering Heights*, Hardy's *Under the Greenwood Tree,* and Bruce Chatwin's *On The Black Hill* to name but a few. In self-contained chapters, he usefully identifies, too, an entire French "tradition" whose high point is Bernardin's *Paul et Virginie* from which emanates a range of international influences beginning with George Sand and extending to what he calls "The Ladies of Maine" — Harriet Beecher Stowe, Sarah Orme Jewett and Willa Cather.

Other sections take in a Spanish tradition centred on the neglected works of Valera and Buzán. Later still, Hardin extends this eclectic mix of writers and texts, including film versions with their roots in idyllic romance and the original *Daphnis and Chloe*: Stacpoole's *The Blue Lagoon*; end-of-frontier stories like *Grapes of Wrath*, Harold Bell Wright's *The Shepherd of the Hills* (cinema version three a vehicle for John Wayne); English pastorals like the Shropshire novels of Mary Webb or the Peak District romance *The Two Goodwins*, and on up to the present day.

Many of these analyses are stimulating and cogent. One personal favorite is the exploration of Stowe's *The Pearl of Orr's Island* where Hardin suggests that, like Sand, Stowe chooses the idyllic romance form as a response to an upsurge of violence in her own society to offer instead a focus on "inner" life and a counter-balancing harmony through working the land. Others seem far more arbitrary. He offers a detailed account of Mary Webb's scarcely-known *Seven For A Secret* alongside a cursory appraisal of Lawrence's *The Rainbow*, a work he, nevertheless, cites as the culmination of a highly influential line begun by Wordsworth and Hardy. He notes the significance of George Eliot's "idyllic romance" novels then turns his attention to the now virtually unknown *Green Mansions* by W. H. Hudson. Admittedly, he explores the popularity and wide dissemination of this work, but fails to explain what for me is the most interesting question which is why some versions — like this one — exert such a profound influence before falling into oblivion.

Inevitably, the chronological arrangement of chapters both embeds as unproblematic the reception history he claims and ensures a loss of impetus. Traces and allusions become increasingly distanced from *Daphnis and Chloe* and, by the time we reach the twentieth century far less compelling. The number of texts unknown outside a specialist sphere, though interesting as a reclamation, demand large chunks of narrative explication where the cumulative effect is to batter the reader.

At the same time, there are too many universals and generalisations. He claims *Paul et Virginie* as a work comparable in its impact to the French Revolution and for Sand an appreciation of "the genre's profound human implications" (93). Other "lost" authors, like Mary Ellen Chase and Jo-Ann Mapson, belong to "the vast legion of good writers over the past century whom fame has kissed but not embraced" (10). Such hyperbole and casual assertion is an irritation only slightly less insistent than the name-dropping that features throughout. The most notable example contains some twenty references to writers across a mere two pages (6-7).

The dust jacket of Hardin's book describes this study as "a groundbreaking exploration of the idyllic romance tradition in fiction and drama." It is certainly unique and breath-taking in its scope. But to what extent is it innovative or insightful? Hardin admits that Longus is long dead as an acknowledged source. His readings of these disparate novels in the light of this source and generic prototype is, he claims, a means of explaining some uncertainties of interpretation, or else "enlarges appreciation of Milton's art" (65) to cite one example. But many texts have complex and far-reaching roots; to single out a single originary narrative is both fallacious and reductive and Hardin offers no compelling reason to suggest the contrary.

The final chapter is called "Points of Departure." It opens with a statement no-one would challenge concerning the difficulties of bringing together the disparate strands of such an enormous piece of work. A summary is, in this instance, then, a pointless exercise. But "points of departure" implies a jumping-off to new questions and ideas or a potential for further investigations, none of which are forthcoming. Instead, we receive yet more of the same: a fascinating and extensive study of Mishima's post-war Japanese novel *The Sound of the Waves* followed by a brief skirmish with a handful of other twentieth-century works. Finally, *Love in a Green Shade* falls victim to its own linear trajectory, and unable to contain itself within the reductive framework of overview, it fizzles out into nothing. (GAIL ASHTON, UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER)

*THOMAS LAMARRE. *Uncovering Heian Japan: An Archeology of Sensation and Inscription*. Durham & London: Duke University Press. Pp. 238. US$17.95.

Thomas LaMarre's extremely ambitious and challenging work is backed by his broad knowledge of Japanese language and culture. He analyzes the Heian society in Japan (794-1192) from the viewpoint of "language" and "waka poems," which can be considered the products of language. Actually the abolishment of the Japanese envoy to China in the T'ung Dynasty for the purpose of learning the Chinese culture and scholarship brought a great change to the Heian society as well as to the Heian court. From the nativist point of view, it was an unforgettable event marking the recovering of Japanese identity. If I were to conclude that the Heian period was the transient period from Chinese to Japanese style not only in the political system, but also in manners and customs, including linguistic features, LaMarre would be probably object to my simplified opinion. That is because the task in LaMarre's study is intentionally to differentiate the Heian texts (waka poems and the scrolls of those poems) and the Heian court from the birth of a new Japanese language called "kana" and the idea of the modern nation.

One of his objectives is to challenge the Japanese nativist tendency to identify themselves from the invention of "kana" Japanese as representing "Japaneseness" in Heian poetry. He insists on the danger of placing an overemphasis on the minor aspects of Heian poetry. LaMarre, following Benedict Anderson's historical view, criticizes the nationalistic tendency to understand a classic community through an obsession with a "national imagination." This expression refers to the modern notion of viewing the nation as coming together from the following important factors: (1) linguistic homogeneity (2) ethnic, racial or cultural purity, and (3) territoriality. It is certain that his concern is a linguistic one, in particular as regards the poetry in the Heian period. Once again, LaMarre advocates the readers should pay more attention to rather various aspects of Heian poetry (waka poems) than to "kana" Japanese itself, without being captivated by the nativist or nationalistic agenda. He also tries to clarify various features of waka poems, tracing and analyzing the remnants of Chinese influences in them.

Another feature of LaMarre's book can be observed in his sociological and historical approach, which uses politics as a point of departure for getting at some of the trickier intersections of language, ethnicity and territory. First of all, he asks, "What is ancient Japaneseness?" He declares that language must be at the center of Heian studies, and insists that disciplinary divisions for study of early Japanese have served to protect the role of poetry as the aesthetic kernel of the "national imagination." Then, to the question, "How did poetry bring order to the Heian society?" he answers that it enabled the formation of an ethnic speech community.

By the way, his research was done pursuing two lines of inquiry following the emergence and maintenance of the modern "ethnolinguistic regime" for reading Heian Japanese and trying to interpret Heian poetics. As for the first line of inquiry, LaMarre mentions the genealogy of modern and general ancient poetry and admits that this genealogy of the modern regime of reading was created by the nativist scholars in the Edo period who tried to read the ancient texts against the then dominant paradigm of Neo-Confucianism. This viewpoint has been maintained for several hundred years. LaMarre concludes that the conceptualization of Heian Japan by postwar Japanese scholars should be criticized for being the main cause of the so-called "national imagination."

LaMarre continuously insists on the importance of his second line of inquiry. This, he says, is because those who were obsessed by the "national imagination" have overlooked or suppressed this approach. When actually investigating the Heian texts linguistically, the functions of Chinese characters should neither be overlooked nor dismissed. He strongly realizes the necessity of reading the Heian texts both philologically and linguistically.

This book consists of three parts: Part One, "Interpretation of Rebuses," Part Two, "Inscription and Sensation," and, Part Three, "The Song Machine." Each part has several chapters such as 1. Revising the Rebus, 2. Kana Inscription and Stylistic Differentiation, and 3. Composition and Competition, for Part One; 4. Toward a History of Styles, 5. Heian Calligraphy, 6. The Multisensible Figure*: Ashide Shita-e Wakanrôeishô*, for Part Two; and 7. Two Prefaces, Two Modes of Appearance, and 8. Tsurayuki's Song Machine, for Part Three.

In this way, LaMarre's Part One introduces the idea of searching for rebuses or picture puzzles in the Heian poetics. According to LaMarre, the rebus, despite the fact that not so many of them can be seen in the poetry, can give a clue to understanding the logic of poetic composition. He never spares pointing out features of the Heian poetry which are not of Japanese origin, such as word games, image games, pivot words, and so on. He still indicates his disapproval of the omission of Chinese characters from the Heian texts, by placing the Heian court in opposition to China. Furthermore, LaMarre, who admits the limit of understanding the rebus linguistically and grammatically, suggests the possibility to read its symbolic relations in this assembled character. Ultimately, he concludes the role of the rebus in the "waka poems" comes to nothing, but still has implications for the way of viewing the history of writing.

LaMarre offers several questions to the conventional understanding of "kana" writing as the phonological transcription of speech. He sticks to the idea that the prime goal of "kana" writing was an attempt to write speech phonetically or phonologically. On the other hand, he tries to see the intertwining of several grammars or various elements in addition to the indigenous features in the Heian "waka" poems by insisting on the fact that "kana"(allomorphs which indicate their origin as Chinese characters reduced to their smallest recognizable shapes) and "mana" (a specialized use of the allomorph) existed side by side, sustaining the productivity of a perpetual contest of doubles. LaMarre, who spends a lot of pages in the description of the figural operations of signs in the Heian poetics, proposes that the figural operations of names relates to a consteller and transversal logic of signs which, in turn, relates to a "cosmological imagination" of human activity and society. His proposition of a "cosmological imagination" is concretely explained in Part Three.

In Part Two, LaMarre introduces calligraphy closely related to Heian poetics. He examines the various stylistic and perpetual registers in the calligraphic texts. He concludes that histories of Heian calligraphy are not supported by a theory of reading. This is due to the ambiguous relations between speech and writing, and also due to the fact that features of Heian calligraphy were variations of the T'ang legacy in China because Heian courtiers were adapting them. LaMarre, however, points out the fact that Heian writers failed to equate stylistic differences with linguistic differences, even though their goals were to establish an autonomous Japanese tradition. What is more, according to LaMarre, stylistic variations brought about the completion of boundaries, although these boundaries were not the same as those defined by the modern logic of ethnolinguistic territories.

LaMarre's concern is to introduce different registers of expression in the production of papaerscapes in his chapter on *Ashide Shita-e Wakanrôeishô* — the "reed-hand under-picture rendition of the 'Collection of Yamato and Han Cant- illations.'" This seems to LaMarre to be the most representative example to support his opinion regarding the poetics in the Heian period. This is because it consists of various registers of expressions, such as calligraphic and pictorial registers, vocal and musical registers as well as verbal registers. He calls them "multisensible figures." LaMarre, who insists that the appeal of Heian lies in the concern for walking the boundary between order and chaos, tries to see more than only the radiance of the capital in this work.

Part Three is discussed from the "cosmological" view. LaMarre introduces his usage of "cosmology" in his introduction. He intends to give two meanings to this word, both in empirical and sociohistorical terms. He points to both the ubiquity of calendrics at the Heian court and the Heian cosmic order which did not place human agency in a central role. He creates the phrase "cosmological imagination of community" in opposition to the "national imagination" which was repeated in the previous chapters. Using this phrase, he insists on the significance of poetry and calligraphy in the Heian court in order to be consistent using the phrase of Kino Tsurayuki in the preface of *Kokinwakashu* (twenty scrolls of poetry).

This book invites Japanese readers as well as non-Japanese readers to enjoy the charms of Heian poetics apart from the narrow nativist view. It clarifies the possibility that the Heian court people had the means to embody the imparted idea or thought as their own, without sticking to the narrow logic of independence, or rather they knew how to live with imported ideas and skills. In addition, it explains how indispensable poetics was to the Heian court people, to whom it was politics, social order and the means to live not only in the court but also in the home. (JUNKO UMEMOTO, NIHON UNIVERSITY, JAPAN)

[*]JACQUES BERCHTOLD. *Les Prisons du roman (XVII^{e}-XVIII^{e} siècle). Lectures plurielles et intertextuelles de "Guzman d'Alfarache" à "Jacques le fataliste."* Genève: Droz, 2000. Pp. 784. No price.

Ce livre propose une étude ambitieuse de l'évolution du genre romanesque aux XVII^{e} et XVIII^{e} siècles, en présentant un parcours intéressant, celui qui mène à la *prison*. Autrement dit, l'analyse d'un certain nombre de textes où figurent largement des "séjours en prison" permet de mesurer d'une façon originale les traits saillants de la constitution du roman moderne. Le thème carcéral privilégié dans cette étude finit par constituer un concept de base dans l'interprétation du genre romanesque de cette période, ou du moins d'une certaine tradition du roman dont le registre s'avère "bas." L'approche méthodologique s'annonce comme intertextuelle, dans la mesure où les textes étudiés semblent entretenir un dialogue les uns avec les autres, qu'il s'agisse de secondarité littéraire, d'empreintes textuelles, de parodie ou de plagiat (l'auteur n'insiste pas beaucoup sur les distinctions). Les connotations d'infraction associées au quatrième terme en particulier permet d'entrevoir déjà le rapport qui sera établi plus ou moins explicitement entre la pratique scripturale et l'emprisonnement (nous y reviendrons).

Or cette étude affiche deux buts apparemment distincts: il s'agit dans un premier temps de décrire et d'analyser les épisodes d'incarcération dans un nombre limité de romans jugés comme représentatifs des étapes majeures dans l'évolution du roman. Mais à vrai dire Jacques Berchtold ne se contente pas de se pencher sur les descriptions de séjours en prison, il offre un recensement exhaustif du parcours particulier qui amène chaque personnage au lieu carcéral qui s'avère souvent sa destination finale. Quant au deuxième but affiché, il s'agit bel et bien d'une métaphorisation ou généralisation de la notion d'incarcération permettant de souligner certains aspects de l'écriture romanesque et de la situation de l'écrivain vis-à-vis de son texte et de sa société. Mais là aussi il y a une expansion de la définition de l'incarcération qui aboutit à une réflexion sur la condition humaine (car, comme dit Epictète cité par Berchtold, "être quelque part contre son gré, c'est être en prison" 55).

La première partie du livre fait le survol des "cas exemplaires" d'emprisonnement et de martyres carcéraux dans la littérature de l'Antiquité, et ceci afin de montrer à quel point la fiction du XVII^{e} et du XVIII^{e} siècles (et surtout, de façon paradoxale, les romans picaresques et comiques privilégiés dans cette étude) est redevable à une érudition classique extrêmement riche. C'est surtout grâce à *Jacques le fataliste* que Berchtold opère un va-et-vient entre l'Antiquité et l'Ancien Régime. Car le roman de Diderot serait hanté par plusieurs souvenirs grecs et latins — c'est ce que voit Berchtold par exemple dans la disparition brutale du narrateur de l'histoire de Jacques et son maître vers la fin du roman, ce qui laisse le pauvre valet au "destin de Socrate"; cette disparition du narrateur rappelle aussi l'emprisonnement et la mise à mort de Callisthène, l'historiographe d'Alexandre, car "une sanction d'incarcération pèse sur la tête de l'auteur qui entreprend de 'mettre en récit' un parcours de vie" (178). Mais c'est surtout l'anecdote tirée de la vie d'Esope qui constitue pour Berchtold le point de mire du roman de Diderot (c'est la raison pour laquelle il y reviendra plus longuement dans la cinquième et dernière partie de son livre). Le narrateur dans *Jacques* évoque l'histoire d'Esope à un moment crucial et déterminant du roman, en guise de réponse au lecteur qui veut savoir où allaient Jacques et son maître (en essayant de se rendre au bain, Esope est arrêté par la patrouille d'Athènes; on décide de l'amener en prison quand il dit qu'il ne sait pas où il va, parole rendue vraie par son arrestation même — il voulait aller au bain, mais voilà qu'on l'amène en prison!). Cette anecdote fournit la question sous-tendant toute l'étude de Berchtold: est-ce que l'on sait où l'on va? Ou encore: où vas-tu? La réponse à cette question est facile à prévoir: "la destination réservée à ceux qui n'ont pas de destination: la prison" (708).

Les deuxième et troisième parties du livre abordent le thème carcéral dans les romans picaresques espagnols et leurs émules français du XVII^{e} siècle. Un texte espagnol qui servira de modèle aux écrivains français, *Guzmán de Alfarache* de Mateo Alemán, contient le trajet archétypal qui caractérise le récit picaresque: celui de l'enfant apprenant à marcher afin de rejoindre son père (le thème de la paternité et la parabole de l'enfant prodigue constituent d'ailleurs des constantes dans cette étude). Autrement dit, c'est l'incarcération qui permet à la brebis longtemps perdue d'être sauvée (la prison n'est pas forcément un lieu pénible ou redoutable — c'est pour certains personnages un lieu familier qui tient lieu de maison paternelle, ce qui n'empêche que la maison paternelle s'avère une prison pour d'autres). Or les textes français qui s'inspirent de *Guzmán* perdront assez rapidement cet élément d'édification chrétienne. Car dans les traductions — ou plutôt adaptations — françaises des romans picaresques espagnols c'est l'*ethos* comique qui finit par éclipser la morale chrétienne. Si l'on veut, la "prison" des romans espagnols, c'est effectivement les traductions-adaptations françaises, poussées et guidées en quelque sorte par "les exigences classiques d'homogénéité" (309). Un autre texte espagnol qui a connu un certain succès en France, le *Buscón* de Quevedo, semble avoir contribué largement au statut parodique affiché dans plusieurs romans comiques français; c'est à Quevedo qu'on peut attribuer la notion quasiment postmoderne selon laquelle l'art romanesque, malgré ses visées d'édification morale, reste "prisonnier" des ressorts d'une littérature de divertissement (305). D'après Berchtold, le rapport de secondarité littéraire qu'entretiennent les œuvres françaises avec leurs modèles espagnols s'avère bien plus important dans le développement du roman comique français que le "réalisme" qui paraît à plusieurs critiques comme le reflet d'une bourgeoisie naissante. Les allusions mythologiques qu'on trouve dans plusieurs romans signalent une pratique parodique en général qui consiste en un "décrochage de niveau par rapport aux genres élevés" (436) (par exemple le Dédale enfermé dans le Labyrinthe transposé par Cyrano de Bergerac dans l'*Autre Monde*, ou encore la lapidation d'Orphée et sa sortie des Enfers dont on perçoit les empreintes dans le roman burlesque les *Aventures de Monsieur d'Assoucy* — les épisodes du séjour en prison dans les romans étudiés entretiennent d'ailleurs un lien ambigu et complexe avec le topos épique du séjour aux Enfers).

