

*RITA SCHÖBER. *Abbild, Simmbild, Wertung: Aufsätze zur Theorie und Praxis literarischer Kommunikation*. Berlin and Weimar: Aufbau-Verlag 1982. Pp. 441. DM11.70

Die im vorliegenden Band zusammengefaßten – es sei vorweggenommen, glänzend formulierten – Aufsätze sind Reprints von Arbeiten, die von Rita Schöber in den Jahren zwischen 1971 und 1982 veröffentlicht wurden, in einer Zeit also, in der sich die Literaturwissenschaft der DDR intensiv mit der marxistischen Rezeptionsästhetik beschäftigte. Ihrer thematischen Intention entsprechend liegen sie in drei Gruppen gegliedert vor. Arbeiten der beiden ersten Gruppen beschäftigen sich mit strukturalistischen, kommunikativen und rezeptionsästhetischen Fragestellungen, die Aufsätze der letzten Gruppe überprüfen die entwickelten theoretischen Positionen am konkreten Material bei Zola, Raymond Jean und Aragón. Wollte man die Untersuchungen auf einen Nenner bringen, so Schöber, stellen sie einen Versuch dar, einige Fragen, die sich aus der Auseinandersetzung mit dem französischen literaturtheoretischen Strukturalismus ergeben hatten, 'von der positiven Seite her aufzuarbeiten, d.h., bestimmte marxistische literarästhetische Theoriebildungen neu zu durchdenken' (p. 7).

Der Ausgangspunkt der Betrachtungen sei der entscheidende Neuanfang der gesamten marxistischen literaturtheoretischen Reflexion gewesen, der sich in den letzten zehn Jahren als Übergang von 'einer darstellungsästhetischen, also rein werkorientierten Betrachtungsweise zu einer kommunikationsästhetischen Sicht' (p. 7) vollzogen habe. In dem Maße nämlich, hier ist es wichtig, Schöber ausführlich zu zitieren, 'wie die Erkenntnisse der modernen Linguistik, der Informations- und Kommunikationswissenschaft, aber auch der Semiotik und Systemtheorie die Literaturwissenschaft erreichten, öffnete sich die eindimensionale Werk-Wirklichkeits-Relationierung der bisherigen Betrachtungsweise auf die Erfassung des... konstitutiven Zusammenhangs von Autor-Werk-Publikum...', von Produzent-Text-Rezipient

(p. 8). Damit konnten Schöber zufolge einseitige oder dogmatische Ansichten abgebaut und ein vertieftes theoretisches Verständnis der Phänomene Kunst und Literatur erreicht werden.

Auch wenn noch auf der selben Seite ideologisches Soll erfüllend versichert wird, daß die angesprochene theoretische Betrachtungsweise von Literatur die entscheidenden Impulse durch die Fortschritte erhalten habe, 'die die marxistischen Gesellschaftswissenschaften insgesamt bei dem präziseren Erfassen solcher Grundkategorien wie Wirklichkeit, Praxis, gesellschaftliches Handeln, Subjekt-Objekt-Dialektik, Abbildung, Aneignung u.ä. machten' (p. 8), so wird Schöber spätestens an dieser Stelle der 'Vorbemerkung' die ungeteilte Aufmerksamkeit des Lesers zuteil, denn was er erwartet, ist eine im Blickwinkel des Marxismus geführte Diskussion der theoretischen Positionen des Strukturalismus und der Rezeptionsästhetik. Zwar ist das Reflexions- und Argumentationsniveau der Aufsätze im vorgegebenen Zusammenhang nicht unbedingt gleichwertig, der Leser jedoch wird nicht enttäuscht. Da aus Raumgründen nicht alle Aufsätze Schöbers – es handelt sich um elf – besprochen werden können, möchte ich hier wenigstens – was mir am wichtigsten erscheint – auf die Methode ihrer Auseinandersetzung und den Kern der marxistischen Rezeptionstheorie zu sprechen kommen.

In der ersten Arbeit, 'Das literarische Kunstwerk: Symbol – Modell – Sinn-Bild?' (pp. 13-22), diskutiert Schöber Wesenseigenschaften des sprachlichen Kunstwerks. Dabei werden die Positionen des französischen Strukturalismus (Symbolcharakter des literarischen Kunstwerks) und des sozialistischen Realismus im Traditionszusammenhang der deutschen Klassik (das literarische Kunstwerk als modellhaftes Sinnbild) bestimmt und voneinander abgegrenzt. Hier nun läuft Schöbers Kritik am französischen Strukturalismus im wesentlichen darauf hinaus, daß er nicht das tut, was er nicht tun will, nämlich das literarische Kunstwerk im 'stets konkret historisch-sozial vermittelten Kommunikationszusammenhang' (p. 19) mit der Gesellschaft als ein 'Abbild der realen menschlichen Verhältnisse' (p. 19) zu verstehen, sondern als ein autonomes Gebilde. Schöber verzichtet darauf, den Strukturalismus als eine Methode im Zusammenhang seiner theoretischen Begründung vorzustellen. Ihr geht es vielmehr darum, isolierte strukturalistische Prämissen mit systemfremden, also eigenen marxistischen Maßstäben zu vermessen und zu kritisieren. Methodisch gesehen werden damit Äpfel und Birnen verglichen. Da jedoch in der Denkweise des Marxismus andere Denksysteme allein als Objektivationen eines 'falschen' Bewußtseins rezipiert werden können, ist Schöber kein Vorwurf zu machen, sie argumentiert, spricht agiert, konsequent. Der fran-

zöische Strukturalismus habe allerdings insofern recht, wenn er behauptet, daß sich das Kunstwerk erst im Rezeptionsprozeß vollendet. Die Rezeption jedoch sei kein passives Aufnehmen, sondern – und hier zeigt sich wieder die marxistisch konsequente Aneignung des Begriffs – 'ein aktives Aneignen' (p. 22), eben die 'volle Nutzung der im "Modell" des literarischen Abbildes angelegten Sinngebungsmöglichkeiten' (p. 22). Ausführlich äußert sich Schöber zu diesem Problem in dem Aufsatz 'Rezeption und Realismus' (pp. 192-240).