La quatrième partie du livre fait rupture avec les précédentes car il s'agit de mesurer les changements qui auraient été effectués dans le genre romanesque par les Mémoires, genre marginal qui contient pour la première fois des descriptions détaillées d'expériences carcérales réellement vécues (Bussy-Rabutin), et ensuite par les romans-mémoires (Courtilz de Sandras), sévèrement condamnés par les critiques à l'époque qui y voyaient un mélange subversif de l'Histoire et de la Fiction. Berchtold signale à ce point précis de l'histoire de la prose romanesque une rupture par rapport aux récits "réalistes" comiques: il s'agit dorénavant d'un "exposé nouveau et cruel d'accidents s'enchaînant selon un ordre contingent et aléatoire désormais privé de toute justification téléologique" (513). Ainsi sont nés le mythe de la Bastille et l'antihéros moderne, victime de trahisons à rebours de toute notion de justice; de toute façon l'emprisonnement dans les textes littéraires sera perçu comme une question non pas de justice mais de hasard — un manque de chance. C'est Lesage, l'auteur de *Gil Blas*, qui a réussi le premier à combiner différents courants romanesques, et notamment le récit picaresque et les (pseudo-) Mémoires. Dans la pratique lesagienne d'adaptation de textes espagnols (*Le Diable boiteux* de Guevara), Berchtold entrevoit une définition de l'art romanesque ayant des résonances profondes aujourd'hui: "sa pratique de re-cyclage et de transformation d'une matière littéraire préalablement incarnée dans un texte-prédécesseur n'est jamais que le mode même de fonctionnement de toute production littéraire!" (521).

La dernière partie du livre présente une analyse de trois romans canoniques du XVIII^{e} siècle, textes que je suppose avoir été choisis en fonction de leur statut emblématique d'aboutissement d'un certain cheminement, à la fois picaresque et carcéral, du genre romanesque en France. Et pourtant, malgré l'intérêt que présentent les deux autres textes sous l'éclairage de l'incarcération (qui au fond n'offre autre chose qu'une réflexion sur la problématique de la destination et du caractère illusoire de la liberté humaine), à savoir *Manot Lescaut* de Prévost et *Candide* de Voltaire, c'est vraiment *Jacques le fataliste* qui constitue le point culminant de cette étude, son inspiration et son *telos*. Le dernier chapitre du livre me paraît le plus intéressant: Berchtold démontre avec perspicacité, par l'analyse nuancée des renvois intertextuels et des récits extérieurs à la diégèse principale, que tout le voyage de Jacques est orienté vers la prison, symbole de l'aspect imprévisible et brutal de l'existence. La façon dont le "philosophe-plagiaire" Diderot s'inscrit dans son texte mérite qu'on s'y arrête: l'histoire par exemple du Frère Jean, coupable d'avoir falsifié des documents, reflète le "remaniement" par Diderot de textes pré-existants (*Tristram Shandy* de Sterne, entre autres). Il y a certes "une oscillation d'identités" (705) chez Diderot entre le philosophe et le brigand — les philosophes sont traités comme des criminels, et les brigands font preuve de qualités artistiques — mais c'est sans doute la pratique du plagiat, une sorte de "larcin intertextuel," qui renforce cette communion entre l'écrivain et le voleur.

La façon ponctuelle dont Berchtold relie le thème carcéral à l'intertextualité est souvent astucieuse mais parfois redondante et facile. À titre d'exemple: plusieurs textes contiennent des échos de la vieille légende de Cymon et Péro, dans laquelle il s'agit d'une jeune femme qui allaite son père pendant les visites qu'elle lui rend en prison (car autrement il serait mort de faim). Or cette histoire permet à l'auteur de réfléchir sur la nature de tout texte littéraire nouveau qui reste "*emprisonné* dans des textes aïeux contraignants" mais qui par ailleurs "alimente, réactive et revivifie toujours des textes aïeux qu'il sollicite" (85). Le roman français naissant (l'"histoire comique") possède des caractéristiques du *pícaro*, le héros du roman espagnol: c'est une sorte de "bâtard" — statut que lui accorde sa paternité espagnole — en quête d'identité, un "hors-la-loi" qui ne peut pas supporter la *contrainte* des règles esthétiques (235). Les propos moralistes rajoutés par Sorel à une édition ultérieure de son *Francion* constituent des "digues de protection précautionneuses" ayant pour effet d'"*emprisonner* les licences de son propre texte" (360). Par ailleurs la censure est décrite comme une menace qui pendant l'Ancien Régime pèse sur l'écrivain dont la pratique scripturale risque de lui attirer une punition carcérale. Dans la deuxième moitié du XVIIe siècle, les Mémoires, dont le séjour en prison constitue un ingrédient majeur, apportent à la prose romanesque une "*libération* formelle fondatrice" (445). Mais le fait intertextuel est incontournable: "tout texte plagiaire est en effet en quelque sorte *emprisonné* dans le texte plagié" (711). On le voit, la dialectique de la liberté et de la contrainte figure largement dans cette étude, à plusieurs niveaux.

Or il paraît que l'emprisonnement — au sens figuré et au sens propre — n'arrive qu'aux hommes, car les personnages féminins sont curieusement absents de cette étude, sauf quelques rares exceptions qui sont révélatrices: quand l'incarcération féminine ne constitue pas tout simplement un reflet caricatural de l'emprisonnement masculin (comme c'est le cas dans *Gil Blas* de Lesage), il reste deux possibilités, ou plutôt deux rôles marginaux et hyperboliques assignés à la femme: l'ange consolateur ou libérateur (comme en témoigne le topos de la femme qui s'introduit dans le lieu carcéral pour sauver son amant en prenant sa place) et la "geôlière" qui fait de l'amour une sorte de "prison," et qui possède un pouvoir de séduction irrésistible, (à titre d'exemple: le topos de la maquerelle aux desseins malhonnêtes qui exploite la peur de l'emprisonnement éprouvée par l'homme qu'elle a séduit).

Ce livre, riche d'analyses pertinentes, constitue dans l'ensemble une lecture assez agréable et édifiante, malgré sa longueur excessive. Certains passages qui s'enlisent dans de très longs résumés de textes s'avèrent nettement moins stimulants que d'autres. Le lecteur aura parfois l'impression de se noyer dans l'analyse d'exemples dont l'accumulation trahit sans doute un souci d'exhaustivité (bien que le nombre de romans qui font l'objet de cette étude ne soit pas aussi grand qu'on pourrait le croire). Cet effet est renforcé par la lecture des nombreuses notes qui occupent parfois plus que la moitié de la page. L'index onomastique s'avère très utile dans un ouvrage d'aussi longue haleine; un index des notions aurait aidé aussi. (CONSTANCE CARTMILL, UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA)

*HELEN M. DENNIS, ed. *Ezra Pound and Poetic Influence: The Official Proceedings of the 17th International Ezra Pound Conference Held at Castle Brunnenburg Tirolo di Merano*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000. Pp. xii+ 282. EUR 55, US $61 paper.

Should we still care about Ezra Pound? Does the famously obscure classicist, anti-Semite, and Mussolini apologist have anything to offer the age of multiculturalism and post-Modernism?

I wrestle with this question every time I include Pound on a syllabus and then work over-time to make undergraduates understand his centrality in Modernism. The question of his "influence," ostensibly the focus of this collection of conference papers, is perhaps the most important query we can pose about Pound. To be sure, most academic writing has dropped the fustian "influence" in favor of a more theoretically informed "inter-textuality," but questions about who "inspired" Pound and was inspired by him (an etymological distinction he would prefer, I think) remain central, simply because Pound was the station-master of a poetic revolution. Many of the articles in this volume do valuable work in clarifying these questions, making it a worthwhile addition to the scholar's shelves or library collection.

The book is predictably strong in two areas: Pound as translator, and Pound as orientalist. William Pratt's essay on the poet's "creative mistranslation" of three source poems nicely complements David M. Gordon's focused piece on "The River Merchant's Wife." Zhaoming Qian's "Pound and Chinese Art in the British Museum Era" (accompanied by five black and white reproductions of art probably seen by the poet) and Naikan Tao's revisitation of Fenellosa and "Canto IV" added to my understanding of Pound's assimilative process. In these and other essays, however, there is a bit too much argument couched in phrases such as "Pound surely saw the show" (107).

Several essays distinguish themselves from this *retardataire* rhetoric, and one that I intend to consult again is Roxana Preda's "The Broken Pieces of a Vessel: Pound and Cavalcanti." Preda situates Pound in a post-Lacanian, post-Derridian view of language, raising to my mind *the* question: how are we to understand the widespread Modernist view that language had a transparent identity with things, in the context of their modernity? Fordism alone, it seems in retrospect, should have disabused the era's poets of this notion. Preda's interesting answer is that sometime in the 1920s Pound's ceaseless etymological investigations led him to form a concept of "series," like the historically changing meanings of Chinese characters, and she uses Pound's borrowings from Cavalcanti to illustrate this, locating him in modernity as well as in modernism. This is an essay that will be on my graduate students' bibliography. Another good piece, seeming to twin gender criticism with New Historicism, is Diana Collecott's "'This pother about the

Greeks': Hellenism and Anti-Hellenism in 1914," which underlines the racial, homo-erotic and anti-feminist elements in the literary wars Pound fought with Richard Aldington in *The Egoist*, *BLAST*, and elsewhere.

Pound's influences on other poets are taken up in the second half of the collection. Burton Hallen's excellent essay posits Pound's *Pisan Cantos* as inspiration for Charles Olson's projective verse. Despite Olson's antipathy to Pound's politics, he defended the latter's poetics, especially "process" and the cascading of perception. Though more text-oriented than Preda's essay, this article explores some of the same questions about language's contingency, drawing on work by Wade Dasenbrock and Norman Wacker, who are among the many important Pound critics not represented here. Massimo Bacigalupo's essay on Eugenio Montale and Pound also explores a relationship of artistic respect but political dichotomy. The "impinging of collective history," as Bacigalupo calls it, led Montale to translate "Mauberly" brilliantly but to question Pound's "unaccountable passions" in Italian literature. The American was completely out of tune with Italian writing, it seems, and communicated in at best a "broken Italian." Helen Aji's short piece on Jerome Rothenberg's interest in Pound, particularly in "total translation" and anthology-making as pedagogic project ("paideuma" in Pound-speak), rounds out the worthwhile mid-section of this book.

The last third of the collection is less even, where it is even concerned with "influence." Here one finds articles on Willa Cather and Pound's daughter Mary de Rachewitz, Pound and post-modern British poetry (mostly an overview of the latter), and Richard Taylor's ruminations on the problems of a variorum edition of *The Cantos*, which in its deliberations over the Eighteen Dots (standing in for living persons named in the "Hell Cantos") is the sort of thing that has always made me hesitate before picking up an issue of *Paideuma*. The important issue of Pound's modernism as opposed to his views of modernity, raised in Preda's earlier essay, pops up again in Scott Eastham's "Modernism contra Modernity." Unfortunately this title hides a simplistic rant against the World Bank, the IMF, GATT, international trade and sundry economic topics about which the author is a naif. The volume concludes with the eccentric "Secret History of St. Elizabeth's" by William McNaughton. The author was the 'minder' of Sheri Martinelli, one of Pound's visitors and romantic interests during his incarceration. Their mutual interest in the occult — the poet supposed Martinelli to be a kind of medium, "furious from perception," and they burned olibanum together on an altar in the hospital park — is, well, literary gossip, but by someone actually present and well told. The final section of this piece, "How Ez Really Got Sprung," confirms what we have long suspected about Robert Frost being window dressing for that effort, and nominates new heroes, Rep. Usher Burdick and one of his assistants. The mid-section of this essay, however, is very strange: a comparison of Pound's political program to that of the "men of 1994." Say who? Why those well-forgotten U.S. political boffos Newt Gingrich and Dick Armey! McNaughton seems to feel that Pound predicted C-SPAN, Rush Limbaugh, and the malfeasance of the Federal Reserve (then in the midst of guiding the U.S. economy to the longest boom in modern history). Surely the editors would have improved the collection by editing such rubbish, but any time one is around Pound at length, the liminal presence of the "revolutionary simpleton," as Yeats once called him, is bound to appear at least once.

In sum, this is a worthwhile volume, with several valuable articles, though the whole is not entirely on the topic of "Ezra Pound and Poetic Influence," nor does the collection approach the question of "influence" with any theoretic sophistication. (WILLIAM MARLING, CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY)

MARIUS BUNING, MATTHIJS ENGELBERTS AND SJEF HOUPPERMANS, eds. *Samuel Beckett: Crossroads and Borderlines*. Amsterdam/Atlanta, GA: Rodopi, 1997. Pp. 412. EUR 118, US $131 hardcover; EUR 33, US $37 paper.

The sixth volume of *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui*, entitled "Crossroads and Borderlines" is a collection of the thirty-one "best" essays culled from the symposiums held on Beckett's work during the summer of 1997 in Strasbourg, London, Florence, and Victoria, British Columbia. The essays, written in both English and French, vary in length from six to sixteen pages, and "for the convenience of the reader" is divided into three sections "more or less according to genre." Rather predictably then, the first section focuses on Beckett's theatre, the second on his "narrative prose," and the third, with the somewhat ambiguous heading "Special Topics," includes discussions ranging from Beckett's radio plays to his early work doing translations.

However, this collection also contains other, less clearly demarcated sections or "borderlines" similar to what Porter Abbott has described elsewhere as the "turf war [in Beckett Studies] between the modernists and postmodernists." This underlying critical polemic present in *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui* not only testifies to the boundless inventiveness of Beckett as a writer; it also documents the sharp contrast of textual focus and approach between the traditional and the theoretical methods of literary exegesis. In the present volume, the reader is given the opportunity to consider the outcomes that such disparate modes of discourse generate, and by doing so, to better determine the overall effectiveness of this collection itself.

Perhaps the best introduction to these theoretical/ideological "borderlines" in *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui* is in Andrew Kennedy's "Beckett and the Modern/Postmodern Debate," located at the beginning of the third "Special Topics" section. Kennedy is initially concerned with defending his definition of "postmodern," while also seeking to confront the ambiguity and applicability of "postmodernism" to Beckett's work. In the time since Kennedy delivered his article, this tepid interaction amongst "postmodernists" and the use of terminology has meant shifting "borderlines" within their own community, and a general sensitivity about defining the term "postmodernism" itself. Thus, when Mariko Tanaka notes in her article, "Postmodern Stagings of *Waiting for Godot*," the somewhat unsettling admission that the concept "postmodernism" is "vague, ambiguous, and often problematic," the positive relationship between the term and much of Beckett's work seems clear. And yet, how plausible is it to approach the work of an author who promotes ambiguity, with a term like "postmodernism" that seeks to do the same? The one threatens to cancel out the other. And given that this inability to define is the chief characteristic of Beckett's own work, perhaps it is timely to suggest that someone seek to define the ambiguity of "postmodernism" by first defining the ambiguity of Beckett.

An alternative to venturing into the terminologically hostile landscape of Beckett and "postmodernism," is to instead invent a term that looks like a postmodern "ism," or at the very least, is suitably ambiguous. The activation of these new "critical vocabularies" that are used to explore Beckett's work can, when used in strict conjunction with the text(s), yield important results. Although Anna McMullan in her "Versions of Embodiment/Visions of the Body," prefaces her discussion of "... but the clouds ..." with a number of pages concerned with various "versions of embodiment," her discourse is "centered" on important comparisons and contrasts with Beckett's earlier work, along with a selection of well-chosen scholars. Alternatively, in "Beckett and Radio: The Radioactive Voice," Kim Connor discusses the "disembodied voice" as a "remarkably flexible, if inconsistent agent for the communication of identity" in "All That Fall," "Words and Music" and "Embers." In both articles the relationship between the concept and Beckett's work is made believable; both scholars use their introductory remarks on "embodiment" and "disembodiment" to yield connections between concept and text that in turn activates the reader's interests and leaves him/her with something tangible at the end of the reading.

In "Beyond Paradox and Perplexities in *Textes Pour Rien*," by Angela Moorjani, the term "psychopragmatics" not only works as a postmodern-"ism" because it conflates two words into one; it also all threatens to marginalize any discussion of Beckett's work with the "wandering" to find an adequate definition of the concept. It is clearly not the author's knowledge of the subject or the concept that is in question here, but rather the effect of the approach that veers ever so close to what Kennedy calls "the cramping effects of literary terms." By no means a worst case scenario, this article is, however, emblematic of the dangers in generating new terms along with their attached definitions that together threaten to eclipse the text. Granted, the essay is written for Beckett scholars; but then, such active readers would surely already know about this concept (given that Moorjani has been writing about this subject "for the last twenty years"). So, perhaps lengthy prefatory definitions betray the underlying scholarly anxiety that most people stop listening to what they are saying at some indeterminable point because definitions in themselves are just not interesting. So, in Julie Campbell's otherwise interesting article "The Semantic Krapp in *Krapp's Last Tape*," this strain to define (otherwise known as "trac[ing] the semantic resonances") means that so much time is spent defining the word "Krapp" that there is a danger that it will be the reader who finally couldn't give a "crap" about the rest of the article. In such cases, the reader should consider for themselves whether the exercise of critical inquiry is more about itself as a form of experimentation, or is in fact about the actual textual content that it is obligated to interpret.

In addition to the drive to define terminology, the postmodern often chooses to move outwards from the "borderlines" of a text in order to examine more culturally predominant views of how art should appear when viewed by the "postmodern" spectator. Thus, similar to the self-reflexivity of Kennedy's article, Tanaka's "Postmodern Stagings of *Waiting for Godot*" provides the reader with a valuable commentary on the public parade of postmodern stage productions of the most canonical of Beckett plays, *Waiting for Godot*. Part of the value of Tanaka's article is that she avoids free-floating concepts by defining "postmodernism" with specific stage productions. In addition to the "what will they think of next?" feeling, this article should entice the reader to question how far beyond the "borderlines" of Beckett's theatre is too far. Of course, given the fact that Beckett was resistant of outside forces changing even a single word in either his prose or his theatre, the reader can only imagine his response to the suggestion of an all female cast for *Waiting for Godot*, or adding the characters of a bride and groom who, for some inexplicable reason, commit suicide at the end of the second and final act.

It is part of the value of Tanaka's article and the value of this volume of *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui* itself that the reader is left to address and readdress such questions of dramatic license and investigative "borderlines." In fact, while Tanaka discusses the postmodern rewritings of Beckett's theatre, Stan Gontarski in his "Staging Himself, or Beckett's Later Style in the Theatre" suggests that long before the postmodernists introduced their bicycle pumps, Beckett was already engaged in what Gontarski calls Beckett's "revisionist impulse." According to Gontarski, "the experience of staging himself had a double effect, altering his writing of new plays, and as important, but almost wholly ignored in current criticism, offering Beckett the opportunity to rethink, re-write, and finally recreate recently published work." As Gontarski makes clear, no clear "borderline" can be drawn between Beckett's early and later theatre, concluding that, "[i]n the theatre, there may only be the late Beckett." With no terminology to define, no jargon to account for, no credibility of approach to defend, Gontarski places the reader squarely in front of Beckett's work by bringing together concrete examples with a solid and thoroughly engaging argument.

Of course, there is also the rare case of the critic who can generate a meaningful relationship between "postmodernism" and Beckett by using a term that is meaningful both to the reader and to the explication of the text itself. Enoch Brater in works such as "Beyond Minimalism," and "The Drama in the Text," at times treats the "postmodernism" of Beckett with the term "minimalism" to positive effect. Here, in his essay "Opening Lines: Reading Beckett Backwards," Brater examines the beginnings and endings in Beckett's work with an attention to textual detail that serves only to enrich the reader's knowledge of such texts as *Waiting for Godot*, *Endgame* and *Happy Days*. Thus, the volume of knowledge, expertise, and inventiveness contained in just these two essays by Gontarski and Brater is worth the price of admission alone.

However, it would be misleading to suggest that these are the only "borderlines" that the reader will want to investigate in this volume of *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui*. For the reader interested not only in the comparison between methods of literary discourse to Beckett's work, this volume also includes discussions of those whose influence can be detected throughout Beckett's writing career. Two of the more impressive examples included in this volume are Giuseppina Restivo's comparison of Beckett's *Endgame* with the likes of Eliot, Durer and Duchamp, and Hans Hiebel's "Beckett's Televison Plays and Kafka's Late Stories." As well, this volume includes Mary Bryden's excellent essay "Sounds and Silence: Beckett's Music," and Catherine Barrett's equally informative "Beckett in Musical Translation." The lines drawn between Beckett and his influences contributes interesting and important dimensions to the study of Beckett's work; each of the above essays are experimental, and at the same time full of valuable information that will only further stimulate the reader's interest in Beckett.

While the diversity of approaches illustrate the different ways of reading Beckett's work, there are also further margins in the organization of *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui* itself that reflect the textual hierarchy still prevalent in Beckett Studies today. In fact, leaving aside the distracting urge to count the typos, if there is a negative criticism to be leveled at the collection itself, it is that the collection begins with the theatre, followed by the prose, and finally more experimental topics like the relation between Beckett's writing and music (although how this topic is "special" while Beckett and Buddhism is not, remains a mystery). In addition to the theatre/prose hierarchy, the scope of texts is predominantly based around all the usual suspects that include, "The Trilogy of Novels," *Godot*, and *Endgame*. The problem in the choice of texts is clearly one of over-familiarization. Instead of continuing to narrow the scope of Beckett's oeuvre until it diminishes to that of Joyce, Beckett Studies must begin to push the "borderlines" of Beckett Studies outwards by investigating areas that have become "special" interests only because they have been unable to compete with their peers. Only once in the entire collection are the "trunk manuscripts" that Beckett wrote during the 1960s given any significant attention. In fact, most would certainly agree that the 1960s include Beckett's most postmodern writing, and there is more than enough ambiguity in texts like "All Strange Away," "Imagination Dead Imagine," "Ping" and "Lessness" to go around.

This sixth volume of *Samuel Beckett Today/Aujourd'hui* offers valuable information from scholars who have devoted their professional lives to the study of Beckett's work. For the reader who is interested in comparing the outcomes of these approaches, this volume provides a genuinely interesting underlying narrative. Thus, in addition to a number of valuable articles, the value of this collection is that it allows the reader to decide for him or herself what kind of writer Beckett is by comparing the findings of each critical approach the wide variety of opinions surrounding his work. (TIMOTHY CALLIN, THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF THE FRASER VALLEY)

[*]MATTHEW J BRUCCOLI, ed. *The Only Thing That Counts: The Ernest Hemingway-Maxwell Perkins Correspondence, 1925-1947*. Columbia: The Univer-sity of South Carolina Press, 1999 (1996). Pp. 367. US $21.95 cloth.

In October, 1924 Scott Fitzgerald contacted his editor at Scribners, Maxwell Perkins, about a friend and new writer, Ernest Hemingway. At the time Hemingway was under contract to Boni & Liveright, but the introduction initiated a twenty year friendship and professional relationship between Perkins and Hemingway. Perkins wrote Hemingway in February, 1925; the subsequent communication between these two "legends in American letters" (Preface 11) is detailed in Matthew Bruccoli's 1996 *The Only Thing That Counts: The Ernest Hemingway-Maxwell Perkins Correspondence*, now in a paperback edition from the University of South Carolina Press. This is a selection of the correspondence, 130 letters from Hemingway and 108 from Perkins; the Princeton Library has 472 of Hemingway's to Perkins and 700 from Perkins to Hemingway. The 1981 edition of Carlos Baker's *Ernest Hemingway: Selected Letters 1917-1961* has 84 of Hemingway's letters to Perkins. Thus *The Only Thing That Counts* is much fuller than the Baker text on this aspect of Hemingway's correspondence, but it is still a selection. Matthew Bruccoli, however, who knows this period and these men well, provides a selection that is most satisfying. Particular images of the two men develop in this selection: Hemingway a man dedicated to his craft and Perkins a skilled handler of writers.

In his introduction, Bruccoli comments that Hemingway's "declarations contradict the now-fashionable death-of-the-author school of lit-crit whose adherents contend that the author does not know what he is really doing.... Hemingway's work was under his control. The purpose of his published words was to express what he meant. His work was his" (24). Certainly and importantly, that sense is evidenced in the Hemingway letters in this collection. Nick Adams remarks in "Three Day Blow" from *In Our Time* on the impracticality of a sword lying between two lovers; similarly, an early letter from Hemingway comments to Perkins on John Thomason's 1926 novel *Fix Bayonets*: "There were too many bayonets in it somehow ... it is a shame to get awfully romantic about bayonets. The bayonet is a fine and romantic thing but the very fact of its being attached to a rifle which is such a fine and practical thing automatically restricts its use in the hand of any practical man also presumably armed with grenades to purely ornamental killing — with which I am not in sympathy. Most of it is fine and the writing often is splendid. There was just that little journalistic something that was disappointing. When you tell so much of the truth you cant afford to have anything not true because it spoils the taste" (37). His subsequent letters continue to emphasize his understanding of and working for what is "true." A letter from Perkins in 1935, from which Bruccoli takes his title, indicates that Perkins and Hemingway shared this commitment: "the utterly real thing in writing is the only thing that counts."

One of the impressive traits of Hemingway evidenced in these letters is his continuing effort to learn his craft: "You see I would like," he writes in 1926, "if you wanted, to write books for Scribner's to publish, for many years and would like them to be good books — better all the time — sometimes they might not be so good — but as well as I could write and perhaps with luck learning to write better all the time — and learning how things work and what the whole thing is about — and not getting bitter" (48). Eight years later, talking about *Green Hills of Africa*, a text few readers fully appreciate today, he comments that "one thing I have learned this last year is how to make a story move" (215). Hemingway worried about numerous things away from his writing — finances, family, friends — but his focus on being the best writer he could is wonderfully clear in these letters: "Max you know truly that while I'm often wrong in personal matters I've always been right about the handling of my own stuff" (160).

Perkins' letters evidence either his skill in managing Hemingway or his sense that Hemingway knew what he was talking about — probably a combination of both. Perkins comes through in this collection as someone working to bring out the best in his stable of writers. Scott Fitzgerald, Tom Wolfe, and Hemingway were the major figures working with him at Scribners, and they were distinctly different personalities. With Wolfe, Perkins was the traditional editor, culling manuscript pages and trying to keep Wolfe focused on getting his material published. He talks about these efforts in several letters to Hemingway: "Then there began all the regular series of procrastinations, but eventually he did turn up with about 60,000 words of his very best sort of thing, though far too much of the dithyrambic, too little dialogue and direct narrative.... Some things had to go out of it obviously.... We spent hours later talking about it, and of course Tom was all for breaking loose into all kinds of excursions away from the main thing, but I got him to promise that first he would put it together on the lines I suggested, with which he agreed" (182). Later Perkins declines a scheduled meeting with Hemingway because "I cannot leave as long as I can keep Tom going well, as he is doing now. We have over half the book finished" (211). Implictly, the fact of his openness with Hemingway on the subject of another writer would perhaps suggest to Hemingway that Perkins knew he did not have to play the same role with Ernest.

With Fitzgerald, about whom Perkins and Hemingway wrote to each other at length, Perkins presented himself as less traditional editor than friend. Both Perkins and Hemingway grew increasingly worried about Scott as the years passed with little writing forthcoming. Where Hemingway would get annoyed, particularly with Zelda's influence, his comments in these letters are those of a writer: "[Scott] thought he *had* to write a masterpiece to follow the Gatsby ... to consciously write such a thing that had to be *great* just constipated him" (114). Later, in a comment on *Tender Is the Night*, Hemingway contends that charm gets in the way of truth: "It has all the brilliance and most of the defects he always has.... He takes these people who are formed by certain things, suffer from certain faults, which he knows nothing of because when he was with them he was busy making them into romantic figures instead of knowing what they were about" (208-09).

Perkins' role with Fitzgerald, in contrast to the stance he took with Wolfe, seems to be that of someone trying to get the writer restarted: "I was extremely interested in what you said about Scott and about the novel. I knew that a great deal of this was true, and yet a great deal of the good writing he has done has come from that very fact of a sort of adolescent romanticism. I saw Scott last week in Baltimore and things are very far from right with him, and it is all based on this confusion in himself. There are certain fundamental things about which he has the strangest, most unreal ideas.... Here he is, only about thirty-five or six years old, with immense ability in writing, and in a state of hopelessness. But it is useless to try to talk directly to him about it. The only way one could make an impression would be by some oblique method, and that takes a cleverer person than I am" (210).

But probably Perkins was far more clever than he was giving himself credit for. His letters to

Charles Scribner and Scott Fitzgerald regarding acceptance of Hemingway's *Sun Also Rises* suggest that while he had misgivings about Hemingway's work, he was perceptive enough to realize the importance to Scribners of having a reputation for being supportive of young writers. To Scott: "Yet the book is not an unmixed pleasure because it is almost unpublishable" (39) and to Scribner: "You wanted to know the decision on Hemingway: We took it, — with misgiving. In the course of the debate I argued that the question was a crucial one in respect to younger writers; — that we suffered by being called 'ultra-conservative' [even if unjustly + with malice) + that this would become our reputation for the present when our declination of this book should, as it would, get about" (38-39). Perkins' letters reveal an individual who knew how to work with particular individuals, getting out of them their best and keeping them whenever possible at Scribners. Perkins was not a sportsman, but he welcomed Hemingway's invitations to hunt or fish. He has a delightful comment about Marjorie Rawlings that reveals just how much he was aware both of his personal inclinations and his professional responsibilities when he writes Hemingway in 1934: "Maybe I might come down to Key West. I would like to do it mighty well. I'd like to spend an afternoon on the dock looking at those lazy turtles swimming around. The trouble is there is another author in Florida, Marjorie Rawlings. She is a fine author too, and a fine woman. But I never did feel comfortable alone with women ... and the idea of visiting one with nobody else around (she is divorced) scares me to death" (217). And this from a man with five daughters.

The Only Thing That Counts is not the only source of the letters of Perkins and Hemingway, but it is useful and accessible, and the attractive selection made by Matthew Bruccoli provides insight into the skills of these two major twentieth-century figures. Perkins recognized Hemingway's talent for cutting to the heart of a character and his need to trust himself, and Perkins supported those qualities: on *For Whom The Bell Tolls* — "I am just sending you a line to say that I have read all of the manuscript there is here, and am still in a kind of daze, half in that land, and half in this, — which has happened to me twice before in reading your manuscripts. I think this book has greater power, and larger dimensions, greater emotional force, than anything you have done before" (283). And the selection of Hemingway letters let us see an individual whose desire to push himself in the physical world of hunting and fishing mirrors his desire to hone his craft, competing against other writers and making his work do as much as he was capable of. We see many of his storied weaknesses, of course, but the man committed to getting the best from himself comes through clearly. That quality of continually going after the best seems to have been shared by both Perkins and Hemingway. (A. CARL BREDAHL, UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA)

KANG LIU. *Aesthetics and Marxism: Chinese Aesthetic Marxists and Their Western Contemporaries*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2000. US $19.95 paper, $59.95 cloth.

This study is, first and foremost, an introduction of modern Chinese aestheticians, both Marxist and non-Marxist, and their relations with a motley array of Western counterparts from classical German aestheticians to post-modern Marxist theorists. More than an introduction, it is a critical rethinking of the interplay between the two fundamental issues in modern Chinese thought: aesthetics and Marxism. It tells of how modern Chinese thinkers have attempted, since the turn of the 20th century, to employ Marxism and aesthetics to construct an alternative modernity to avert the crisis in the Chinese consciousness and fulfill the dual task of enlightenment and national salvation. Placing the issues under examination squarely against the background of general aesthetics and within the broader context of global Marxism, the author successfully weaves heterogeneous strands of Marxism and aesthetics in China and the West into a coherent and meaningful narrative of the genealogy of the aesthetic discourses in modern China, with a dazzling vortex of conceptual migrations, practical modifications, and creative transformations.

The book consists of five chapters and a preface. The first chapter deals with the key theoretical issues that inform the book: aesthetics, modernity, alternative modernity, cultural critique, etc., and narrates the reception of these issues before and shortly after the coming of Marxism. It traces the origin of why aesthetics has been emphasized in modern Chinese history by briefly examining Liang Qichao, Wang Guowei, and Cai Yuanpei's efforts at making aesthetics serve China's needs to search for modernity and salvation. The bulk of the book covers the historical periods from the 1910s to the 1980s, and narrates the story of how Marxist aesthetics has developed in China over a time span of 70 years. For all its heterogeneous concerns, the study never loses sight of the main theme defined by the book's title. In a way, the main title and sub-title not only adequately summarize the content of the book but also serve as its warp and woof. While the main title defines the subject matter, the sub-title specifies the scope. The interaction between the main title and sub-title enacts an intriguing drama with a diverse cast drawn from both Chinese and Western traditions. If the Chinese scholars make up the main cast who stage their performance in the foreground, their Western counterparts constitute a supporting cast in the background who assists the main characters and illuminates the drama's plot through prompts, asides, and dialogues. Under the rubric of Marxism and aesthetics, the author brings in practically all the important thinkers in modern China, who have made contributions to the topics of aesthetics. In their ranks we find Marxist thinkers like Qu Qiubei, Lu Xun, Mao Zedong, Hu Feng, Li Zehou and Zhu Guangqian, and non-Marxist thinkers like Wang Guowei, Liang Qichao, Cai Yuanpei, Hu Shi and others. At the same time, he also brings in a host of Western aestheticians including Hegel, Kant, Schiller, Schopenhauer, Marx, Lenin, Lukács, Gramsci, Horkheimer, Adorno, Althusser, Benjamin, Marcuse, Williams, Jameson, and Eagleton, who have influenced or been influenced by or commented on their Chinese counterparts. A great achievement of the book is therefore the degree of success in relating Chinese issues of aesthetics and Marxism with similar concerns in the West and in enabling the seemingly local issues of Chinese aesthetics to become an organic part of global Marxist aesthetics.

The book is a celebration of the achievements of modern Chinese thinkers. It has convincingly demonstrated that since the coming of the West, Chinese aesthetic and Marxist thought are not merely preoccupied with the rudimentary work of introduction and interpretation of the imported Western theories. Having digested and absorbed the imported theories, modern Chinese thinkers have made creative efforts to integrate them with traditional Chinese theories and social reality, thereby enriching both aesthetics and Marxism. In the West, except for a utopian vision of a constructive nature, Marxist aesthetics has mainly remained a critical tool. But this study has shown that aesthetic Marxism in China has performed a dual role of critique and construction. While performing the task of critiquing the intrinsic contradictions in Chinese society, it offers a constructive vision of culture in a post-revolutionary society, although that vision has been seriously tarnished by the CCP's politicization of aesthetics and instrumentalization of Marxism. In the evaluation of the role played by aesthetic Marxism in modern China, the study reveals the value of Chinese Marxist aesthetic theories that goes beyond the local Chinese scene. It thus suggests that Chinese thinkers up to the 1980s were able to carry on truly meaningful dialogues with their Western counterparts from whom they had learned so much in aesthetics and Marxism without blindly following their footsteps, as many present-day Chinese intellectuals tend to do in cultural studies.

Despite numerous studies of Marxism and aesthetics, the general picture of global aesthetic Marxism is not complete, and will always remain so because it is like T.S. Eliot's conception of Western literary tradition. But its present incompleteness is strongly felt, not because the Marxist tradition is constantly changing, and needs to be re-established and re-evaluated with the appearance of new theories, but because the jigsaw puzzle lacks a significant piece, which is the Chinese chapter of Marxist aesthetics. Since Marxist theories of aesthetics have all along been the dominant theoretical discourse in modern Chinese thought and had the strongest impact upon Chinese society and culture, this in-completeness has been doubly felt. In this regard, Liu Kang's book is a welcome addition that has filled a conspicuous hiatus. In a way, I may say that this book has considerably altered the general configuration of Marxist aesthetics in the global context.