Zunächst ist zu bemerken, daß das Argumentationsverfahren das gleiche ist wie oben besprochen, was zu erwarten war. Nach einer einleitenden Erläuterung des Rezeptionsbegriffes werden die rezeptionsästhetischen Ansätze von Roman Ingarden, Wolfgang Iser, Roland Barthes und Jan Mukarovský dargestellt und kritisiert. Als ihr Hauptfehler wird die 'Lösung' des Werkes und damit des literarischen Kommunikationsprozesses als eines Austauschprozesses zwischen historisch bestimmten Subjekten aus dem Gesamtkontext der geschichtlichen Bewegung oder ihr sogar prinzipieller Ahistorismus' (p. 215) bezeichnet, womit allerdings wieder eine Erwartung angesprochen wird, die den behandelten Richtungen systemfremd ist. Der zweite Teil der Arbeit entwickelt vor dem Hintergrund der marxistischen Klassiker, bei denen Schöber die sozialistischen rezeptionsästhetischen Ansätze zu erkennen glaubt, eine marxistische Lektüretheorie, die auf den kulturellen und materiellen Bedingungen der Buchproduktion, den gesellschaftlichen Rezeptionsbedingungen und den individuellen Rezeptionsvoraussetzungen aufbaut. Als Vorbedingung gilt, daß Produktion und Rezeption von Literatur nicht unabhängig voneinander betrachtet werden können, sondern 'als Teil eines jeweils historisch-konkret determinierten literarischen Kommunikationssystems erfaßt werden müssen' (p. 218). Der Vorgang der Rezeption habe der folgenden programmatischen Funktion zu entsprechen: 'die Anerkennung der Parteilichkeit und des aktiven Charakters der Rezeption und der entscheidenden Rolle, die dabei die Ansichten, die soziale Position, der Klassencharakter und der subjektive Beitrag des Rezipienten spielen' (p. 218).

In der auf dieser Weise vollzogenen dialektischen Aneignung des Rezeptionsbegriffes im marxistischen Sinn geht es also nicht darum zu erfahren, wie sich der Leser im 'freien Spiel seiner Entfaltung' (ein Begriff, der in marxistischer Sicht als Indiz des falschen Bewußtseins abgelehnt werden würde) Literatur aneignet, sondern wie er sie sich im Sinne des agitierenden Marxismus anzueignen hat. Damit handelt es sich nicht um einen Beobachtungsvorgang hinsichtlich des Lesers, sondern im Grunde um die Vermittlung eines Lernprozesses, eben den

des 'richtigen' Lesens im Sinne sozialistischer Kulturkonzepte.

Die vorangegangenen Bemerkungen waren notwendig, um die politische und geistige Position Schöbers zu fixieren, die als Rahmenbedingung ihrer Untersuchungen zu verstehen ist. Damit wird auch gleichzeitig die ideologische Differenz zwischen Autorin und Rezensent abgesteckt, die allerdings auf die kritische Bewertung keinen Einfluß haben darf. Und dazu ein abschließendes Wort: auf der Basis der hier besprochenen Zusammenhänge ist Schöbers Buch unbedingt als ein wichtiger Beitrag zur Literaturtheorie zu akzeptieren, nicht nur der orthodox marxistischen, es ist reich an Fakten und Details, die Argumentationen zeigen sich mit Schliiff und Transparenz, Schöber diskutiert informiert, ausgewogen und interessant, kurz, es handelt sich um eine willkommene Arbeit. (HOLGER A. PAUSCH, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

* WILLIAM V. SPANOS, PAUL A. BOVÉ and DANIEL O'HARA, eds. *The Question of Textuality: Strategies of Reading in Contemporary American Criticism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press 1982. Pp. 372. US\$17.50

This handsome volume consists of the proceedings of the 1978 *boundary 2* symposium on the 'Problems of Reading in Contemporary American Criticism.' As the editors point out, this title is revealing, since, unlike the famous Johns Hopkins symposium ten years earlier, the contributors and participants are Americans, not Europeans, though their mentors still hail mostly from France or Germany. This in itself, however, is significant, for this volume testifies to the fact that literary theory is largely an American phenomenon at present, even if, as the introduction's epigraphs from Nietzsche, Heidegger, and Marx suggest, the theoretical bases of that theory lie elsewhere. As the editors explain, the focus of the book is on textuality, on 'the space of endless series of reflected signs which Derrida and Foucault, among others, have explored (and exploited) in defining the beginning conditions of post-structuralism' (p. 2). The work of Edward Said is perhaps the clearest American articulation of the poststructuralist challenge to humanist thought, to concepts of 'Man' (both universal and individualized), of history, of language as centred and coherent entities. And it is fitting that his paper begins the volume. In their introduction, however, the editors attempt to forestall reader objections, objections from what they label as 'traditionalist' critics to contemporary French

thought, by arguing for the liberating effects of the process of questioning, of laying bare assumptions, as that which makes new thought even possible. This basic poststructuralist tenet is indeed made manifest throughout the volume, a volume that brings together a motley collection of papers ranging from reader response theory to semiotics to discourse analysis. Although the editors argue for the coherence of the volume (a rather odd tactic, given its topic), what is clearer is the pluralism of American criticism today. (Inevitably, perhaps, given the gap in time in publishing [1978 to 1982], some of the papers will be familiar to readers of the recent books of Said, Stanley Fish, Murray Krieger, and Joseph Riddel.)

The book is structured, as was the conference, according to a paper/response format. This is appropriately diacritical or dialogic (in the Bakhtinian sense) for a volume on poststructuralism, wherein diacritics is to replace dialectics. The structure itself is that of textuality, of the open generating of discourses, especially since some of the responses are critiques, and others are supplements which broaden the scope of the papers themselves. After the first two of these pairs, there is also 'An Exchange on Deconstruction and History' with Said, Eugenio Donato, Marie-Rose Logan, and others in the audience. In addition, the notes in this published version of the papers frequently take into account the responses at the conference and the audience's questions.