I take issue with the author on a minor point in the book, which is nevertheless a major concern in comparative literature. In arguing against facile equations between the Tao and Logos, and between the Chinese and de-constructive views of language, the study claims that in China, "there has never been a strong sentiment against the alleged 'tyranny of mimesis'"; nor has there been an "intense apprehension of the unreliable and untrustworthy status of language." For these reasons, it chastises Chinese deconstructionists who neglect "the dominant Confucian notion that presupposes a natural bond and reciprocal interaction between signs and things" (24). It seems to me that the author has oversimplified an exceedingly complicated issue. The skepticism for the adequacy of language as a mean of representation is not just confined to Daoists thinkers like Laozi and Zhuangzi "Xicizhuan" (Appendixes to the *Book of Changes*) is reputedly the first classic of the Confucian canon, but precisely in this discourse, Confucius is quoted as making the famous saying: *shu bu jin yan, yan bu jin yi* (Writing cannot fully express words; words cannot fully express ideas). Of course, Confucius added a remark to qualify his negative view of language and representation: "The sages established images to fully express their thought, designed hexagrams to fully express the true and false conditions of affairs, and attached verbalizations to fully express what they wanted to say." Clearly, "Xicizhuan" adopted a dialectical view of the relationship between language and thought. Linguistic skepticism has been a major line of thought in traditional China. During the Wei-Jin periods, there was a famous debate on whether language could adequately express ideas. Though it ended inconclusively with no indication of which side got the upper hand, the debate has continued intermittently throughout the ages. The negative thesis of skepticism has been entertained by avowed Confucian scholars. Thus, it is somewhat simplistic to describe linguistic skepticism as a purely Daoist view in Chinese tradition. As for the lack of anxiety over the tyranny of mimesis, the study was restating an almost accepted view by some comparatists in the field, who have not adequately assessed the legacy of Chinese aesthetic theories. This is an issue that requires a long article or even a book. Here, I only wish to state that Chinese thinkers may not have approached the problems of representation in speculative or reflective mode of thinking and expression, but to say that Chinese tradition has no great anxiety over the "tyranny of mimesis" is indicative of insufficient grasp of traditional Chinese thought and aesthetics. Lu Ji (261-303) states in his *Wen-fu* [Discourse on Literature]: "I constantly fear that my ideas are not adequate to the objects of the world and my writing not adequate to capture my ideas." Liu Yuxi (772-842) expressed similar anxiety in his poetic lines: *chang hen yanyu jian/ bu ji renyi sheng* (I constantly regret that language is shallow/ And does not reach as deep as human thought). The notion of a natural bond between signs and things admittedly represents a tradition, but linguistically speaking, it is not the correct tradition. It is doubtful whether it is Confucian or dominant. Xun Zi (300-230 BC), the great Confucian thinker, posited the correct cardinal principle of sign representation: *yueding sucheng* (the naming of things is determined by common agreement and customary usage). This principle, recognized as the first cornerstone of Chinese linguistics, corresponds exactly with Saussure's notion of the arbitrariness of sign and the linguistic principle that the relation of a sign to its referent is humanly designated.

Conducted from a multidisciplinary perspective that combines history, philosophy, politics, comparative literature, and cultural studies, this study adopts an approach unlikely to be favored by traditional Sinology. Throughout the book, the author has emphasized the two-way flow of ideas, concepts, and influences in the exchanges between Chinese and Western Marxist aesthetic theories, thus bringing about an interesting exchange between Chinese and Western thought. The study is not an easy book, not because of its language or approach, but because of its overwhelming scope, its coverage of diverse topics, and its theory-driven penchant. The general reader will find it a highly valuable introduction to Chinese Marxist aesthetics and its major theorists. For specialists who wish to delve into the subject in depth, there are plenty of interesting avenues for further inquiry. If one wants to find to what extent Chinese scholars have developed aesthetics and Marxism, the most valuable parts are certainly those dealing with Mao Zedong, Hu Feng, Zhu Guangqian, and Li Zehou's aesthetic and cultural ideas.

The author could have made some speculative efforts to extrapolate out of the Chinese case, "some alternative model of cultural criticism," but I may have demanded too much. To conclude, the author should be congratulated on his remarkable success in pulling together different strands of thought, classical and modern, Chinese and Western, Marxist and non-Marxist; and issues as diverse as politics, philosophy, aesthetics, revolution, modernism, postmodernism, cultural critique, and social reform. Marked by an adequate command of the diverse issues under examination, a critical mind that refuses to take for granted existent scholarship and paradigms, and an innovative desire to reconceptualize the study of aesthetics and Marxism beyond the Chinese context, especially beyond the traditional domains of Sinology, this study represents the highest achievement on the topic to date and is unlikely to be superseded in the near future. (MING DONG GU, RHODES COLLEGE)

DOMINICK LACAPRA. *Writing History, Writing Trauma*. Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins Press, 2001. Pp. 226. US $21.50 paper, $48.00 hardcover.

The multitude of international texts — poetic, autobiographical, fictional — about the Holocaust experience that emerged in large number since 1945 have produced an equally extensive body of critical writing on the issue of representation. From the beginning there were diverging assumptions as to who was entitled to have his/or her voice heard, and in which manner, the frequently-invoked debate involving Adorno's statement about poetry "after Auschwitz" being only one instance. In addition to the theoretical debates and published criticism, the publication history of Holocaust literature provides further, albeit indirect, evidence about the expectations of such writing in different cultural settings. LaCapra characterizes different reasons for the unwillingness to deal with the Holocaust in the United States, Israel and Europe after an initial surge of publications in the immediate post-Shoah era, and for the changed situation at the present time. Contrary to earlier realist writing about the Holocaust, more recent texts make the posttraumatic condition evident by "acting out" the trauma in repetitive and disruptive patterns, or, as is the case in the works of Celan and Aichinger, a mystical approach to a past whose presence is maintained by means of pointing to the textual void of the inexpressible. As LaCapra points out the Holocaust constitutes so much so a caesura that certain critics consider the concept postmodern synomous with post-Holocaust.

LaCapra's book contains four essays and one interview for Yad Vashem (1998), all of them devoted to the problem of trauma and the representation of traumatic events, a central concerns in the modern thought, and of particular significance after the Second World War. In his brilliant analyses of contemporary historical and critical writing, LaCapra argues for historical specificity and transparency also in the case of the "limit situation" (Grenzsituation) of the Holocaust. Debates such as the ones on the uniqueness and the normalization, "unspeakablity," the assumed ordinariness or monstrosity of the perpetrators, the place of the victims' voices, and the discussions about the psychological mechanisms for coping with a history of trauma and concepts such as "transference" and "working through" are an integral part of LaCapra's argument. As is common among contemporary historians, he also addresses literary and theoretical, texts, criticism, and feature films in his discussion, just to mention Spielberg's *Schindler's List* and Schlink's *The Reader*, which he subjects to a similar discourse analysis as historical writing. Unfortunately, important albeit uncomfortable modes of expression such as the satire or the grotesque are excluded, and it is precisely texts in these genres — Hilsenrath's *Story of the Last Thought*, or Lind's *Soul of Wood* — that convey insights of interest to the historian and the literary scholar alike. Hilsenrath, for example, provides in his novel a scathing deconstruction of historiography and historians, calling for an altogether non-academic alternative mode of recording past events from the point of view of the survivors.

In his preface LaCapra cautions against foregrounding the trauma as a "pretext for avoiding economic, social, and political analyses," and against "obscuring the difference between victims of traumatic historical events and others not directly experiencing them" (ix). In the essay "Writing History, Writing Trauma" LaCapra situates his critical approach in the middle ground between two forms of historiography he considers extreme, positivism and radical constructivism. In his exploration of discursive models as appropriate to the representation of extreme situations such as the Holocaust, LaCapra explores, among others, the potential of a "middle voice," as proposed by Hayden White. Characterizing unchecked identification as one extreme and the objectification of victims as the other, LaCapra maintains that historiography requires a certain degree of objectification as well as empathy, the latter to counteract victimization and self-victimization (40) and to allow for the working through of trauma. "Trauma, Absence, Loss" discusses the conflation of absence and loss in many critical and literary texts as evidence of the impact of trauma and the post-traumatic condition of disorientation. Examining psychoanalytic theory, notably Derrida, Lacan, Nancy, and ek, LaCapra emphasizes the need to maintain specificity in the discussion of absence and loss. While the insistence on conceptual clarity and the proper historical contextualization in historical writing is convincing, similar norms applied to genres of creative writing would clearly be restrictive. The dilemma of genre and representation (and the need to take recourse to moral and ethical categories) is particularly obvious when LaCapra ventures into the "gray" area of texts that pretend to be something they are not, for example the Wilkomirski memoir.

Contrasting structural and historical losses, LaCapra argues that it is possible to avoid the latter by fostering specificity and articulating "more desirable socialand political institutions and practices" (85). The call for specificity also informs "Holocaust Testimonies: Attending to the Victim's Voice." Here, LaCapra discusses, among others, Claude Lanzmann, particularly in his role as interviewer in *Shoah* and, in "Writing Trauma, Writing History," the case of Wilkomirski to explore the issues of boundaries and authenticity. The latter issue is again raised in the discussion of Goldhagen ("Perperators and Victims: The Goldhagen Debate and Beyond"), whose prose LaCapra aptly compares to fictional writing.

The interview for Yad Vashem which follows the four essays is the most accessible part of the volume. In his responses to questions that run the gamut of the entire book LaCapra clarifies his theses in an eloquent, superbly direct approach. This section, thematically arranged by the topics "'Acting Out' and 'Working Through' Trauma," "Redemptive Narratives," "The Holocaust as a Denial of Other Traumas?" succinctly articulates major issues raised in the previous articles and the disciplinary questions facing scholars dealing with the Holocaust and other "limit events" (206).

In an exemplary fashion LaCapra's essays as well as the interview reveal the importance of the affective element not only in historical writing but also in other genres. LaCapra elaborates the importance of a type of representation that avoids the pitfalls of victimization, scapegoating, of sentimentalizing (as present in the ending of *Schindler's List*), thereby avoiding the repetition of the trauma and the reproduction of the mechanisms that caused it. Imbedded in his far-reaching analysis of vastly diverse texts is a plea for a humane rationality and theoretical moderation that deserve to be taken seriously. (DAGMAR C.G. LORENZ, UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT CHICAGO)

*CONSTANTIN V. PONOMAREFF. *In the Shadow of the Holocaust and Other Essays*. Amsterdam, Atlanta: Rodopi, Internationale Forschungen zur Allgemeinen und Vergleichenden Literaturwissenschaft, 1998. Pp. 127. US $28.00 paper.

The title chosen by the author is misleading; of fifteen essays, only two deal with the Holocaust. The book is made up of three different untitled parts. Indeed, the book begs the question of the relationship between essays treating a variety of subjects. The first part for example includes, as well as essays on the Holocaust, studies on Lawrence of Arabia and on Mayakovsky as well as a general article on "The Self in Cultural History."

Following the title's own implied logic and starting with studies devoted to the Holocaust, the first of theses challenges Adorno's view that, after the Holocaust, art and poetry could or, at least, should no longer be written. Following Langer, Ponomareff argues that survivors' writing about their experience stems from the need to communicate and exorcise their pain. He cites the pre-eminent Israeli writer, David Grossman, who wrote on another issue — the Israeli-Palestinian conflict: "the writer's job, I believe, is to put a finger on the wound, to write anew..." (26). Ponomareff goes on to claim that, although European authors in general treated the issue of the Holocaust, the need to write about it was felt especially by Russian and German writers who lived under totalitarian regimes. How was one to speak of that which was unspeakable? Writers seem to have chosen a metaphorical language; to have used the poetic power of metaphors to communicate the inexpressible.

In an essay devoted to "Some aspects of the post-Holocaust Jewish psyche," Ponomareff comes to terms with recent political choices made by the Israeli people and suggests that we might explain them in terms of the trauma of the Holocaust: "the past hunts the present.... It is as if the Israeli psyche *had to relive* its suffering at the hands of the Nazis, but this time at the expense of the Palestinian, humiliating them in turn" (37). For Ponomareff, who surveys various recent events in Israel, notably the Intifada, the Holocaust is really a portmanteau word which can serve to explain a variety of events occurring in Israel. This is an erroneous approach to a study of the Israeli psyche. The soldiers who humiliated Palestinians during the first Intifada and those who are now serving during the second Intifada were born respectively in the seventies and the eighties and raised by parents born in the forties and fifties respectively (who did not therefore experience the Holocaust). For these young persons the Shoah is far away and certainly does not hunt their psyche. The violence of both Israelis and Palestinians derives from bitter disputes about land, and is driven by the fact that both peoples have legitimate and strong claims. Indeed, the complexity and intensity of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict stems from the fact that both peoples can justify their claims and both peoples are aware that there is a certain element of justice in the other side's arguments. It is this conflict that hunts both the Israeli and the Palestinian psyche rather than the Shoah; it is this factor that explains the violence on both sides (and Ponomareff does not, by the way, explain Palestinian brutality in terms of the Holocaust). The Israelis, who experience terror in their everyday life, have basic concerns about questions such as whether or not to take the bus, how to send their children to school, how to avoid main roads. In addition they face the disastrous economic repercussions of the situation. The Israeli psyche is too much preoccupied by existential and everyday problems for the Shoah still to be a preoccupation to the extent that Ponomareff suggests. Besides, half of the Israeli population, the Sefarad and their descendants, did not experience the Shoah. And generally speaking, to explain diverse phenomena in terms of the Holocaust is something of a worn-out cliché.

In the opening essay, "The self in cultural history," Ponomareff suggests that the history of Western culture over the past three thousand years can be read as "man's continuous struggle to liberate himself from divine despotic intervention and to humanise himself and his existence on earth" (3). While in the Renaissance interest in man and his environment increased, in modern times the self has become alienated. Artists reflected in their works the malaise of their times and Man's awarenes of his isolation in the world and of dehumanisation. This essay is followed by two articles devoted to Lawrence of Arabia and Mayakovsky. Ponomareff argues that what brought Lawrence of Arabia to the desert were personal traumas; thus the desert allowed him to be with a male Arab companionship that fitted his homosexuality. Ponomareff also looks into the soul of Mayakovsky, suggesting that his suicide derived from "an instinctive penchant for destructiveness" (18) rather than from ideological reasons. Mayakovsky, argues Ponomareff, realised that by placing his poetry at the service of the Russian revolution, he was betraying both his poetic and his human vision. "In my view," writes Ponomareff, "what ultimately destroyed Mayakovsky was that quintessential loss of the sense of one's own legitimacy as a human being" (22). Ponomareff ends his article by stating that "there was no other way out for him" (ibid). The analyses of both Mayakovsky and Lawrence of Arabia are not well supported and seem to me imprudent. Ponomareff ends the first part of his book by suggesting that "it may be that the inhuman chemistry of our century has been the bitter medicine necessary for our being shocked into a spiritual recovery" (45).

The second part of the book deals mainly with Russian literature. However, it starts with a theoretical article on synæsthesia: "Synæsthesia as Reader Response." Ponomareff claims that "there is no point for synæsthesia ... if the reader's experience is excluded" (51). This claim is interesting because synæsthesia challenges the possibility of constructing a representation. Nevertheless, Ponomareff does not develop his argument but rather turns to dealing with synæsthesia in Russian literature. One may wonder why Ponomareff fails to mention Ullmann (1945, 1957) and Siebold (1919, 1932) whose works are cornerstones for research on synæsthesia. Nor does he refer to Shen (1998) who proposes a cognitive explanation for these researchers' main findings. Much the same applies to the two following essays; in the first Ponomareff briefly surveys the representation of woman in the writings of various Russian authors, noting, for example, that woman is almost absent from Gogol's work, that Lermontov is hostile to woman etc. In the following essay, Ponomareff turns to Russian Symbolist literature and writes that "women are first idealised, then victimised, but then allowed to triumph in the end" (73). The question that both essays raise is how, in 1998, one can write about the representation of woman in while ignoring the huge wealth of research in Gender Studies.

In another essay Ponomareff deals with the mystic dimension in Russian poetry, that is, those times "when the poet seems in touch with something beyond his consciousness ... God" (75). Ponomareff states that "poetry, by its very nature, shares in that mystic affinity for life which is expressed at moments of profound poetic inspiration" (ibid.). There are poems that leave us with a sense of spiritual transcendence. The poets' search for Epiphany may become a psychological process of legitimisation and consequently of healing hidden suffering. Ponomareff discusses the mystic dimension of the works of poets such as Skovoroda (1722-94) who left a collection of mystical poems, Batyushkov (1787-1855) as well as Pushkin (1799-1837), who seems to be torn between demon and God, Lermontov (1814-41) etc.

In the essay "The Paradoxical Nature of Russian Literary Text," Ponomareff argues that various Russian authors, such as Pushkin, Turgenev and Dostoevsky left us with highly paradoxical texts. Turgenev's hero, for example, in *Fathers and Children*, a self-proclaimed nihilist who feels superiority in society learned at the end of his life that he was not made to be a nihilist. Another example is provided by Esenin's poetry which celebrates both death and decay as well as the exact opposites, love and life. Ponomareff argues that this paradoxical nature of Russian literature is grounded in Russian society. Russia

has many times been forced to shift its spiritual and political focus, producing "diametrically opposed visions of social reality" (104).

The third part deals with a variety of issues, beginning with "God in Search of Self: Divine tragedy." Ponomareff argues that God created the world because he was not self-sufficient. However, he decided to expel Adam and Eve from paradise because he saw them as a threat to his divinity. It is certainly true that God feels a persistent need for man's obedience to and faith in him. This need is reflected in the demand that Isaac should be sacrificed as well as in the story of Job. "God's desire for human reincarnation and companionship" (108) was expressed in the life of Christ and in his crucifixion which emphasised God's desire to be a part of the human world. The same holds true for the mythological gods. In the works of Homer and Virgil the gods desire a human relationship even though the earth is a place of suffering.

The three final essays deal with specific works: Wolfgang Borchert's play *The Man Outside,* Camus's *L'Étranger* and Malcolm Lowry's *Under The Volcano*. The first writers urge their readers to start anew and build a new society on bare ground without regarding the religious and political European institutions that brought to a moral bankruptcy. In Borchert's play the hero comes back from the war and finds Germany in ruins. He decides to build his life but the play suggests that "far from progressing into a brighter future, man was regressing in time, turning non human" (114). As for Camus's *L'Étranger*, Ponomareff argues that Meursault was a personification of the precepts of existentialism. He lacks emotions, lives a life of hedonism and refuses promotion at work. "All this gave him a sense of independence and freedom to be himself" (117). Ponomareff quotes Camus on the point that Meursault's actions seem unmotivated. Camus says that Meursault is "a poor naked man ... animated by a passion ... for the absolute and for truth" (quoted in Ponomareff 119). Ponomareff makes the link between *L'Étranger* and *L'Homme révolté* who seeks reasons for living. Finally, Malcolm Lowry's work describes a love story between a man and his divorced wife during the Spanish civil war. According to Ponomareff, Lowry's message is that it is impossible to live without love. However, though the hero, a consul in Mexico, has many opportunities to leave that country with his wife and to start a new life in Canada, he stays in Mexico. In my view, Ponomareff is at his best when dealing with Russian literature, which seems to be his speciality. (IRIS YARON, UNIVERSITÉ MARC BLOCH, STRASBOURG II)

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ELIOT BORENSTEIN. *Men without Women. Masculinity and Revolution in Russian Fiction, 1917-1929.* Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2000. Pp. 346. US $19.95 paper, $59.95 cloth.

The last decades of the twentieth-century enabled various groups, which had been hitherto marginalized, to speak with their own voice and to write their own history. The first and largest among these groups were, quite obviously, women. It does not, then, come as a surprise that a similar development occurred in Russian literary studies: the last quarter of the century saw the appearance of a number of critical works devoted to women as literary characters and as writers. Initially popular primarily among female scholars, the feminist approach to Russian literature became eventually widely accepted, so that at present many North American universities offer feminist courses in Russian literature or cultural studies.

Russian literature proved of special interest to feminist-oriented critics because of the striking contrast between the relatively limited number of women authors and the significant number of world famous female literary characters. Furthermore, the erosion of the Soviet empire weakened the politically oriented interest in its culture, which was the main motivation behind 20th century Western studies of Russia, including its literature. Feminist critical trends coincided at the end of the century both with the collapse of the Soviet Union (and the erosion of Russia's leading role in the world) and with the appearance of a fairly large number of women writers and their growing contribution to Russian literary life. Given the rather minimal impact of Russian feminists (whose numbers were small) on literary studies in the last decades of the USSR, the credit for generating a significant interest in women in Russian literature can presumably go to Western (including North American) critics. It may be safely assumed that the very fact of putting women issues into critical circulation carried some importance for the development of Russian literature.

Another interesting result of the process of "feminization" (or more precisely — of the engendering) of Russian literature and literary studies is the growing awareness that what has been previously described as patriarchal (i.e. essentially male) comes from a specific definition of maleness and does not necessarily represent men in general, controlling and constraining "male" behavior to the exclusion of other types of behavior, such as, for instance, homosexual. Post-feminist critics define "patriarchy" not as the generalized institution of male dominance, as did the feminists in their critiques, but rather as a more traditional and symbolic notion of the "rule of the father," placing greater emphasis on family versus other social relations. And it is this interest in post feminist views of maleness, its cultural construction and socially acceptable variations that is the focus of Eliot Borenstein's book *Men Without Women. Masculinity and Revolution in Russian Fiction, 1917-1929*. An in-depth under-standing of the relations between ideology and practice in the Soviet Union is coupled here with a good grasp of the clash between the rise of the official line of feminism (or the "women question") characteristic of early Soviet policies and a profoundly male iconography and men-oriented symbolic systems prevailing in the "first communist country in the world."

The second decade of the last century — the literary period here under scrutiny — seems to be particularly appropriate for this kind of study. The beginning of a new, communist era of Russian society with its "refreshing" phraseology and "new" ideology has been traditionally studied from a primarily political point of view. The focus included the phraseology used to promote an interest in the situation of women as well as the establishment and the short life of the *Zhenotdel*. It may be said that Borenstein begins where others have stopped. He understands the impact of communist ideology on the social processes of the time and especially on the erosion of the traditional, family-oriented structures, but he also understands the nature of the long tradition affected by these changes and its persistence. The society whose picture he paints is in fact much less "innovative" or revolutionary than one might have thought. In other words, he argues that the new ideology, despite its stated goal of getting rid of the past, had actually reformulated it, replacing the old, patriarchal structures with ones analogous to them. The family, as a concept based on biological affiliation, was to be replaced by relationships based primarily on common ideology, not blood relations. In his view this is consistent with the communists' attempt to ignore nature and biology and to make them serve human beings. This should not, however, be taken as a complete rupture with tradition. Using as an example Gogol's references to the Cossacks (as an all male community), Borenstein argues that "the aversity to the traditional family was not the sole provenance of political radicals. Though the nature of the Soviet attack on the family was dictated by left-wing ideology, the form of the projected new social relationship is largely indebted to Russian religious tradition" (26). So, for instance, the concept of comradeship, an iconic term of the early Soviet period, is in his book explained as a communist variant of brotherhood, or more precisely, of *pobratimstvo*, which in turn was regarded as a blood-like relationship between men with roots in pre-Christian Russian culture. Comradeship was not to be confused with friendship since the latter is not based on common ideology and goals.

Studying social processes reflected in literary works, Borenstein uses a variety of ideas in, as he himself admits, a consciously eclectic and not always well-coordinated manner. "Said, Remy, and Sedgwick provide a useful vocabulary for discussing the ties among men — filiation, fratriarchy, and homosociality, respectively — while Gray's distinction between comradeship and friendship is crucial for our understanding of the texts in hand. Freud, Levi-Strauss, Sedgwick, and Girard offer useful models for approaching the role played by women in male relationships" (36-37), writes Borenstein, adding that the phenomenon of male oriented utopia should not and cannot be examined outside of its socio-historical context. This is because while the early Soviet masculine utopianism can be — at least in part and in terms of some of its ideas- traced back in history and is not limited to Russia at the turn of the century, it is characteristic of that particular period. Furthermore, he examines it not only as a Soviet phenomenon but also as part of an early twentieth century modernist discourse in general, and sees certain similarities with another -ism ideology, namely fascism, in its approach to masculinity in both iconography and phraseology. At the same time he provides a specifically Russian literary background to his study by well-chosen references to the Russian literary tradition. Even the very titles of the chapters of his book, to mention just "Dead Fathers and Sons" or "Comrade Myshkin" as most striking examples, provide an intertextual web of literary references.

Literary texts chosen by the author for special scrutiny belong to "the particular strain of Russian literature" in which, as Borenstein says, women were either barely present or reduced to bodiless "abstracts." In fact, it would be difficult to come with a better description of the character of the works analyzed in this study. Basically the number of texts discussed in detail is very small and consists of *Red Cavalry* by Isaac Babel, *Envy* by Yuri Olesha and Andrei Platonov's *Chevengur* with a number of occasional references to other literary works, the latter being mostly by the same authors. Borenstein makes no attempt to deal with a wider spectrum of works written in the period to which his analytical categories could not be applied meaningfully, and it is enough to mention Zamyatin or Bulgakov (with his unforgettable Margarita) to make the point. Similarly, there is no room in his book for a discussion of the poetic form of female persona or for that matter, of the works of Akhmatova and Tsvetayeva. Instead it largely follows the attitude toward women formulated in Blok's poetry — from fascination to estrangement.

Borenstein claims that there were two sexual revolutions in early Soviet Russia and his study is concerned primarily with the second one, which, deeply rooted in Russian radicalism and intellectual history, argued in favour of revolutionary ascetism. What interests him is thus not so much what women were able to contribute to literature and culture of the period (or the discussions surrounding them) but rather how male oriented literature was in fact reinterpreting and using for its own purposes the myth of the Eternal feminine and, in the process, transforming women "into abstracts." And it goes without saying that the texts he chose for his study are meant not only to exemplify his ideas but also to prove his points. But they are also more than mere examples. While the literary texts discussed in the book were written in a reaction to the communist revolution, the authors whose works are analyzed did not enjoy for long the regime's benevolent attitude, and the idea of society presented in their works did not survive even the first years of Stalin's rule, not to mention the years after the imposition of Socialist Realism. Thus Borenstein's study is devoted to literature which bears witness to the enthusiasm and freedom of ideological trends of the first years after the Soviet revolution and provides readers with examples of quasi-communist literary utopias which later were viewed with rather serious consequences as counterrevolutionary.

The book is based on the author's doctoral dissertation and, being subject to the scrutiny of an examination committee, displays the caution typical of doctoral dissertations; this means that it contains few assumptions that can be questioned — and it is usually the bolder kind of assumptions that lead to the most interesting discussions. Nevertheless, well written and amply informed, replete with insight and based on a good grasp of Russian literary and social discourses, Borenstein's book provides a much needed companion to a number of recently published feminist-oriented studies of Soviet and post-Soviet Russian literature. (BO_ENA KARWOWSKA, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA)

CLAUDIA MOSCOVICI. *From Sex Objects to Sexual Subjects*. New York: Routledge, 1996. Pp. 190. US $70.00 hardcover, $20.95 paper.

Claudia Moscovici's *From Sex Objects to Sexual Subjects* is relatively brief as critical texts go (ninety-eight pages, including notes), but the issues she raises are weighty, and her treatment of them interesting and insightful. At first glance, Moscovici's volume might appear to hint at a historical progression in subjectivity, with the title's opening suggestion of "from ... to." Her treatment of the issue in her introduction and five essays is not a linear, historical progession *per se*, however; the essays actually engage in a relatively ahistorical comparison and contrast of Enlightenment, Kantian, Habermassian, and contemporary feminist philosophical thinking about the basic concept of subjectivity. In her own words, the "five interrelated yet relatively independent essays" share a unifying concern with "some of the ways in which Enlightenment and postmodernist theories constantly negotiate the boundaries and tensions between universality and particularist socio-political paradigms in their definitions of the subject and, relatedly, in their construction of public and private spheres" (4).

That general focus is further refined in light of the gender emphasis also implied by Moscovici's title. Within her argument, the project of critiquing subjectivity "means openly redefining the subject in a manner that does not reduce either men or women to the status of objects, but enables both to function as sexual subjects who share political, social, and cultural power in the context of truly, and not only formally or nominally, democratic societies" (5). To that end, the essays emphasize and analyze the subjectivity of women, as defined by philosophical, political, and sociological methods and writings from both sexes and multiple historical periods.

The book as a whole is structured according to an organizational pattern related to these theoretical foundations. Following the introduction, the text's five chapters move back and forth between Enlightenment and contemporary thinking and thinkers, both within themselves and across essay boundaries as well. Thus, Chapter One addresses contemporary, postmodern thinking on subjectivity as that concept is raised, either directly or indirectly, by Rousseau and Diderot primarily; Chapter Two, subjectivity discussed by Irigaray; Three, Habermas (along with Nancy Fraser and a bit of Judith Butler); Four, Bourdieu and Pollock on Kant. Chapter Five serves as a culminating discussion of subjectivity in relation to "The (Im)possible Future of Democracy," as its subtitle declares.

Moscovici sees this progression as a series of widening circles that move outward from micro to macrostructures as each theorist and theory is taken up. But given the relative independence of each essay from the others, it is possible to simply read the essays as separate pieces, without worrying overmuch about the essential progression of the text as a whole. The theoretical issues, in short, are sufficient to unite the chapters and to provide coherence among them all, whatever the overall design pattern. Such an open-ended sort of reading also serves the differing emphases and weights — the number of pages, to put it simply — devoted to the differing topics of the separate chapters.

There are three comparatively short chapters (One, Two, and Four), which consider subjectivity and democracy in light of more directly literary and/or representational issues. Together, these chapters occupy half of the book's analysis. The rest of the text is taken up by Chapters Three and Five. These two chapters, each of which is nearly twice as long as any of the remaining essays, are the most thorough-going discussions of what are, ultimately, two key concerns of Moscovici's argument: 1) the liberal concern with a society portrayed essentially as group of individuals united by universal principles, and 2) the consequences of the failure of such a sense of subjectivity for models of democracy.

That breakdown in length and direction fits Moscovici's project, with Chapter Five's closing being especially important, since it provides the book with a closing argument that moves beyond critique and into Moscovici's own theoretical vision of the role of subjectivity in society in general and democracy in particular. With that as her project, the lighter treatment provided to more directly representational (or literary) texts is understandable. Given my own interests in literary/critical analysis, I longed for more discussion such as that linked to Diderot's *La Religieuse*. Indeed, this section of the book provides the only point where fictional texts are addressed to any degree within the work as a whole. That complaint points to issues of readership more than argument, however. Such caveats clearly run the risk of becoming comments on the book that is not being reviewed rather than the book that is, and are indicative more of the suggestiveness of that early chapter than of the overall work of the text as a whole.

The reader of Moscovici's text, then, will be most satisfied — and rewarded — by engaging closely with her linked philosophical and socio-political concerns, concerns which are brought together very nicely in the last chapter of her text: "Justice, Equality, and Proportional Group Representation: The (Im)possible Future of Democracy?" In that essay, Moscovici moves beyond simply critiquing other models of subjectivity and fully into the arena of definition herself. Her goal is to provide a framework that both allows for the undeniable effects of social construction while at the same time also allowing the subject some measure of agency. In order to do so, Moscovici's overall rhetorical strategy (as she notes in Chapter Four's discussion of neo-Kantian and Marxian models as opposing poles of artistic creativity), is one of "staking a middle position between two alternatives that are presented as highly problematic" (64).

Such a stance is both useful and problematic for making an argument, of course. On the one hand, it establishes a position from which two "antagonistic" arguments can be critiqued on the grounds of a set of externally chosen oppositions. That accomplished, the rest of the argument is free to move toward a resolution of each opposing failure through a moderating revision of these polarized positions. The problem with such middle ground resolutions, politics aside, are that they often simply flatten real oppositions, resolving valid and important differences through a "lowest-common-denominator" approach.

Moscovici is fully aware of those dangers, however. As she herself states it, her overall stance "is not meant to establish or idealize in an Aristotelian fashion the universality principle of the 'golden mean,' but rather … to provide critiques and alternatives" (64). The possibility for doing so rests ultimately, of course, on the alternatives more than the critiques, hence the importance of Chapter Five.

In this closing essay, Moscovici once again takes up the issue of subject and agency in light of an individual/determinist opposition, here framed as 1) the view of democracy offered by liberal, Enlightenment based, one citizen/one vote approaches and 2) critiques of such views provided in terms of the role that institutional and economic power plays in determining actual subject behavior in an ostensibly democratic society. In taking up that concern, Moscovici also repeats her connection of this chapter with the concerns of the previous essays (83), and stresses further her desire to approach the question on pragmatic and feminist grounds. These are not abstract questions for Moscovici, deeply concerned as she is with addressing the possibilities for real change in current socio-political roles of women and other disenfranchised groups.

The particular resolution offered here is not a universalizing middle ground, but multiple grounds, as it were. The future of valid democratic models, Moscovici believes, lies in multiplicity and differentiation within them, not in excessive unification and idealization. She wants (citing Iris Marion Young's *Justice and the Politics of Difference*) "'a group-based and egalitarian' rather than an 'idealistic and hierarchical' model of democratic citizenship" (82). These are the key elements announced in the chapter's subtitle — "Justice, Equality, and Proportional Group Representation" — of course, and since few would find problems with the first two concepts, the real issue lies in defining the last.

Once more, the issue shifts to a set of oppositions: 1) individualist and 2) "identity-based," a model she rejects, via Condorcet and others, as itself leading to erasure of differences and inequalities within such a group. The resolution offered by Moscovici (which I am only summarizing here and which is based also on work by Young) is to present social groups as not encompassing, yet again, a common denominator of subject-asserted interests, but rather as consisting of sets of subjects defined according to self-recognizable but socially established practices. Defining groups according to these "ascriptive qualities," these shared practices, thus relies upon a basic affinity among group members, while at the same time enabling "the members of such a group such as women [to be] recognized as always socially and politically diverse and overdetermined" (97). Such groups, defined in opposition to universalizing and idealizing and individualizing tendencies, thus provide actual, "proportional" political weight for subjects according to shared affinities and identifications while at the same time ensuring, or at least insisting upon, acknowledgment of their differences.

I have summarized heavily here, and Moscovici herself refers to her "articulation of some of the normative assumptions and political goals" provided in the essay as "open-ended" (83). To some degree, then, a reader may be left wanting further clarification of the actual socio-political dynamics assumed to be at work within these groups, as well as among differing groups. Likewise, the issue of institutionally recognizing any group remains clearly an issue. But, as I noted in discussing Diderot, to push these issues at this point is to ask the book to do more than it intends. What Moscovici offers — and provides — is a set of engaging critiques of subjectivity, primarily via analyses of Enlightenment, neo-Kantian, and Habermassian individualist/universalist assumptions. For the reader who wants more, these essays establish a solid foundation on which to continue the questioning. (JAMES CATANO, LOUISIANA STATE UNIVERSITY)

BARRY RUTLAND, ed. *Gender and Narrativity*. Ottawa: Carlton University Press, 1997. Pp. 259. CAN $27.95, US $24.95 paper.

Papers from a colloquium dealing with comparative literature studies are invariably (and thankfully) a diverse bunch. Selecting any of these papers in order to produce a volume of essays cohering to a central idea must be a difficult task. Barry Rutland, the director of the Centre for Textual Analysis, Discourse and Culture at Carleton University, has made a fine attempt to form one anthology out of a group of nine dissimilar essays, under the rubric "Gender and Narrativity," initiated by an International Colloquium at Carleton in 1987.

I say "attempt" in that addressing a topic as broad as "gender and narrativity" one can never be comprehensive. In addition to this, though, is Rutland's selection of an insufficient theoretical essay to frame (purportedly) the topic at hand. First, though, comes Rutland's own introduction. Central to Rutland's conceit is the concern that "discourses which offer themselves as gender-free ... can be deconstructed to reveal silent gendering in terms of patriarchal masculinity as the governing norm. Narrative, then, seems always to refer to a world which is 'naturally' distributed along dual gender lines" (3). Rutland goes on to argue that fictional narrative cannot be read extra-textually, that is, narrative does not transparently represent the world it purports to correspond to, since it is structured along lines of self-interest and — reference, mainly those determined by the dominant male gender.

Here, we enter the prison-house of language in which "narrative is performative in the speech act theory sense: it posits that to which it refers, and that to which it refers has no being apart from acquiescence with the narrative assertion" (4). Yet if we are all thus positioned, I contend, can we ever escape the overwhelming and continuing dominance of those Lyotardian *grands récits* to which Rutland gestures? How can we ever know a "reality" beyond master narratives if we are using the same tools as those who presumably master *us*?

It is a difficult task that Rutland boldly addresses, and in doing so he uses John Verdon's "Toward an

Epistemology of Gender" and Robert Richard's "Telling the Feminine" as the theoretical underpinnings for the other essays which follow. Verdon's essay, arising from sociological and anthropological concerns, deftly addresses the question posed by Rutland, "to what extent is cultural gender rooted in and constrained by human biological evolution?" (8). In these days of compelling arguments for the social construction of knowledge, Verdon delicately addresses questions of biological essentialism which may influence *and* be constitutive of such construction. His conclusion is not surprising: "[I]nherent sex-specific perceptual orientations act as filters in the organization of a cognized environment. These filters arise out of different male and female structural and ontological processes." Such orientations, he continues, "play important roles in the recognition of environmental contingencies and in this way contribute to the shaping of culturally specific relations between the sexes" (42).

I have quoted Verdon at length not only to point out the significance of what he writes — especially for studies in gender and sexuality — but moreover to highlight how out of place his paper is in relation to the rest of the volume. Indeed, Verdon's socio-scientific work, as foundational as it may be, is not a template upon which any of the remaining essays are written, lodged firmly as they are in the realm of the social. This is unfortunate, though perhaps understandable. What is particularly upsetting in light of this realization, though, is that Verdon's paper is followed by Richard's regrettable musings on the social construction of the feminine.

Part of the blame for the paper must rest with Rutland in not giving Richard's work the thorough editing it so desperately needs. Playing in part to George Cantor's notion of the transfinite, Richard's central contention — that the feminine has been created as foundational to (Western) civilization — is hardly news, although it is a subject that, in the context of this anthology, would appear to be interesting ... initially. Richard, in purchasing his point, takes his reader on a journey filled with governing paradigms (Law, Desire, the Other, the Baroque, *jouissance,* Freedom), notable names (Freud, Kant, Foucault, St. Augustine, Aristotle, Galileo, Lacan, Nietzsche, Locke, Bataille, Aquinas, Descartes, Kristeva, and Barthes), and dualisms (masculine/feminine; pleasure/ pain; respect/disrespect; anti-civilization/pro-civility; new/old; liberalism/ contractualism; hard totalitarianism/soft totalitarianism; subjective/objective), all amongst others.