The focus of attention varies from paper to paper. Some address general theoretical issues: deconstruction, formalism, stylistics. Others are more specific poststructuralist rereadings of entities as large as 'the aesthetics of experience' (Stephen Crites) and 'American literature' (Joseph Riddel) and as small as individual poems (Stanley Fish, Homer Obed Brown). While most of the volume is concerned with literary or literary critical issues, there are token nods to philosophy (David B. Allison on Nietzsche and David Couzens Hoy's broader philosophical contextualizing in his reply), to cultural theory (historian Mark Poster on Baudrillard's semiotics as an approach to the media), and to anthropology (Dennis Tedlock and Neville Dyson-Hudson). What is missing, and quite glaringly so, is the presence of both women (only one, and only as respondent) and feminism — one of the major impetuses to poststructuralist challenges to humanism and the theory of (male) 'Man.' This omission is all the more startling, given the editors' clear position in their introduction. They rather condescendingly mention the large number of participants at the conference who 'defended New Criticism and/or Humanism in what, in the present crisis of culture, can only be described as a sentimentally innocent and nostalgic way'

(p. 7). The lack of representation of a major force in modern American criticism points to a certain innocence, to use a kind term, in the organization of this conference and volume.

There are other consequences of this rather judgemental stand taken by the editors in the introduction. One of these is that they are driven to rather extreme formulations of the poststructuralist enterprise. The challenge to totalized and fixed, single meaning and unique meaning-mongering in criticism is expressed in terms of the 'death of meaning, of interpretation as the recovery of meaning, of the innocence of systems of representation' (p. 8). The only alternative to deconstruction, according to both the editors and many of the individual authors of papers seems to be 'traditionalist' or 'recuperative' criticism — a stand perhaps belying the introduction's stated pleasure in the pluralism of the contemporary scene. The editors also claim that the critic who seeks universal human ideals in art is no longer perceived as 'legitimate' (pp. 8-9). This strong statement can only be made from a particular point of view, of course: that of poststructuralism. However, falling into the trap that humanists have always fallen into, the editors here present this as an eternal truth or as an 'obvious' and 'natural' statement, as outside ideology. One could certainly argue that it is just as 'legitimate,' if less fashionable, to look for universals and unities, as it is to look for ruptures and aporias. In other words, both stances are ideologies: the former may indeed be passing, but the latter is no less an ideology for that. It is culturally and discursively conditioned; it is of a particular place and time, class and, here, sex. I say this not to contest the validity of the poststructuralist enterprise, but only to try to see it in a context. What is the point of presenting humanism as an ideology if we do not extend that liberating acknowledgement to our own position?

This is particularly important in a volume that opens with Edward Said's 'Reflections on Recent American "Left" Literary Criticism.' This article sets up a theoretical context which undercuts the rhetoric and tone of the editors' introduction and should act as a corrective to the tendency to read leftist or even contestatory political stands into the 'oppositional manner [and rhetoric] of New new criticism.' Using Gramsci, Said argues for criticism to enter the 'world,' to come out of its self-imposed and socially legislated isolation, and to make room for socio-cultural process. Extended by Evan Watkins' thoughtful response, this perspective points toward the direction that poststructuralism since 1978 has been moving, a direction to which feminists have, of course, contributed in significant ways. Mark Poster's article, 'Semiology and Critical Theory: From Marx to Baudrillard,' also moves towards this.

Others nod in that direction, like Crites' 'The Demiurgic Imagination in Art and Experience,' but in the end offer a totalizing, Romantic, theory of the drive to achieve 'coherency.' What is interesting in the response to Crites' paper by Daniel O'Hara (one of the editors) is, once again, the tone or rhetoric. Crites' theory is called 'a hollow idol of absurd authority' (p. 315) and is contrasted to Nietzsche's view of imagination and its relation to the will-to-power. What is absent here is any awareness that the rhetoric of the response is as much a will-to-power in its condescension and prescriptiveness: 'What I want to suggest, then, is that *all* of us, victims of blindness *all*, *must* be engaged in an open and explicit dialogue with what Ricoeur calls the masters of suspicion: Marx, Nietzsche, and Freud ... But the point is that *all* of us now, whatever our orientations, *must* engage in active dialogue with these thinkers and we *must* find a language ... to do justice to each others' critical situations' (p. 316, emphasis mine). Such a language is certainly missing, at least, from the contributions of the editors of this volume.

Nevertheless, the articles themselves do suggest that some meeting of perspectives is possible. There are common denominators to the papers. All can be seen as poststructuralist in the sense that they partake of the challenge to (or even defense of) Humanism, the basis of New Criticism and of much literary theory until the present. This is a challenge to the universality of 'Man,' to the concept of the self or subject as the coherent, unified, original and originating source of meaning and action. This is also a challenge to the related unifying and totalizing impulses of New Criticism and other formalisms, as Jonathan Culler and Murray Krieger reveal in their papers. The attacks range from Stanley Fish's reader-oriented look at the interpretive moves inherent in all formalist descriptive strategies to more specific attacks: Homer Obed Brown's look at Robert Penn Warren's reading of 'The Rime of the Ancient Mariner' or W. Wolfgang Holdheim's critique of the use made of Worringer's theories by New Critics.

Out of these theoretical common denominators comes a proposed new view of the critic. No longer just an analyst of form, the critic is now said to be self-conscious and self-consciously theoretical (although, in this volume, it is most often the respondents who fill this role). There are clearly new masters to follow now: Vico, Marx, Heidegger, Nietzsche, Gramsci, Althusser, Derrida, Habermas, and others. The conspicuous absence of Lacan (important to feminist poststructuralists like Teresa de Lauretis and Kaja Silverman) is perhaps telling. The fact that Derrida is the most cited probably attests to the love affair of American criticism with deconstruction. As the editors claim, there are new

genealogies (Foucault's Nietzschean term to replace 'histories') in which to root contemporary interests.