Why? To what end? It is hard to tell in a rambling essay that addresses not only the feminine, but also Freudian theory, Quebec's language laws, McCarthyism, art, female hysteria, political correctness and Moebius strips. It's dizzying. Perhaps Richard was attempting an informal approach; yet it is telling that when he peppers his essay with the warning "a point to which I will return," you simply don't care.

The two essays which make this collection worthwhile (and come as a relief after reading Richard) are Barbara Godard's excellent "F(r)ictions: Feminists Re/Writing Narrative" and Arnd Bohm's incisive "Androgynous Realism in Heinrich von Kleist's *Die Heilige Cäcilie order Die Gewalt der Musik (Eine Legende).*" More than the other remaining essays in the anthology, these two thoroughly address the topic at hand. Godard, working largely from a deconstructive approach by which she investigates the tensions produced from the contradictory discourses effectively constituting women, argues that “gender differences structure social relationships at all levels and are essential to narrative, whose grammar is grounded in difference and opposition of marked and unmarked pairs” (118). Relying largely on her reading of Carol Shield’s (detective fiction) *Swann*, Godard analyzes the subjective and capricious character of masculine mythologies and their reliance upon a feminine “secondariness.”

In his examination of Kleist, Bohm thoughtfully contends that “the driving forces of Kleist’s narrative [“Saint Celia, or the Power of Music (a Legend)”] are not only truth and power but also a crisis of gender, which manifest itself textually as androgynous realism” (200). Bohm’s critique of this “crisis,” not unlike Godard’s account of “tensions,” results in his contention that “the emergent disclosure or even the possibility of a feminine sublime has destabilized the conventions of masculine narration upon which a conventionalized reading is contingent” (216).

Canadianists reading this volume might appreciate Barbara Gabriel’s reading of Timothy Findley or G. A. Woods’s deliberations on Lucy Maud Montgomery, although they, like the remaining papers by Ben Jones, J. Iain Prattis, and Barry Rutland, don’t quite match the rigor of the three key essays, by Verdon, Godard and Bohm. (ANDREW LESK, TORONTO)

NINA GERASSI-NAVARRO. *Pirate Novels. Fictions of Nation Building in Spanish America.* Durhamn and London: Duke University Press, 1999. Pp. 251. US $17.95 paper, $49.95 cloth.

Siguiendo la línea de interpretación de la literatura decimonónica hispano-americana establecida por Doris Sommer en su conocido estudio *Foundational Fictions. The National Romances of Latin America*, Nina Gerassi-Navarro nos invita a leer las novelas de piratas de ese mismo periodo como textos en los que se intenta transmitir un concepto de nación. A fin de ofrecer un mejor entendimiento de este subgénero narrativo, Gerassi-Navarro inicia su estudio con un capítulo en el que ofrece amplia información sobre la historia de la piratería en el nuevo mundo, las causas de su aparición y desaparición, los piratas más destacados y la terminología relacionada con este fenómeno.

El segundo capítulo se centra en las representaciones literarias de la figura del pirata en la producción hispanoamericana del periodo colonial. A través de la lectura de una serie de textos entre los que destacan *Elegías de varones ilustres de Indias* de Juan de Castellanos, *Armas antárticas* de Juan de Miramontes y Zuázola, *Espejo de paciencia* de Silvestre de Balboa Troya y Quesada, *Peregrinación de Bartolomé Lorenzo* de José Acosta, *Los infortunios de Alonso Ramírez* de Carlos Sigüenza y Góngora y *El desierto prodigioso y prodigio del desierto* de Pedro de Solís y Valenzuela, Gerassi-Navarro observa cómo, al ser el único enemigo que ponía en jaque el poder de España en el Nuevo Mundo, el pirata era visto como la viva encarnación de las fuerzas del mal, un ser diabólico cuyo único propósito en el mundo era el de destruir el afán cristiano y civilizador de los españoles. Con todo, Gerassi-Navarro advierte cómo, sin dejar de ser tratado como un enemigo temible, los escritores hispanoamericanos le fueron gradualmente atribuyendo acciones que no correspondían con el retrato de bestia feroz que, por otro lado, recreaban en sus relatos, revelándose así un cambio paulatino en la imagen del pirata, indicador del atractivo que este marginado social iba teniendo en una sociedad cada vez más descontenta con el sistema en el poder.

A partir del capítulo tercero, el estudio se centra en la narrativa posterior a la Independencia. Se nos presentan aquí los textos a los que la autora va acudir repetidamente para ilustrar su tesis sobre el nacionalismo de las novelas de piratas: *La novia del hereje o la inquisición de Lima* del argentino Vicente Fidel López, *Los piratas de Cartagena* de la colombiana Soledad Acosta de Samper, *El filibustero* del mexicano Eligio Ancona y la novela homónima de Justo Sierra O'Reilly. A la luz de las teorías expuestas por Benedict Anderson en *Imagined Communities* sobre el proceso de concepción nacional, Gerassi-Navarro señala como en estas cuatro novelas se intentan establecer unos parámetros que definan la nación de acuerdo con el momento político-ideológico que están atravesando los distintos países en los que se producen. Así, la autora señala cómo en la ficción de Fidel López se nos sugiere que el modelo nacional de la América hispana no puede encontrarse en las represivas instituciones coloniales españolas sino en un sistema que, como el inglés, reconozca la necesidad de una sociedad abierta y democrática basada en los principios del libre comercio y en el progreso de la humanidad mediante la industria y el trabajo. Por el contrario, Acosta de Samper, hija de un colombiano y una jamaiquina, pero fiel defensora del concepto nacional propuesto por el presidente Rafael Núñez, se identifica con el pasado español de Colombia y en *Los piratas de Cartagena* subraya la superioridad de los valores morales y culturales españoles ante el de las naciones que apoyaban a los piratas que atentaban contra los intereses de España en sus colonias de ultra mar. Ahora bien, ya sea en España o en Inglaterra, ambos autores acuden a Europa cuando de encontrar el modelo nacional se trata y consideran con cierta reserva a los grupos sociales más evidentemente autóctonos: indígenas, mulatos y mestizos. En ese sentido, Gerassi-Navarro considera que las novelas de Fidel López y Acosta de Samper se asemejan a las de Ancona y Sierra O'Reilly, pues en la formulación nacional expresada en estos textos también se percibe un velado rechazo de esos grupos raciales.

El propósito nacionalista de la novela histórica es el tema del apartado siguiente. La autora se aproxima nuevamente a los textos antes citados, pero ahora como si se tratara de novelas históricas. A tal efecto, comenta diferentes teorías sobre las características de la novela histórica y los objetivos de este tipo de narrativa, señala la opinión de distintos críticos ante los textos en cuestión, explica el uso de la documentación histórica llevada a cabo por los distintos autores y la manipulación de la misma para formular el específico mensaje nacionalista que les interesaba transmitir y subraya el protagonismo otorgado a las mujeres en la novela de Acosta de Samper, llegando a la conclusión que, en las ficciones históricas analizadas, el elemento criollo nos es presentado como el verdadero y único cuerpo de la nación.

En el siguiente y último capítulo, Gerassi-Navarro estudia el uso del melodrama en las cuatro novelas seleccionadas. Como antes hiciera al hablar de la novela histórica, la autora inicia este apartado hablando del melodrama, de sus orígenes y propósitos y, a continuación, comenta cómo esta técnica se observa en la imagen de la familia como nación, en el protagonismo femenino y en el deseo de presentar una nación racialmente más blanca de lo que éstas eran en realidad. Las conclusiones a las que llega la autora ya nos han sido adelantadas en los episodios anteriores: el maniqueísmo de este tipo de melodramas depende de la intención política del autor, el argumento gira en torno a unas historias sentimentales en las que a la mujer, preservadora y continuadora de la esencia nacional, le corresponde elegir y su elección encierra un mensaje que simboliza el futuro del proyecto nacional. De la misma manera, la actitud de los piratas ante el ser amado encierra un mensaje sobre el posible futuro de la nación. Por otro lado, los textos reafirman el deseo de una identidad hispanoamericana blanca, aunque tal deseo contradiga las bases mismas de la realidad hispanoamericana. El estudio se cierra con una corta conclusión en la que se hace mención a las connotaciones que la figura del pirata ha tenido a través de la historia hasta nuestros días. Finalmente, el libro se complementa con el apartado en que se incluye una serie de extensas notas y una igualmente extensa bibliografía.

Pirate Novels supone una nueva aportación al estudio de la narrativa hispanoamericana del siglo XIX, se centra en unos textos poco tratados y amplia lo ya dicho por otros autores acerca de las técnicas de formulación del discurso nacionalista en la América hispana. Ahora bien, debido al limitado número de textos tratados y al aún más limitado enfoque del estudio, leída la mitad del libro, la tesis de Gerassi-Navarro está ya suficientemente probada y el texto empieza a resultar algo repetitivo. El caso es especialmente lamentable teniendo en cuenta que, de haberse incluido una revisión de la narrativa caribeña (la ausencia de un texto como *Cofresí* de Alejandro Tapia y Rivera me resulta inexplicable), el estudio habría podido comparar la formulación nacional tanto en los países hispanoamericanos independientes como en los que todavía estaban bajo el yugo español y dar así una visión mucho más completa del discurso nacional formulado por este tipo de novelas. Asimismo, siendo las novelas de piratas un subgénero que ofreció una producción literaria tan limitada y habiendo escogido la autora solo cuatro textos para demostrar su tesis, sería de esperar el encontrar un análisis más detallado y profundo de los mismos, revelándosenos otros aspectos de interés. Eso o que se nos los comparara con algún otro subgénero parecido, las novelas de bandidos, por ejemplo, para así constatar de una manera más amplia la importancia que estas novelas de aventuras tuvieron en el lector del momento y el verdadero alcance del impacto del discurso nacionalista que se proponían transmitir. (JOAN TORRES-POU, FLORIDA INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY)

EOIN S. THOMSON. *The Distant Relation. Time and Identity in Spanish American Fiction.* Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000. Pp. xxv+190. Bibliography. Index. CAN $55.00 cloth.

Critics interested in Spanish American fiction will be less enthusiastic upon reading Eoin Thomson's *The Distant Relation* than those who have more of an interest in philosophy. More than a book about the literary texts themselves, their meaning, their historical signification and their place in the tradition, this is a text about certain key philosophical concepts in the formulation of a new philosophy of relation. To a great extent, the literary texts the author employs for his analysis constitute an excuse to put these concepts to work. He himself avers in the introduction: "... my intention in this text has been to mobilize concepts rather than any primary philosophic or literary author(s). If I seem to prioritize certain texts from Spanish America, that is because they embody, in a particularly clear way, a number of key concepts" (xxii-xxiii). Most of Thomson's study constitutes a dialogue with certain ideas of Blanchot, Levinas, Lyotard, Iser, St. Augustine and Ricoeur, among others, rather than a comprehensive analysis of the samples from Spanish American fiction he chooses: Carpentier's *Los pasos perdidos* and *El acoso,* García Márquez's *La hojarasca* and *El otoño del patriarca,* Paz's *El laberinto de la soledad* (arguably a type of fiction, one might assume) and Rulfo's *Pedro Páramo.*

The book is divided into five sections. In the first, "Being too great for words," Thomson introduces and develops two fundamental concepts: "*opacity,*" as it relates to Levinas' critique of the Other, and "*extimacy*" in relation to Lyotard's critique of the Sublime. But if the author favors Levinas' idea that language plays a fundamental role in the relation between self and other it is only to argue, *contra* Levinas, that language does not close the gap between self and other and that, most importantly, it is precisely this impossibility that makes the union between the two, their intimacy, possible. Hence relationality is based on the "impossibility of opacity," on the fact that even though ego and other will never thoroughly know each other, yet the possibility, the anticipation of knowing is ever latent in the encounter. Thomson speaks of the "extimate relation" as that instance in which one horizon of experience, one "I," meets another "I" but in the very midst of opacity, opacity being the *sine qua non* of relation: "The exterior can never be intimate with a subject unless by way of the opacity that structures relation" (13). In other words, it is only through separation, through distance, through the "intimate outside," that relation is ever a possibility. Given opacity's paramouncy in Thomson's building of a new concept of relation, he critiques Lyotard for not providing an adequate explanation of opacity and for not putting into question, in the context of the failure of language to represent reality, the relation between word and thing.

In "Interlude," the second and longest section of the book, the author explicates two other concepts, namely "*duplicity*" and "*absence,*" for these concepts focus on literature's role in the philosophy of relation. But before elaborating on them, Thomson reiterates the importance of the "between," of the distance that makes intimacy and relation possible and how this distance is particularly evident in the literary texts which he has decided to examine. The author starts his analysis with an examination of *Los pasos perdidos.* This novel, according to him, incarnates the extimate relation in the sense that the protagonist's search for the center, for the purity of nature through his close encounter with the jungle and especially via his erotic meeting with Rosario, is ultimately motivated by an artistic pursuit that by its very nature excludes him from intimacy. Hence, identity constitutes a species of Sisyphean enterprise whose locus is marked by incessant postponement around an absence. Speaking on the relationship between history and narrative especially as it pertains to Spanish America and in light of Iser's notions of "absence," "doubling" and "boundary crossing," Thomson concludes: "Absence *is* the center to which this fiction responds in its attempt to create an identity for itself, an identity that arises out of the self-creating act of fiction revolving around an absent source" (38). Carpentier's *El acoso* clearly reveals fiction's impossible task of going back to the origin, back to "original innocence." According to the author, this novel represents a moving forward from the realization in *Los pasos perdidos* that identity cannot be located within the parameters of Romanticism. In *El acoso,* in fact, the protagonists find themselves in a position of "utter and irresolvable duplicity" which results in the "dislocation of subjectivity" (61). Everything in the text points to the appearance of things; nothing in it is what it seems, nothing, consequently, leads to Truth: "Through the duplicity and duplication of the sign ... both the protagonists are constantly separated from the meaning they seek" (68). Thomson concludes this second section by underscoring Carpentier's recognition that it is precisely fiction's impossibility to take him back to "original innocence" which in the final analysis makes creation feasible.

In the book's third section, "Return to Opacity," the critic offers a more elaborate definition of "opacity" as this concept represents *the* concept in the new philosophy of relation he proposes in his study. He does so through a close reading of a few aspects of García Márquez's *La hojarasca* and *El otoño,* focusing concretely on the themes of death and foreigness. In these two novels, as one might remember, a dead body stares characters in the face; as Thomson would put it, the cadaver is present but *in absentia.* The author makes much of the fact that as a consequence of the leaf storm in *La hojarasca* Macondo suddenly becomes populated by foreigners and its inhabitants become foreigners in their own city, the doctor being the foreigner supreme, a drifter who "lacks presence" and who becomes a specter even prior to his death. Devoid of a past, distant in its very opacity, anonymous and absent, the doctor's corpse is what ultimately bestows identity on the novel's characters. In contradistinction to *La hojarasca,* the process of identification in *El otoño* is much more complex, claims Thomson, for the characters constitute a multitude of voices who carry on an "infinite conversation" where, paradoxically, identity is postponed "through the postponing language of the written text" (94). He underlines Blanchot's pivotal concept of "distortion" in *The Infinite Conversation.* In the "space of distortion" spawned by opacity, truth is always postponed as the subject is ever in a duplicitous position. The patriarch's locus of utter duplicity is, in the final analysis, what makes absence and foreignness the key concepts of Márquez's *El otoño.*

Appropriately for an analysis of the conception of time in Paz's *Laberinto* and Rulfo's *Pedro Páramo,* Thomson commences the third section of his book ("The Time of the Between") by focusing on the implications of St. Augustine's ontological question "'What, then, is time?'" for the understanding of the distant relation. Through a critique of Ricoeur's own analysis of St. Augustine's question in *Time and Narrative,* whom he faults for ultimately remaining "bound by the necessity of being" (104), the author asserts that the real question should not be what time is but rather "What is the relation between past and the present such that the past remains as the absence and postponement of what cannot be held?" (105). It comes as no surprise, therefore, that for Thomson the "persistence of the past" is what best characterizes the distant relation. It is for this very reason that, without adding new insights into Paz's *El laberinto,* he concentrates primarily on the Mexican writer's ideas of revolt, fiesta, and the poet's other voice. The critic concludes, nonetheless, that Paz's dialectic of solitude serves the purpose of only foregrounding the extimate relation but without offering a reconciliation between the past, the present and the future. In the end, the poet "arises out of separation" and speaks a duplicitous language which makes reconciliation impossible (118). Unlike *Laberinto,* Thomson contends that Rulfo's *Pedro Páramo* presents the confluence between the past and the present not through the register of reconciliation but rather that of absence. No such Pazian notion of return is present in this novel, for Juan Preciado, and likewise the way he relates to the other characters, is in a state of suspension. In contrast to other critical readings, the author wishes to underscore that *Pedro Páramo* is fundamentally a novel about the suspension of time, death, and, above all, life in the "between." This "interstitial space" is epitomized by Comala itself, by its "no-time," by its purgatorial nature: "Comala is the mediation point, the distance that mediates the relation between the living and the dead" (134).

Thomson concludes *The Distant Relation* with an unsurprisingly telling section: "Postponement: In Lieu of an Ending." Given the unequivocal fact that relations are always distant and that humans are perennially immersed in a process of self-realization, so-to-speak condemned *ab ovo* and *ad infinitum* to postponement, identity exists as a possibility solely through opacity, through absence: "… identity is always in circulation around an absent kernel or representational meaning that we could call the unity of our being" (140). Yet, upon reading Thomson's conclusions one is inevitably tempted to ask whose time and whose identity? Those of the investor in the globalized economy or those of the subaltern from whose labor he/she benefits? Those of the producer of university discourses or those of the dweller of refugee camps? Those of the north or those of the south? Is it viable anymore to utilize categories such as time and identity in such decontextualized fashion? Furthermore, where is the new philosophy of relation he proposes located? Indubitably there is the philosophical relating to an "other" or the religious Buberian "I and Thou," among other highly abstract forms of relation; but there is also, specially as it pertains to Spanish America and other non-imperial nations around the globe, more concrete relations which are born out of the necessity to resist dictators, invading armies, political corruption and ever new ways of cultural impositions. At a time when capital no longer has a fixed residence but floats rather incessantly, in an age in which the nation-state has been dismantled in most countries in Latin America and literature's cultural capital seems to be losing out to videos and films, time moves fast and identities are formed not by governments but by the internet and the culture industry. In these circumstances, Thomson's concepts of opacity and absence become synonymous with abysmal poverty, economic exploitation and the violation of human rights. The "distant relation," here, ought be converted into the "close relation" of the community of subalterns which strikes back at empire, protecting itself at every stretch from the myriad of hegemonizing tentacles which seek to appropriate it. (J. AGUSTÍN PASTÉN, UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA, LINCOLN)

DARREN TOFTS. *Parallax: Essays on Art, Culture and Technology.* No P.: An Interface Book, 1999. Pp. 112. Illustrations. Index. US $16, EUR 14.50 paper.

Reviewing Darren Tofts' collection of essays *Parallax* is a difficult and frustrating undertaking, because, in my opinion, the text under review is not a completed book. If this publication was intended as a scholarly work, then in the best case, it could pass for a rough draft of such. If the book is targeted at a wider audience as some essays may suggest, significant changes are required for rendering the entire work into a more appropriate form.

Admittedly, the topics which the author notes, are interesting and important. Non-traditional cultural practices and products (multimedia and digital art, electronic and holographic literature, digital photography, etc.) have been globally created in the past several decades and have become one of the hallmarks of our media-saturated age. In view of their popularity, it is high time to recognise them as a significant component of the global culture. And yet numerous aspects of multimedia and digital aesthetics have not been addressed by scholars or critics. Individual works of contemporary authors exploring potential of computer-generated art and literature, using new artistic means, have not received much attention either. Undoubtedly, they require serious study. It is worth mentioning that the criteria of evaluating traditionally created art and literature, may not necessarily be apt in assessing aesthetic objects produced by means of modern technology. Therefore, debate regarding this direction would be beneficial for the creative circles and the public. New approaches to experimental literature and art produced in the pre-computer and video technology era also requires further research. Tofts' attempts to deal with these relatively new and complex issues is praiseworthy as such, yet his final result evokes significant criticism.

Tofts claims in his preface, that the essays in the *Parallax* are united by the common theme, which he defines vaguely as "that culture at the end of the century needs to be looked at differently" (9). Furthermore, he clarifies his point: the technological accessibility and the replacement of familiar "habits of interaction associated with physical proximity" (9) by electronic means of mediation in the age of cyberculture and hypermedia result in the "technological transformation of the social life" (9), and, consequently, in that of perception of art and literature. The author admits that his essays are above all "concerned with exploring interferences to normative perception of language, technology, creativity and reception" (11). Many of these interferences are realized through diverse practices, which have not yet been "fully absorbed by the . . . mechanism of cultural change" (11); some of them do not even seem "to fit in, or belong to, the *fin de siècle* age of electronic technology" (11). Thus, the stated objectives of the study are quite ambitions as they require awareness of the mechanism of cultural change and the factors associated with this phenomena with thorough research in several related areas. However, this is not the case with the book under review.

This collection consists of ten essays (each presented as an individual chapter) previously published in magazines, journals or read as conference papers. According to the author, all essays have been revised specifically for this edition. However, their scholarly value varies to a great extent. As the author muses on the nature of his writing in one essay, describing his work as "a kind of compilation tape, made up of songs that have meaning and resonance for me within the context of a specific act of speculation. It is not only the eclectic suggestions of tunes, but the relations between them, their contiguity, that suggest the signature even" (25). This trait is applicable to the most essays in the book under review. With a few exceptions, both, the "tunes" and relations between them receive only cursory treatment, as the author tends to jump from one hypothesis to another without much logical argument or relevant discussion. In some essays, Tofts simply ignores the need to support his perceptions. In others, he substitutes a flood of information for a well-organized argument. Very few essays present a well-researched and coherently presented study of the chosen topic. The background research is often based on an insufficient number of works and authors, even in the case when the attempt is made to analyze a wide-ranging issue or phenomenon, like a morphology of the image in the digital photography. Some of the essays should not be included into the collection at all since they do not meet the basic requirements of scholarly works. The failure to maintain a consistent method of the analysis and conceptualization reduces many of Tofts' essays to a series of superficial comments on selected works, even though quite a number of his observations are interesting and thought provoking. Generally, the book creates an impression that the author submitted the manuscript without being able to complete his research or adequately conceptualize his ideas, to say nothing about providing a terminological glossary (which would be very much appropriate when focusing on new cultural phenomena) and a bibliography.

The first essay "Machine Metaphysics" provides an example of Tofts' approach to the material and his research methodology. The essay has a potential to be an interesting study. However, the research is sloppy and the work is far from being complete, both conceptually and structurally. It is intended to examine a metaphysical problem common for science fiction: the dichotomy between the human beings and cybernetic constructs (androids or humanoid robots, cyborgs or technologically improved humans, and others) found in literary and film works. While attempting to investigate this problem, the author based his assumptions on four sources; two stories and one novel by an American science fiction writer Philip K. Dick, and the TV serial *Star Trek: The Next Generation.* No attempt is made to scrutinize the problem from various perspectives, nor is the comparative analysis of the literary and film sources provided. Tofts demonstrates an amazing lack of interest to other scholars' findings on the chosen subject (the sole reference is made to Donna Haraway's article "Manifesto for Cyborgs," later published as a part of her book *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*). Not surprisingly, Tofts' arrived at conclusions which are neither convincing nor valid: "while we [human beings] want to be become more like them [androids], they may become more like us" (15), or "the machines becoming human and turning into machines again, and somehow being aware that the implications of this bizarre, elegaic transubstantiation do make a difference" (15).

Although "Machine Metaphysics" is a representative piece of the collection, it should be noted that the book includes more thoroughly researched and better conceptualized essays. Among them is the work "'Unseizable Enigma': Notes Towards a New Morphology of the Image," in which Tofts provides a closer look at the nature of the digital images and attempts to outline at least some of their intrinsic attributes. Using the concept of simulation as a starting point for his investigation, which he traces back to Plato's theory of the image, Tofts examines the most discernible similarities and divergences of the analog and digital image making. As he stresses, in both, analog and digital photography, the referent adheres and is indistinguishable from the image itself. However, if the analog photography requires the presence of a real object, something that has actually existed, the digital one, like painting, simulates reality without recording its existing image. According to Tofts, the digital image is always the synthetic image, since the process of the image production involves the manipulation of the existing images and objects by using two- or three-dimensional rendering software. Works by the artist Murray McKeich created by implementing the technique of "electrobricolage" (93) in which the accrual of the industrial process is fused with animal figures in order to produce convincing and feasible images of the apocalypse, quite compellingly illustrate Tofts's point. Nonetheless, many aspects of the morphology of the digital image, as well as implication of the essential principles of digital aesthetics by artists Cindy Sherman and Murray McKeich, whose works are used as illustrative material, slip the author's attention. Tofts does not attempt to explore the formal attributes which convey the semantics of the digital image, nor does he attempts to compare aesthetic principals behind digital image-making to those employed by the traditional photo-collage production. The issues of digital photography perception also remain neglected. Having rightfully observed that McKeich's images produced by the sophisticated techniques of image-enhancement stimulate hypothetical apocalyptic realities with very high degree of accuracy, Tofts confines his analysis to several brief comments, which do not shed much light upon the artist's style. Although Tofts insists that McKeich "approaches digital reality first and foremost as an artist" (93), his emphasizing the technical aspects of the digital image-making suggests that anyone who has access to the new technology and the appropriate software can easily produce something similar.

The opposite is attested to in the essay "Travelling to *Iconica*: The Virtual Worlds of Troy Innocent," which in my opinion is best piece in the collection. The work deals with both, theoretical and practical aspects of the Melbourne-based multi-media artist's inventive responses to the challenges of new visual language development. Innocent is recognized as one of the few artists whose contribution to the vocabulary of multi-media art and development of expressive visual language is significant. In his essay, Tofts provides an overview of Innocent's creative career, focusing on his best-known works *PsyVision* (1996) and *Iconica* (1998). *PsyVision*, a 50 minutes computer animated video features eleven tracks released by various artists on the Psy-Harmonica label and deals with a developed set of prototypical language elements (icons, movements, spaces, colors, animated figures and textures) which receive a diverse stylistic treatment in the three-dimensional world of virtual reality. The artist's further contribution to the development of digital language is his project *Iconica* (available at http://www.iconica.org), a hybrid form fusing generic repertoires of computer simulation, electronic art and multimedia games. The visitor to *Iconica* is exposed to the complete morphology of cyberspace and its language, as the project uses iconic elements or life forms as basic building blocks in order to create a world literally made from language. The principle is not new as it has been widely utilized in various subforms of visual poetry (the genre which conjoins literary and visual strategies), where diverse structural elements (individual letters, syllables and words, textual fragments, icons, mathematical signs, musical notations, topographic signs, pictorial elements, etc.) are employed to convey a poetic message through their interplay. Innocent's system is highly interactive though. *Iconica*'s life forms include various groups of iconic signs and structures representing aspects of the world: basic element, forms, spaces corresponding to basic elements, and entities identifying various features and abilities of bodies, moods and behaviors. Using the combinations of these life forms the visitor can construct the space, which is a dynamic, evolving, and complex self-regulating system. As Tofts suggests, Innocent's artificial life model is based on the principle of quantum mechanics, since life forms are similar to quarks, the most elementary particles of light in their ability to mutate and form themselves into unusual particles. He also points out that the model employs the cybernetic feedback principle since entities of *Iconica* can learn about various concepts from changes occurring in their environment. Therefore, *Iconica* presents a new and sophisticated stage of interactive communication between people and virtual environments, the analysis of which considerably expands our understanding of the essentials of digital aesthetics.

If the controversial work of contemporary American photographer Andres Serrano, "Piss Christ," had received the same treatment as Troy Innocent's projects, it would have been an important step in the study of new artistic practices and setting the paradigm for their perception and evaluation. But the concluding essay, "The Passion of Andres Serrano," dealing with the 1997 reception of the above-mentioned work in Melbourne is just a piece for a week-end issue of a local newspaper, or a general interest magazine explicitly aimed at Catholic intolerance towards experimental treatments of crucifixion icono-graphy, and the conservatism of the Melbourne art-going public. The essay is totally devoid of any attempt of analysis. Tofts' disappointment with what occurred to what he perceives as an important and valued artistic object, is not a valid reason for inclusion as a separate chapter. Surprisingly, in his endeavor to defend Serrano's claim to explore the unexplorable, he does not attempt to provide any adequate interpretation of Serrano's work, which can justify its importance in the context of contemporary culture. Nonetheless, the work is referred to as "a powerful text" (103) whose impact as a "commentary on, and critique of, a particular belief system" (103) is unquestionable. I doubt that this argument can enlighten the insensitive Melbourne public (for whom the essay is most likely targeted). Nor does it contribute to the polemics with those art critics (not necessarily Melbourne-based) who consider Serrano's paradoxical works as second-rate art relying on cheap sensationalism and reducible to a simple and banal content. By no means does Tofts' piece elucidate any aspect of perception (rather than the immediate response of the Melbourne public, ranging from overt criticism to physical attacks on Serrano's creation) or interpretation of the new cultural practices exemplified by Serrano's photography in general and by his "Piss Christ" in particular.

The essays "Hyperlogic, the Avant-garde and Other Intransitive Acts" and "Un Autre Coup de Dés. Multimedia and the Game Paradigm" are two other works with good potential which would have benefited from in-depth research and thorough revision. In the former, Tofts links hypermedia such as Internet and hypertext to the modernist avant-garde works (represented by James Joyce's writing, Marcel Duchamp's art, and *The Large Glass* in particular, and John Cage's music) on the premises that both phenomena imply the "purposeful purposelessness" (21) or the "activity without an ostensible point"(21). Backing his ideas by selected postulates of postsructuralist theory, Tofts argues that both, hypermedia and modernist text are intransitive and cannot be viewed as forms of communication. Hypermedia "constitute an emergent signifying activity that does not take and object and are not communicational" (26), while the language of the modernist text, exemplified by *Finnegans Wake*, is intransitive. At best, this comment needs further elucidation. The author does not attempt to support his observations by providing examples from other modernist texts or art products (Duchamp's painting and Cage's music are briefly mentioned in the connection to the hypermedia), nor does he try to compare the hypertext and its attributes to those of postmodern discourse, and hypermedia to mass culture products, which would be relevant in the context of this discussion. The latter essay touches the important issue of the game paradigm characteristic of new forms of creativity such as multimedia art, as well as forms originated centuries ago, visual or pattern poetry being the most prominent example. In the essay Tofts casually discusses several important aspects of the topic (game theories as applied to the multimedia, narrative structure as one of the rules of the game in multimedia, Janet Murray's inventory of fundamental game structures) without elaborating on either of them. The work is completed by a brief analysis of the Residents' game *Bad Day on the Midway* as an example of "the interface between literary theories of narrative, cybernetic articulations of game theory and multimedia environment" (42). Unlike "Hyperlogic, the Avant-garde and Other Intransitive Acts" "Un Autre Coup de Dés" is not entirely inconclusive. Tofts notes the importance of the aesthetics (or rather the technique) of delay for both, narrative forms and multimedia games. And yet both essays resemble a rough draft of some yet unfinished work. "Your Place or Mind? Locating Digital Art," although dealing with the topical issue of locating, exhibiting and presenting electronic and multimedia art, cannot be considered a subject for scholarly discussion. It would better serve its purpose as a keynote address at an art gallery board or city hall meeting.

Another superfluous work in the collection is "Samuel Beckett, Francis Bacon and the Ferocious Dilemma of Expression." Notwithstanding its flamboyant title, the work is no more than a survey of David Sylvester's *The Brutality of Fact. Interviews with Francis Bacon* and Samuel Beckett's *Three Dialogues with Georges Duthiut* seasoned with the references to some other sources with the intention of comparing Bacon's and Beckett's theories on the creative act of painting and its product. Tofts' final conclusion that the deep frustration of both Bacon and Beckett was caused by the impotence of an art criticism unable to keep abreast of the creative act, seems inadequate to justify the writing of this essay.

"Parallactic Readings: Joyce, Duchamp and the Fourth Dimension," and "*Ulysses* Returns" are interesting works which in their present form are not quite in tune with the rest of the collection. Although the analysis of modernist lite-rary texts or art pieces from the perspective of multimedia and digital aesthetics is an obvious case of a cultural parallax, an apparent change in interpretation resulting from a cultural and societal change in the perception of art and litera-ture, Tofts' essays do not provide such an analysis. The former work attempts to prove the interactive nature of the Duchamp's definitely unfinished art project *The Large Glass,* accompanied by an amorphous literary text of *The Green Box*, and Joyce's *Ulysses*. One may agree that both Duchamp and Joyce produced "systems of prompting rather than actual texts" (61), which does not necessary suggest the cultural parallax. The latter essay deals with the controversial history of the editors' attempts to discern the "ideal" and "complete" text Joyce intended to write from its numerous versions, which as Tofts rightfully suggests, is quite problematic given the multi-textuality of *Ulysses* and the multiplicity of its reading. Yet, this by no means implies a parallactic reading.

The rise of electronic technologies and multimedia has already begun to alter cultural studies and will presumably continue influencing cultural criticism in the future. It is obvious that the cultural theory cannot pass ahead of the cutting-edge artistic and literary practices. It is also imperative for the cultural criticism not to be left behind. Nonetheless, the ideas need time to develop, and research requires that a temporal framework be completed. Precocious publications like Tofts' collection confuse more than enlighten the discussion of important and topical issues. I hope that the author will be stimulated enough
to prepare a second edition of this work with a qualitatively new level of argumentation and presentation. (TATIANA NAZARENKO, UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA)

* DIANA M.A. RELKE. *Greenwor(l)ds: Ecocritical Readings of Canadian Women's Poetry.* Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 1999. Pp. 363. CAN $24.95.

Diana Relke's *Greenwor(l)ds* is a collection of essays written over the past two decades about Canadian women poets and their relationship to nature. Relke points out that while she had been working on this particular topic since at least the early 1980s, it was not until 1998, with the publication of a special issue of *Canadian Poetry,* that she realized the significance of her project. According to Relke, on that date "Canadian ecological literary criticism came of age" under the guidance of the editor of the magazine, David Bentley. Bentley's special issue is indeed important, as is the work of other, earlier, ecocritics such as Laurie Ricou, Pamela Banting, and Marian Schoeltmeijer. However, when compared to the activity of U.S., British, Taiwanese and Japanese scholars, there are still too few published Canadian anthologies dealing with eco-critical issues. For this reason, Relke's book is a welcome addition to ecocritical approaches to Canadian women's poetry.

Relke's book is structured into three sections, each devoted to a particular theme. The first deals with the development of poetic consciousness and draws heavily on the author's feminist background. Relke begins with the familiar dilemma of women writers: will they use the literary conventions of their male counterparts, thus risking being judged too "masculine," or face being patronized if they write about "women's issues"? The first section of Relke's book deals with the emerging poetic consciousness of Marjorie Pickthall and Constance Lindsay Skinner and includes a discussion of Margaret Atwood's *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*. Each author tries to convey a feminine sensibility, and Relke sees this as a necessary "first step" in also learning to write about the natural world in a way which is sensitive to the viewpoint of women.

The second section of the book is concerned with the development of ecological consciousness; poets under discussion in this section include Dorothy Livesay, Isabella Valancy Crawford, and Daphne Martlett. (Both Livesay's early 1928 work, and Crawford's 19th century poetry might more properly be termed proto-ecological as both women wrote before ecology emerged as a fully formed scientific idea.) Relke's point is that once women develop their own voice they are then in a position to write about their relationship with the natural world in a way which is both feminist and nondualistic. The main point in this section is that these women poets tend to invest nature with "subjectivity" and, as such, tend to express concerns about the natural wor(l)d in ways which their male counterparts do not. Such an approach does not, as some feminist critics allege, necessarily return women to an essentialist identification with nature. Rather, in Relke's reading, these poets present nature as a far more nuanced place than older, "Mother earth" metaphors suggest. Furthermore, Relke finds in each poet a strong conviction that language can re-forge connections with the natural world. This idea seems to run counter to most dominant contemporary critical positions — such as postmodernism or post-structuralism — but is a central preoccupation of ecocrititicsm.

The final section works with the notion of an ecocritical consciousness. This is linked to the feminist need to do "archeological" work — that is, to recover the poetry of women who received critical wounds in earlier misreadings of their work. Ecocriticism provides an interesting way to reassess poets like Phyllis Webb, P.K. Page, and Marilyn Dumont, a project particularly useful when compared to other critical trends in Canada. Ecocriticism, for example, provides a corrective to critical approaches from the "Garrison Mentality" to postmodernism, offering a new way to read poetry by women who do not always share the preoccupations of their male counterparts. Such a reclaiming of authors is particularly useful in an age of environmental crisis, when the human-nature relationship needs to be re-examined from many different points of view, but particularly from a point of view which suggests that the natural world has value apart from what is overtly assigned to it by human culture.