This is a very American volume, American even in its devotion to French and German theory. This is both its limit and its strength. There is much more diversity, despite certain broad common concerns, than one might expect from the introduction, where the ideal and overriding interest is said to be in '*dispersal*: a broken, discontinuous, jagged series of fragments emptied of all illusory, mystifying traces of unity, revealed in all its particularity and unevenness — not the One, the Word, Identity, but the many, words, difference' (p. 8). Admittedly, this claim is a paradoxical one, suggesting, as it does, a unity to the volume, a unity based on diversity and discontinuity. The breadth of scope of this volume is admirable, but one can only lament that such a major portion (even in 1978) of contemporary criticism — feminism — was not represented and, in fact, not even mentioned by anyone, even the editors. It is a big gap, and one that casts a necessary ideological light on a work that pretends to ideological critique and to the rhetorical self-consciousness. (LINDA HUTCHEON, MCMASTER UNIVERSITY)

*RENÉ WELLEK. *The Attack on Literature and Other Essays*. Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press 1982. Pp. x + 199. Hardcover US\$18.00, paperback US\$8.95

By its title, *The Attack on Literature* would seem to address the writings of the so-called 'Yale School' during the late 1970s and early 1980s, thereby suggesting an intramural polemic. In fact, most of the eleven essays collected in this volume were published in the early and mid 1970s, and address problems then current. Thus the title essay, 'The Attack on Literature,' first published in *The American Scholar* in 1972, addresses late modernist announcements of 'the death of literature.'

Wellek does, even at this early date, distance himself from what was to become known as the Yale School, although neither Derrida nor deconstruction is mentioned. Hillis Miller and Geoffrey Hartman do figure in several essays, as proponents of the 'French or Geneva School,' with Miller characterized as a disciple of Georges Poulet, and Hartman as an epigone of Maurice Blanchot. Paul De Man does not appear at all, while Harold Bloom, associated partly with Northrop Frye, is cited for having restored 'the romantic poets to their place from which they seem to have been dislodged by Eliot and Leavis,' but then

chided for having accomplished the task 'with ethical fervor often at the expense of aesthetic judgment and correctness of interpretation' (p. 109). It might be said that the concern here is not with 'anxiety of influence,' but with its geriatric counterpart (a serious problem for the final stages of the careers of all great critics), the 'anxiety of obsolescence.'

Indeed, *The Attack on Literature* might best be seen as an elegiac work whose most interesting essays may well be the last two: 'Reflections on my *History of Modern Criticism*,' reprinted from *Poetics and Literary Theory* (1977), and 'Prospect and Retrospect,' reprinted from *The Yale Review* (1979). The entire volume, however, must be seen as a 'défense et illustration' of Welles's concept of the history of criticism. In this regard, one cannot help wondering at the consistency of his methodology, from the seminal 'Theory of Literary History,' published in the *Travaux du Cercle Linguistique de Prague* 6 (1936), pp. 173-191, and *The Rise of English Literary History*, also published by The University of North Carolina Press in 1941, to the essays in the current volume, particularly, 'The Fall of Literary History.'

All of the essays, in one way or another, seek to defend Welles's methodology against what he sees as an ever-widening set of encroachments. The besetting sins of contemporary criticism might well serve as a subtitle for the book, and it does seem to have suggested its tripartite structure. The first and largest section contains six articles that together form a critique of recent critical trends: 'The Attack on Literature,' 'Literature, Fiction, and Literariness,' 'Poetics, Interpretation, and Criticism,' 'Criticism as Evaluation,' 'The Fall of Literary History,' and 'Science, Pseudoscience, and Intuition in Recent Criticism.' The next three articles deal with similar themes, but are organized according to schools in the manner of *A History of Modern Criticism*: 'The New Criticism: Pro and Contra,' 'American Criticism of the Sixties,' and 'Russian Formalism' (where, inexplicably, Welles devotes only a cursory sentence to one of Bakhtin's works). Finally, we have the two reflections on Welles's own work mentioned above.

The Attack on Literature will do little to revive interest in Welles's work, at the moment anyway, although it may serve to stimulate a revival within the next decade of the sort we have witnessed recently for Leo Spitzer and Erich Auerbach. It does allow one to understand better why Welles could have so precipitously been eclipsed during the seventies, ironically during the period in which these essays were written. In the 1974 essay, 'Poetics, Interpretation, and Criticism,' Welles correctly perceived a major trend in critical theory to have been an opposition between 'poetics,' the attempt to establish a universal matrix for

literary expression, and 'interpretation,' or the concern with meaning in individual works and/or the mind of a given author. In line with his most enduring contribution to criticism, the insistence on the continuity of Western thought, Welles situated these two antinomies within a long tradition of rationalism versus irrationalism and the concerns for universal trends versus individual meaning. He shows the original impetus for both movements as emerging from differing interpretations of Aristotle in keeping with the principle, asserted elsewhere in the book, that 'modern criticism can be described as a constant process of rediscovery of old questions' (p. 140).

While one might well debate the reductive tendencies of the theoretical overview by which he establishes the matrix for his article, it would be difficult to disconfirm the basic truth of the premises. The real problems, from a contemporary viewpoint, arise when Welles begins to apply the paradigm to a discussion of representative critics. Rather than analyze the critics, working from within or against their premises, Welles provides a kind of annotated bibliography whose critical remarks tend to be impressionistically evaluative, and finally unanalytic. In essence, he provides neither a hermeneutics nor a poetics of the critics discussed.

A supporter of the 'individualist' position in criticism by which the best critical approach will be that which allows the most complete exposition of meaning of an individual work, Welles attacks 'universalizing' approaches such as that represented by the Geneva School. Its (then) reigning principle, described by Poulet in a letter to Welles, quoted here, urges the identification of an 'organizing consciousness which can be attained only by lifting the mask of structures' (p. 42). Welles opposes this approach by citing an attack on Poulet by Leo Spitzer who accused his Swiss colleague of a 'complete disregard for the meaning of an individual work' (p. 42). Ironically, the exposition and 'disconfirmation' of the validity of the Geneva School, occupying no more than two pages, could only be accomplished because Welles himself adopts the very universalizing approach for which he condemns Poulet and the Geneva School.