Whether or not this value can actually be expressed by human language is the point dividing ecocriticsm from critical approaches like postmodernism. Relke's reading of these poets is designed to show that such value can be expressed; though in a hostile critical climate, such efforts are not always recognized or appreciated. Relke points out that the marginal status of both women and nature, as well as the association of the two, allows female poets to offer different kinds of insight into the way nature is represented. In discussing Majorie Pickthall's poem "Inheritance," for example, Relke demonstrates that rather than following the dominant model of nature poetry (where a poetic consciousness temporarily reconnects with a landscape), Pickthall reverses conventions, allowing the poet to come to the forefront, while nature recedes. This outcome has significance of which any ecofeminist could recognize and approve: "In this reversal of figure and ground, the poet does not lose herself in nature, but rather, finds herself there" (87).

However, this finding of the "self" in nature can be dangerous in a society which has on occasion linked women too intimately with nature, and men, with culture. Nevertheless it is a risk these poets appear willing to take, and it is their confidence that gives them the ability to develop their own poetic task as one of culture/nature mediation. This role is particularly evident in Relke's discussion of Dorothy Livesay. Unlike a poet who needs to reconnect to the natural world, Livesay, in her early poetry, begins with the assumption of a connection already in place. Humans are obviously embodied in the world, and do mediate between the demands of nature and the demands of culture. What Livesay takes on as her particular poetic task is the development of a point of view where biological differences (and by implication the differences between culture and nature) can be viewed as complementary, rather than destructively antagonistic.

In her discussion of Daphne Marlatt's *Steveston,* Relke points out that the task of mediation can be accomplished through the exercise of the human imagination. If it is the imaginative faculty which allows the poet to imagine other human lives, why shouldn't that same faculty allow the poet to imagine the lives of other species? This is still a daring, revolutionary question, one which proposes to break many literary taboos. Isabella Crawford's poem *Malcolm's Katie* is also given such an ecocritical reading. Crawford's act of mediation is accomplished by imbuing nature with subjectivity, an act which breaks down the rigid divide between human and nonhuman. Viewing nature as a peculiar kind of culture as Crawford does, according to Relke, is another "effective way of conveying the fact that human culture is merely an extension of the natural order" (173). Relke points out that Crawford makes use of many visions of nature in her poem, including commercial, military, scientific and, finally a New Edenic vision of land harmonized through submission to human culture. But it is in her more radical, mythical aspects that Crawford expresses a truly ecological vision, blurring the familiar nature/culture and male/female dualisms.

The poets Relke discusses in this collection are each in their own way providing correctives to traditional modes of perception of the natural world. That such corrections are necessary in an age of environmental crisis is not surprising. According to Relke, poets such as Livesay, Martlett, and Crawford offer "intersubjective ways of seeing and knowing the world and new ways of resolving the conflict that arises out of a perception of reality as turning on an infinite series of hierarchically arranged oppositions, the most fundamental of which is the opposition between male and female, and by extension, between culture and nature" (33). Each, in a different era and in a different way, attempts to develop a vision which can mediate through the pitfalls of dualistic constructions of reality.

Although Relke's feminist background underscores her book in numerous ways, on occasion it can overshadow her concern for the representation of nature. To begin with, she describes her critical approach as both archeological and rehabilitative. As many feminists have done in the past, she works to resurrect women authors harmed by hostile male critics. As a feminist she clearly believes that women often offer a significant alternative to masculine poetic conventions. Relke believes, for instance, that Canadian poetry by women tends overwhelmingly to refute Frye's view that a deep terror of nature imbues most Canadian poetry. In addition, Relke challenges, from a feminist standpoint, many Canadian critics, arguing that post-colonial theory, for example, tends to represent a kind of remasculinzation of criticism.

In the conclusion of *Greenwor(l)ds,* Relke writes that she discovered the 1996 Cheryl Glottfelty and Harold Fromm *Ecocritical Reader* — a bit too late to have any significant impact on my essays" (317). This speaks to the most serious problem of the book — the fact that Relke does not carefully identify what she means by ecocriticsm, and her own introduction to her work provides little more than a truncated tour of the usual eco-villains (Francis Bacon, Judeo-Christian beliefs, and modernism). In spite of such minor shortcomings, however, Relke's close readings of a number of Canadian women poets are creative and suggestive. She links a poetic coming of age as a necessary first step to developing an ecological vision of the natural world, and most strikingly, she demonstrates clear parallels between feminist concerns and ecological ones. (REBECCA RAGLON, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA)

RICHARD J. SCHNEIDER, ed. Thoreau's Sense of Place: Essays in American Environmental Writing. Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2000. Pp. 324. 1 map. 3 photos. US $39.95 hardcover, $19.95 paper.

A new addition to the American Land and Life Series from the University of Iowa Press, *Thoreau's Sense of Place: Essays in American Environmental Writing* builds on Lawrence Buell's important work, *The Environmental Imagination: Thoreau, Nature Writing, and the Formation of American Culture*. This collection of nineteen essays from a wide range of authors, some well-known within ecocritical circles and others new-comers, offers several new lenses through which we might consider Thoreau's work. The central question of the collection is Thoreau's relationship to place, construed to mean not only the physical landscape but also the cultural and social matrices that constitute place. Because of Thoreau's influence on writers and thinkers throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, this central question becomes one that looks both backward into Thoreau's unique time and forward into our time. Schneider has organized the collection into four central questions or conflicts, though the essays throughout the book overlap in their concerns and approaches.

The first part of the book, entitled "Relating to Place: 'Between Me and It,'" grapples with the issue of the epistemological split between observer and observed, subject and object, a split that is especially relevant in writing about nature. At the heart of this issue is the question of whether or not Thoreau or his successors were able to move towards a biocentric view of the land. Three of the essays in this section consider Thoreau's ideas within the context of nineteenth-century scientific thought, focusing on incipient debates concerning ecological approaches to the land that arise from the work of Alexander von Humboldt, on debates concerning evolution and especially the concept of transmutation, and on a new approach to geography put forth by Arnold Guyot. Each of these essays provides a succinct discussion of the scientific thought that framed Thoreau's thinking and writing in relation to his view of the land and the relationship between humans and nature. The final two essays in the first part consider Thoreau's relationship to two contemporary writers, Wendell Berry and Annie Dillard, demonstrating the way in which both writers, while influenced by Thoreau, reject his claims and develop an anthropocentric view that values the power of culture in connecting humans and nature (Berry) and an empirical view that takes the primacy of experience as truth itself rather than perceiving nature as a signifier of a higher truth (Dillard).

The second part of the collection, entitled "Imaging Place: Finding a Discourse to Match Discovery," analyzes the various genres that Thoreau used — such as the excursion and the journal — and whether or not these genres were effective in depicting nature. Again, a central theme running through the essays in this part of the book is the degree to which Thoreau was able to move towards an ecocentric view of the land. Two of the essays in this section engage Thoreau's use of the excursion as a way-of-being in the world and as a way of writing; both essays suggest that this model of being and writing allows Thoreau to transcend an empirical and objective relationship with the natural world and to develop a metaphysical and ethical relationship. Similarly, a third essay comparing the methods of composition and philosophies of place of landscape painters Asher B. Durand and Thomas Cole with those of Thoreau concludes that while Durand's and Cole's aesthetics had political and nationalistic motives, Thoreau's aesthetics were based on moral and spiritual values. The final essay begins with an analysis of the reason for Thoreau's turn away from poetry — its inability to capture the wildness of nature — in order to provide a basis for understanding the ecological poetry of the twentieth century in writers like Wendell Berry and W. S. Merwin.

The third part of the book, entitled "Socially Constructing Place: Culture and Nature," considers the role of cultural assumptions in the creation of images of place, assumptions based on economics, gender, nationality, or literary conventions. The first two essays in this section consider the multiple perspectives from which Thoreau perceived the landscape, and the balance that was offered as a result of this multiplicity. The second of these essays, which explores the way in which the Maine landscape was connected simultaneously to both spiritual truths and large scale logging, also considers the loss of balance that occurs when other uses of the land, such as recreational uses or large-scale clear-cutting, are added to the mix. The central essay in the third part of the book considers the similar cultural work of Thoreau's *Walden* and Susan Fenimore Cooper's *Rural Hours*. While both works sought to help people consider seriously their connections to nature, their approaches were markedly different in that Thoreau engaged the dilemma of representation in his text (the question of the effectiveness of language as a medium to bridge self and place) while Cooper did not, making her work appear more simplistic to twentieth-century readers. The final two essays compare Thoreau's view of the landscape to Wordsworth's view (in the first) and to Taoist views (in the second).

The fourth part of the book, entitled "Saving Place: Writing as Appropriation or Preservation of Nature," engages the writer's dilemma in writing about a place and whether or not their action is construed as a defense of the landscape or as an exploitation of the landscape. The opening essay in this section deals with this topic most elaborately, suggesting that in the period from 1851 to 1854, Thoreau shifted from writing as a poet/philosopher who sees transcendent truths veiled in nature to writing as a naturalist who offers empirical depictions of nature; according to the essay, this shift allows Thoreau's writing to speak for nature without being influenced by his own cultural perceptions. Two of the essays approach this issue from an economic point of view, the first describing the way in which Thoreau built his cabin in the middle of a rural slum and very near the site of extensive commercial and agricultural activity and the second discussing the way in which Thoreau's essays advance American "exceptionalism," suggesting that America does not have a class consciousness or a labor politics. The fourth essay engages an excerpted version of Thoreau's "Walking" and demonstrates the way in which the editing of the essay refocuses the theme of the essay towards wilderness preservation propaganda and away from the true focus, the idea that wildenss can be found anywhere, even in the domestic. The final essay discusses the activism of Edward Abbey and Henry David Thoreau and demonstrates how their activism comes primarily through writing.

While *Thoreau's Sense of Place: Essays in American Environmental Writing* builds on the work of such critics as Lawrence Buell, the collection breaks new ground, placing Thoreau within some interesting contexts — scientific, philosophical, and literary — and expanding our understanding of his work. Several of the essays, and especially William Rossi's "Thoreau's Transcendental Ecocritism," Rochelle Johnson's "*Walden*, *Rural Hours*, and the Dilemma of Representation," and Stephen Germic's "Skirting Lowell: The Exceptional Work of Nature in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*," are particularly strong, balancing extensive contextual matierals with close and thoughtful analysis of the texts. Unfortuantely, however, others on occasion oversimply or overstate their case, such as in Aimin Cheng's "Humanity as 'A Part and Parcel of Nature': A Comparative Study of Thoreau's and Taoist Concepts of Nature" and Richard Schneider's "'Climate Does Thus React on Man': Wildness and Geographic Determinism in Thoreau's 'Walking.'" Nevertheless, even in these essays, the authors provide new and interesting contexts within which to consider Thoreau's work allowing for an expanded view of his themes and concerns. (A. JAMES WOHLPART, FLORIDA GULF COAST UNIVER-SITY)

* UMBERTO ECO. *Experiences in Translation*. Trans. Alastair McEwen. Toronto/Buffalo/London: Toronto University Press, 2001. Pp. 135. Biblio-graphy. Index. $19.95 cloth.

The first volume of the University of Toronto Press new series, named the Goggio Publications Series after the Emilio Goggio Chair in Italian Studies, is devoted to translation. The two essays are based on three lectures delivered by Umberto Eco in Toronto in 1998. The book is well-edited and well-translated with a short but useful bibliography for those interested in the link between semiotics and translation. The first essay is entitled “Translating and Being Translated” and gives a fresh perspective on old problems as experienced by Eco as a translator and as a translated author. The second essay, entitled “Translation and Interpretation,” is more theoretical and calls for establishing clear distinctions between the categories found on the continuum of the semiosis of translation and interpretation.

After apologizing in a brief introduction for relying on common sense — “but *common sense* is not necessarily a bad word” — Eco reviews some basic concepts and problems associated with equivalence in meaning. True to his promise of common sense, he quickly contrasts Benjamin’s idea of a *reine Sprache* with the necessity “to elaborate a logical model for the perfect language” (11). As a result, he insists that the metalanguage, produced by a *tertium comparationis* and currently called Mentalese, must be expressible in formalized language. Using relatively simple examples, such as Jakobson’s famous discussion of propositional meaning based on “I like Ike,” and borrowing from Peirce’s discussion of interpretation, Eco proceeds to demonstrate how the translator, imbued with not only linguistic competence but intertextual, psychological and narrative competence, must make a *textual abduction* in order to explicate inferences. Every practising translator will immediately recognize the process he or she follows in interpreting the source text without necessarily being conscious of every step while aspiring translators and their teachers will find the discussion useful as a guide into the complexity of the act of translating.

Broadening his discussion to larger issues of culture, Eco dismisses target-oriented theories as beyond the purview of translation, since, for example, evaluating the impact of Luther’s German translation of the Bible upon the German language does not require knowledge of Hebrew. Instead, he stresses that the best way to study the process from a source text to a target text is to go back to considering the source/target dialectics from the perspective proposed by Humboldt and Schleirmacher: should a translation lead the reader to the text or lead the text to the reader? The debate has by now become well-known as the opposition between *foreignizing* and *domesticating*. In his discussion Eco introduces an additional distinction between *modernizing* the text and *keeping it archaic*. Using examples from the translations of his own novels and from translations of the Bible to illustrate this double opposition, Eco shows himself to be resolutely on the side of bringing the text to the reader. The rest of the essay deals successively with issues of possible changes to the story line, rhythm, loss and compensation.

Weaving together semiotic and literary theories — the Russian Formalists' distinction between *fabula* (story) and *sjuzet* (plot), the difference between content and expression, the rhetorical device of *hypotyposis* — into his analysis of translation problems, Eco provides an entertaining account of his experience of having been translated and of translating. This perspective is insightful on the process of translation and, here and there, on the process of writing fiction while appearing somewhat prescriptive at times about translation strategies and solutions. The reason for this normative tone becomes clear in the second essay which reveals Eco's intention to formulate what constitutes translation apart from other forms of interpretation.

To make his point, Eco revisits Jakobson's definition of the three types of translation (intralingual or rewording, interlingual or translation proper, intersemiotic or transmutation) and the influence of what he calls Peirce's protean language on Jakobson's thinking about translation. In his conceptualization of the universe as perfuse with signs, Peirce did indeed use translation as a synecdoche for interpretation but Eco insists that, contrary to Steiner's theory of language, niether Peirce nor Jakobson lost sight of the specificity of the phenomenon of translation as distinct from the many other modes of interpretation. Thus the concept of translation cannot and should not be extended to the entire realm of interpretation and interlinguistic translation should be examined separately from other forms of interpretation. Eco illustrates his position in regards to *rewording* by submitting an English translation of Baudelaire's *Les chats*, whose poetic function was so brilliantly analysed by Jakobson, to the vagaries of automatic translation. The initial result is that the text's semantic level and even a hint of its poetic function are preserved but, when dictionary definitions are used to replace individual words and fed back into the computer, the text becomes a joke. Eco concludes that intralingual translation cannot be considered a form of translation and that "translation is a species of the *genus* inerpretation, governed by certain principles proper to translation" (80).

The subsequent sections focus on elaborating these principles and are grounded in Hjelmslev's distinctions between form, substance and purport. In translation the aim is to retain the same *substance* of the content — and often the same form of the content — in the transfer from the form and substance of one expression to the form and substance of a different expression. Eco proposes a new diagram to account for the variations in both the substance and the purport of the expression. The divisions are 1) Interpretation by transcription, 2) Intrasystemic interpretation, 3) Intersystemic interpretation. Translation fits under the sub-division 3.1) With marked variation in the substance, and as distinct from 3.1.2) Rewriting and 3.1.3) Translation between other semiotic systems. Each category is then discussed in details with the help of examples which include Eco's own translation of Raymond Queneau's *Exercices de style* and Joyce's own translations, sometimes in collaboration with other writers, of the chapter from *Finnegan's Wake* entitled "Anna Livia Plurabelle". As fascinating as these examples are, they do as much to demonstrate Eco' erudition and brilliance as provide readers with new insights into *Experiences in Translation*.

Although the term *experience* becomes mostly implicit in both essays, the title for this publication has been cleverly chosen. Not only do Eco's demonstrations never lose sight of the practising translator but the philosophical implications of experience, as in introspection, description, study and knowledge, serve the stated goal of "identifying different phenomena in the apparently uncontrollable flux of interpretative acts" (130). As Eco himself points out, however, using Wittgenstein's discussion of the effect a minuet might produce on listeners, it is not enough to describe the effect one experiences in aesthetic appreciation, one also has to examine the textual strategies that brought the effect about, i.e. the minuet itself. This means that, in order to understand an aesthetic experience, the shuttling back and forth between cause and effect must be considered. In attempting to isolate translation from other forms of interpretation, therefore, Eco needs to discuss various cases of interpretation. Interestingly, these demonstrations result in showing that all forms of interpretation laid out in his table are called upon to determine what is and what is not translation proper and when translation is "merely" used as a metaphor.

But why should the practising translator, or the theorist, stay away from any metaphorical use of translation? Is the etymological sense of *metapherein* not precisely "to carry over, to transfer"? Isn't translation itself a metaphor in its task of suggesting likeness within difference? The process of interpretation, as Eco so aptly demonstrates, constitutes an integral part of the process of translation and relies on many, if not all, forms of interpretation Eco wishes to dissociate from translation proper. He admits to overlaps between categories but I would argue, as Antoine Berman has, that "la traduction, c'est toujours bien plus que la traduction" (292). It belongs to the nature of translation to overflow the semantic and epistemological boundaries imposed on it by certain theories. Although it is clear that Umberto Eco takes it upon himself to continue the "pioneer, or rather [the] backwoodsman" task Peirce had defined for himself, namely to clear and open up "what I call *semeiotic*, that is, the doctrine of the essential nature and fundamental varieties of possible semiosis" (5:488), he ends up closing the door on exciting recent developments in Translation Studies where, in collaboration with other disciplines such as Cultural Studies or Women's Studies for example, a careful examination of the metaphoric nature of the experience of translation is leading to a better understanding of translation proper. In other words, if the translator is to be expected to have the kind of multiple competence Eco talked about in the first essay, it is essential that various theories of interpretation explicitly complement each other rather than stand in opposition. This kind of collaboration can show, for example, how intricately connected interlinguistic, as well as intralinguistic, translation, cultural translation and identity can be in the writings of immigrant and other displaced writers. (ANNE MALENA, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

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