In fact, it might well be argued that Poulet, and the Geneva School – to which Welles takes particular exception – in seeking 'an organizing consciousness that can drop the mask of structures,' apply to the critical task precisely the kind of conceptual and subject-oriented approach to literary criticism that Welles himself urges as methodological grounding for literary history. In 'Reflections on my *History*,' Welles observes that:

All histories of philosophy preceding Hegel's can be called doxographies, i.e., summaries and expositions of the doctrines of philosophers, arranged either according to schools (Platonic, Sceptic, Epicurean, Stoic, etc.) or chronologically. . . . With Hegel the whole conception of a history of philosophy changed radically. In his introduction Hegel states resolutely that "the history of a subject depends closely on the concept one has of the subject." (pp. 136-7)

Wellek's adherence to the conceptual approach to literary history and theory cannot be questioned. What may be questioned — and this helps explain his unwillingness, so evident in these essays, to come to grips with developments in contemporary critical practice and theory — is his adherence to Hegel's insistence on the importance of diversity in philosophy.

He [Hegel] admits that philosophy (and this would be even more true of criticism) has "the disadvantage compared to other sciences, that there are the most divergent views about what philosophy should and can do." But those who complain about the diversity of the manifestations of philosophy are, Hegel says with an unusual display of dry wit, like the man whom the doctor advised to eat fruit but who then refused cherries, plums, and grapes. "Diversity is thus not an impairment but an absolute necessity for the existence of philosophy. The study of the history of philosophy is thus the study of philosophy itself." The diversity of philosophy is conceived not as a random sequence, but as "an organically progressive totality, as a rational continuity." Philosophy has a history that is "a necessary, consistent process." *Every philosophy was necessary.* (p. 137 [my italics])

The Attack on Literature tests the limits of this observation. Wellek recognizes the extent to which unprecedented diversity marks the contemporary critical scene. Neither can he be said to be alone in deploring certain trends seen to be inimical to the very project of symbolic expression. Repeatedly, however, these essays seek to limit the purview of contemporary criticism, especially when it seeks to cross boundaries by defining the subject and concept of literature more broadly than Wellek would wish.

The relationship of literature to society and thus to history, to philosophy and thus to the history of ideas, to culture as a whole and thus to philosophical anthropology, all these subjects encounter the opposition made explicit by the polemical title, *The Attack on Literature*. Piece-by-piece, the essays have the effect of immuring Wellek in the keep of his own paradigm. The nostalgia for the American New Criticism, as well as his own early participation in the formalist-oriented

Prague Linguistic Circle may explain in part what seems to be an unusual paradigmatic rigidity.

In this respect, his refusal to consider the deviationist, but nevertheless crucial importance of Bakhtin within the Russian Formalist movement (to which he devotes an essay) appears most revealing. Bakhtin's work permits individual texts to be studied intensively within the context of extensive literary, historical, and linguistic movements. To rethink Formalist tenets in the light of Bakhtin would prove instructive. By not doing so, and by refusing generally to address the diversity of contemporary critical movements in any but oppositional terms, Wellek illustrates the 'resistance to theory' that formed the subject of one of De Man's last essays.

Wellek played a crucial role in establishing the primacy of literary theory and comparative literature as important components of literary study in North America. He came to this country in the heyday of historicism and empiricism which he consistently opposed. His establishment of the Yale School of Comparative Literature which trained some of the leading critics and theorists in North America today testifies to the force of Wellek's theoretical vision. Ironically, however, the resistance to theory attested by *The Attack on Literature* may serve to fuel the mounting anti-theory and pragmatist movements. In response to deconstruction, and other forms of continental criticism against which Wellek himself argues in this book, pragmatism has again emerged as a major intellectual force in North America. By historicizing his own method, Wellek provides grist for that mill. In preparing *The Attack on Literature*, he might well have pondered the dictum Walter Benjamin formulated in 1938, and then given us the book he is still capable of writing: 'The true picture of the past flits by. The past can be seized only as an image which flashes up at the instant when it can be recognized and never seen again.' (STEPHEN G. NICHOLS, UNIVERSITY OF PENNSYLVANIA)

* ALEXANDRU DUȚU. *Literatura comparată și istoria mentalităților*. București: Univers 1982. Pp. 267. 15.50 lei

Alexandru Duțu's latest book is yet one more step forward in the advancing and steadily diversifying discipline of Romanian comparativeism. As we have recently been involved in studies of the same nature (*Étemble ou le comparatisme militant* [Paris: Gallimard 1982]), we feel quali-

fied to make certain inevitable confrontations. Since there is no canonical, dogmatic, official definition of comparativism, interpretations and acceptations of the discipline are, or may be, very diverse. Alexandru Duțu's idea of comparativism is an historicizing one which is worked out and continues the doctrine of the French school of 'Annales.' Our own approach is ideological and theoretico-literary. We consider comparativism as a very good basis for a militant literary ideology and the-ory of literature. Orientations, as one can easily see, that are completely different and yet both legitimate. We are for pluralism and for freedom of opinion not for 'comparativist' alone. So there is no point in 'blaming' Duțu's book for what it is not and never proposed to be. It is interesting to note, however, what the book actually stands for and on what level such an undoubtedly deserving enterprise can be placed.

One thing must be made clear from the very beginning, namely, that Duțu has (to our satisfaction) radically broken with the dated historicist comparativism of 'factual relationships' and binary 'influences' together with strictly scholarly documentary positivist studies. The historical dimension of 'events' is replaced by a history of 'mentalities,' frames of mind, and ideological scales characteristic of a culture and society in a certain period. The concept of 'mentality' is not clearly defined but since no one as yet has given a clearcut definition (mere hypothetical formulations so far) we must content ourselves with descriptive definitions and quasi-synonyms such as 'dominant concepts and images,' 'mental discourse,' 'mental climate,' 'intellectual mechanisms' and other such (unavoidable) approximations for an indisputable historical reality even though it may be difficult to express in formulae: the world of thought and sentiment, the viewpoint and outlook on life of a social-cultural community. This perspective completely changes the notion of 'source' and 'historical document' (which practically becomes anything, absolutely any vestige of the past, of any kind written or oral) as well as the methodology of the subject. Duțu inclines to a morphological and structural description in which the ideas of 'Structure' and 'model' play an important rôle. On mentioning the works of the same author some time ago (*Comparatism și model in Convorbiri literare* 2 and 3 [1975]) we observed that the notion of 'model' taken in its twofold acceptance, descriptive and normative, inevitably leads to interferences and ambiguities some of which are annoying. We note that in Duțu's latest work sticking to the same terminology he increasingly inclines to ascribe the idea of 'model' only to the ideal type of humanity recommended to a collectivity. Defining these normative models (hero, knight, etc.) would be the last stage of the history of mentalities (the study program is schematically defined on pp. 81-2).

Of special interest is the articulation of this *purely historical* program to the ensemble of studies called 'comparativism.' Certain things, however, must be made clear. First, the historians of the 'Annales' school, so far as we know, have never made a fuss over 'comparativism,' much less over 'literary comparativism,' so Duțu's initiative represents a notable personal opening. We remember that Marc Bloch nevertheless pleaded for the thesis in his 'Pour une Histoire comparée des sociétés européennes' in *Revue de Synthèse Historique* 46 (1928), pp. 15-50, a review in which Paul van Tieghem was militating for 'general literature' (applied to the history of European literatures) in the same way. Meantime, if the history of mentalities constitutes a perfectly possible enterprise – although it remains, whatever we may say, the most 'impressionistic' and 'literary' form of present-day history – the integration of this type of history into comparativism brings up certain problems. Confrontation of mentalities of different cultural areas may lead to two categories of conclusions: emphasis on peculiarities or on identities. The author seems to incline to the latter.

Thus 'literary comparison falls back on what cultural history communicates' in order to seize the 'play of cultural and temporal levels,' 'mental discourse,' 'dominant concepts and images,' 'mental structures,' 'the imaginary,' 'the image of the other person,' 'cultural models,' 'forms of universality,' 'humanity models' in the literatures compared (pp. 44-5). The object of literary comparativism thus defined will be to discover the 'mental structures in the literary work' (p. 118), 'the imaginary' (pp. 167, 183), studied – by extension – in the totality of the cultural productions of an epoch (including the other arts). Duțu is not concerned with the peculiarity, the originality, the modernity of a literary work but he is interested in collective phenomena, the 'ensemble' and the 'subensemble.' Neither is he interested in the formal surface but only in the phenomena of literature (p. 80). He does not care about technicalities but is all for the mental aspect.

Although our approach to comparativism is not that of cultural history, we are in sympathy with this trend. So much the more since Duțu often notes the reality of 'common' elements (ideas, sentiments, topoi, wit) called 'identities,' 'permanences,' 'prototypes,' 'constants' or cultural-literary 'invariables.' From our point of view – and from the standpoint of the theory of literature – it is only through such 'forms of universality' that one can attain to a true 'poetics of [comparative] literature.' So we have kept in mind the passages in which the author considers universal literature as a totality (p. 53) in which he admits that 'generalizations' and 'rationalizations' are inevitable where the finality of comparativism merges into the 'schema' or 'model' which leads

to the discovery of 'coherence' (p. 81), of 'mental discourse' and Dufu's historical training (nevertheless elastic, restrictive) becomes even more conspicuous especially within the limits of any type of historicism: the inhibition of generalization and theorization.

It is also true that as compared with the earlier stage of Romanian comparativism progress is considerable and must be welcomed. So much the more since it opens up new vistas in areas of Romanian history of culture and literature as yet unexplored.

On an essayistic-dilettantish level, some show interest in 'Balkanism.' The real and fundamental problems that Dufu calls attention to are different. We have listed them as follows: the relationship of oral/written, culture/literature (belles-lettres, fiction), rhetoric/imagery, the level of concepts and definitions as well as at the level of predominant corresponding structures in Romanian culture and literature at least up to the middle of the nineteenth century. Hence the importance of research on the beginnings of Romanian rhetoric and hermeneutics, on the idea of literature and culture, of 'writing' and 'book,' etc. an area wide open to original comparativist studies on material as yet largely unexplored.

One last word about Dufu's references: they are very numerous and of good quality; some are strictly useful, others mere protocol. In his position at the Institute of South-East European Studies and at I.C.L.A. (he has been elected vice-president), we understand him. In time, however, some reciprocity would prove equitable. (ADRIAN MARINO, CLUJ, ROMANIA)

* ANDRÉ LEFEVERE et RIA VANDERAUWERA, éd. *Vertaalkwetenschap, literatuur, wetenschap, vertaling en vertalen*. Leuven: Acco 1979. Pp. vi + 251. BF470.00

Ainsi qu'André Lefevere l'indique dans la préface, ce livre réunit des travaux autour du concept de 'polysystème' formulé par Itamar Even-Zohar d'après les travaux des formalistes russes. D'emblée, l'éditeur distingue la 'vertaalkunde' (technique de la traduction) de la 'vertaalkwetenschap' (théorie des textes traduits). Cette différence voulue par André Lefevere est une précision importante, étant donné que le titre de l'ouvrage pourrait laisser croire qu'il s'agit de notes sur des problèmes méthodologiques et techniques de la traduction. En réalité, pour les auteurs, la notion de 'polysystème' permet d'intégrer les

traductions dans la littérature. Dans cette perspective globalisante, les chercheurs se pencheront sur les interactions entre tous les genres: littérature 'canonisée' correspondant aux canons traditionnels des belles lettres et 'non canonisée' ou 'Trivialliteratuur,' sans oublier les traductions. Tous ces textes constituent, en effet, le système littéraire d'une communauté linguistique.

Anton Popović s'attache au concept de traduction qu'on peut définir par l'analyse interne des caractéristiques structurales et par l'intégration dans le système littéraire. Il évoque aussi diverses variétés de traduction, telles les adaptations, les modernisations, les versions abrégées, les traductions de prose en vers et de vers en prose, les plagats, les pseudo-traductions.

Pour Gideon Toury, qui distingue aussi l'approche purement linguistique de l'étude du texte en tant qu'élément du système littéraire, il importe de définir le concept d'équivalence fonctionnelle en analysant le fonctionnement du texte cible dans la littérature. Cette équivalence se détermine par rapport à une hiérarchie dynamique de critères pertinents relevés dans le texte source et le texte cible.

Selon Shelly Yalahom, la traduction permet de jeter un pont entre les divers co-systèmes littéraires. Lorsqu'un système en crise entre en contact avec d'autres et que le passage direct d'éléments d'un système à l'autre est impossible, les auteurs utilisent des techniques de camouflage telles que les mémoires, la correspondance, les récits de voyage. Ils évitent ainsi que le texte apparaisse comme une menace pour la culture 'officielle.' La manière dont la littérature anglaise fut introduite en France au 18^{ème} siècle illustre parfaitement cette observation.

H. Van Gorp décrit les diverses adaptations de romans picaresques en Europe. Il s'agit de la *Vida de Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554), la *Vida del Picaro Guzman de Alfarache* (1599-1603) et la *Vida del Buscón llamado Don Pablos* (1626). Il souligne les déviations observées par rapport à l'original, les adaptations aux normes de l'époque et de la contrée, les 'happy endings'

Pour Leo Hermans, qui compare la traduction des poèmes chinois de Liu Ch'e élaborée par H. Giles avec celle d'Ezra Pound, ce dernier choisit des sources dans lesquelles il croit retrouver un reflet de ses conceptions de la poésie imagiste.

Rika De Vos soulève les problèmes de dialecte, d'idiolècte et de registre dans les versions allemande et française des pièces de Harold Pinter pour conclure que le traducteur français s'accroche davantage à l'original, de sorte qu'il en arrive à produire des énoncés inhabituels et que certains effets sont perdus.

Outre une étude consacrée par Reinilde Van Laer aux *Gulliver's Travels* dans la littérature enfantine, mentionnons une comparaison du *Faust* de Nerval avec celui de Bertioz par Ria Vanderauwera, qui prouve ainsi que les Français n'ont pas tout de suite perçu la dimension métaphysique dans l'œuvre de Goethe.

La deuxième partie de cet ouvrage est une anthologie consacrée à des traductions de textes venant d'Afrique et d'Asie. (ANDRÉ DUSSART, INSTITUT SUPÉRIEUR DE L'ÉTAT DE TRADUCTEURS ET INTERPRÈTES, BRUXELLES)

* JEAN BURGOS. *Pour une Poétique de l'Imaginaire*. Paris: Éditions du Seuil 1982. Pp. 407. FF100.00

L'Amérique s'engourdit; elle renoue un peu avec une logique formulée, sur son sol, il y a un bon bout de temps, celle de Pierce, et suit les maîtres consacrés de la théorie critique française des années 60. Les noms de Barthes, de Todorov, de Genette et de leurs amis reviennent. Quant à Paris, ses revues et ses maisons d'édition se doivent d'abord la prolongation des courants établis: sémiotique textuelle qui — champ magnétique — attire, centralise, absorbe d'autres initiatives, psychanalyse renouvelée à la source du structuralisme, marxisme, représentant éloigné d'une base étrangère où il est politiquement limitée dans son développement, mais tous les trois référés au modèle linguistique. L'université française semble de plus en plus inspirée par la province. Elle tente le sauvetage de sa vocation non seulement philologique, mais aussi érudite et historique, en restructurant ses dires selon quelques inspirations originales. La pensée théorique fleurit et on voit apparaître une longue liste des thèses doctorales qui passe aussi facilement sous le chef des sciences de communication et de l'information que sous celle des lettres, des travaux qui relèvent de la science du livre, du document, de l'écrit, de l'image, autant, ou d'avantage, que du *texte*, à côté d'autres, dont la référence au mot 'texte', rappelle l'anthropologie structurale, l'École de Tartu, ou la *Textgrammatik* néerlandais-allemande.

Il est certain que Jean Burgos, l'actuel doyen de l'Université de Savoie, lauréat de longue date, du Prix de l'édition critique, apollinarien connu, est un de ces innovateurs qui cultivent le paradoxe: il ne perd pas de vue la meilleure des traditions. Son essai — car c'est bien d'un essai de teneur à la fois scientifique, théorique et poétique qu'il s'agit — impose le respect des œuvres personnelles engendrées par un créateur (les mots 'œuvre' et 'créateur' se trouvent revalorisés), mais encourage

le lecteur de laisser 'travailler', son imagination. Le mot qui revient souvent dans son texte est l'amplification. 'Pour Burgos, une œuvre *grandit* sans perdre son identité. Cette thèse — jusqu'ici — ne semble contenir rien de révolutionnaire. Mais Burgos se réfère à Apollinaire, à Éluard et à Michaux qui ont retranché leur mode d'expression spécifique de la littérature, ont taillé, assuré un domaine à part pour la *poésie*, poésie dont la 'factivité' — que je voie comme pratique culturelle singulière, néanmoins objective — tout en se référant à la réalité *préexistante*, *constitue* une réalité et engendre de *nouvelles* réalités.

L'imaginaire au service du réel? Dans un certain sens, oui. Jean Burgos prend grand soin de se distancer de tous ceux qui — nombreux et divers — croient que l'écriture *poétique* puisse de quelque façon *imiter* le réel, et se range du côté de ceux qui osent se lancer à la conquête de l'inconnu. La poésie se dirige vers ce qui est situé en amont. On écrit le langage futur, et c'est par-là qu'on fait de l'histoire.

Cela dit, Burgos s'oppose nettement au structuralisme et au néo-structuralisme parisiens comme à leurs courants associés. Il vise une réalité *plaine* à s'approprier; il revient donc aux sources. Ses références sont Jean Piaget, en premier lieu l'*Épistémologie génétique*, C.G. Jung, sa psychologie des profondeurs, Gilbert Durand, son anthropologie de l'imaginaire, et Mircea Eliade et ses recherches en mythologie. Le texte de Burgos frôle, sans le dire explicitement, cette critique thématique renouvelée qui, dès les années 60, traverse l'université française, dont Jean-Pierre Richard est peut-être le représentant le plus éminent, mais qui était marquée par les noms de Michel Mansuy, Pierre Brunel, Georges Césbron et bien d'autres, toute une génération nourrie par les essais de Gaston Bachelard. Toutes les références de Burgos renvoient, en tout cas, aux théoriciens de l'image, *génératrice de langage*, (*non pas au 'texte'*).

La publication de *Pour une Poétique de l'Imaginaire* en 1982, son discours dans les années 80, peuvent paraître aux fêrus de la linguistique, voire du Texte, quelque peu surprenants. En effet, Burgos a eu le grand courage non seulement de réfuter les théories des structures vides, et cela avec franchise et une rigueur rares, mais aussi de critiquer ses propres sources et — allusivement — ses congénères, partisans d'une recherche sur le *fond image* de l'écriture. Il a même l'originalité d'admettre et d'explicitier le large éventail de contradictions sans lequel la poésie ne peut exister. 'Qu'il s'agisse de l'irrégularité' baudelaireenne, de la 'surprise' apollinaireenne ou de l'étonnement' persien, dans tous les cas, c'est un arrachement à un certain regard, à une certaine résignation temporelle, à une certaine clôture de l'être que vient proposer la poésie,' écrit Burgos (p. 182), et, un peu plus bas, il énonce: 'au lieu

de récuser le paradoxe, c'est sur lui qu'elle [la poésie] va se fonder' (p. 182). Il ajoute ensuite qu'il s'agit d'une 'sorte de logique de l'Imaginaire, 'logique' qui — pour nous — n'en est pas une dans le sens strict du terme, qui tout en étant impérialiste, ne peut effacer l'*hiatus* 'entre l'actualité inscrite dans l'écriture et les virtualités ouvertes par cette même écriture' (p. 183). Hiatus ou 'discontinuité' (mot qui reviendra à partir de ce passage très souvent), paradoxalement ne signifie pas que le lecteur puisse se détacher de l'œuvre. *Pourrais-je dire en renouche, qu'il s'en sert comme d'un tremplin?* Il est adonné au texte lu. Et pourtant — paradoxalement — il entonne son propre chant. La cohérence textuelle interne, n'a pas prise sur lui, à part le fait peut-être qu'il est, pour ainsi dire, lancé par elle.

Ailleurs, dans son texte, Jean Burgos concentre son attention sur le schème transcendantal de Kant qui oriente la dynamique imaginaire interne d'une œuvre. Le schème de Kant est un produit ... de l'imagination pure a priori, au moyen duquel et suivant lequel les images sont tout d'abord possibles' (cité par Burgos, p. 117). Or, les psychologues de l'intention, de l'inclination et de la tendance, auxquels se réfère Burgos en général, et Albert Burloud en particulier (*Psychologie* [Paris: Hachette 1948]), comme d'ailleurs Gilbert Durand (dans *Les Structures anthropologiques de l'imaginaire*) débouchent sur une définition plus ample des schèmes: '*trajets innés dans des représentations concrètes pré-cises*' (Durand, cité par Burgos, p. 119). Ce sont ces *trajets* qui vont 'susciter, informer, regrouper, orienter et entraîner tout à tour... une écriture poétique' (p. 120). Ce n'est pas leur origine, encore moins un enchaînement causal ancré dans cette origine, mais 'la structuration dynamique ordonnée par les schèmes, autrement dit un '*univers des possibles*' qui va caractériser la poésie. La notion magique est formulée. Rappelons que c'est la logique contemporaine des modes qui a construit la notion, '*univers des possibles*, et pour elle, il s'agissait, à l'origine, d'une phrase dont les verbes principaux exprimaient la croyance, la supposition, le savoir, tandis que la proposition subordonnée constituait l'énoncé véritable' — comme le fait remarquer Antal Bokay dans une récente étude consacrée à l'Image cosmologique ('*A Világképről* [L'Image cosmologique], *Novellaelenzék [Analyses de nouvelles]*. Z. Kanyó, ed. [Szeged: Acta Universitatis Szegediensis 1981, p. 170]). Et le théoricien allemand connu, Siegfried Schmidt, observe que 'le texte littéraire crée un système composé d'univers ... système qui est renvoi aux univers créés par d'autres textes ou par notre expérience personnelle' (cité par Bokay ibid.). Mihály Hoppal, en se référant à Van Dijk (*Foundations for Typologies of Text*), a écrit que depuis que la théorie textuelle (Texte-théorie néerlandais-allemande) est effectivement fondée,

L'exigence a vu jour de ne plus se contenter de l'examen des structures verbales d'un texte mais de saisir l'univers manifesté par le texte' (*Hiedelemrendszér, világkép, mitológia* [Système de croyance, image cosmologique et mythologie], *A Társadalom jelei [Les Signes sociaux]*. Budapest: Académie des Sciences de Hongrie 1980, p. 129 [Il s'agit d'une publication collective]). C'est ici qu'on voit apparaître le plus clairement l'opposition (logique et épistémologique) du verbal (*vide*) et de l'univers (*le plein*). Ne pourrait-on pas donc faire remarquer, en passant, que Burgos s'inscrit bien dans la ligne d'une évolution post-structuraliste, et répond à des exigences déjà devenues évidentes au milieu des années 70? Il a toutefois l'originalité de constater que le poéticien se préoccupera donc du '*dévenir de la structure impliquée par la fonction symbolique de l'image*' (p. 128). L'attention de Burgos n'est pas détournée de cette réponse, négligée par les autres représentants poststructuralistes: c'est l'image qui 'fait le plein, qui dirige vers les univers possibles. Une logique régressive dirigera sa réflexion: il saisira la poésie à partir de son aboutissement illimité, en théorie (car le déchiffrement d'une écriture poétique ne connaît pas de terme... 'toute lecture est toujours à poursuivre'), les univers possibles.'

Ici se séparent les voies du poéticien et de l'anthropologue. Tandis que l'anthropologue peut examiner les racines, l'origine, la genèse, la motivation, la structuration des symboles manifestés à travers des *images* de l'écriture — dans le but, soit de saisir la variété de la parole d'un texte culturel, soit le système codifié donné, interne d'une écriture — le poéticien reprend les images au moment même où, constituées et ordonnées, elles se prêtent à des *réorganisations* diverses. De sorte qu'aussitôt après avoir perçu et mis en relief 'les liaisons harmoniques du texte et son schéma général d'organisation' (p. 185), il va du général au particulier: il met en route 'des processus de résonance multiple ... qui *contradisent*... le schéma initial' (p. 185; c'est moi qui souligne). Le travail du poéticien commence, pour ainsi dire, au ras des textes et s'en éloigne dans la direction de l'imagination des lecteurs. Celui de l'anthropologue, comme il vise les secrets des êtres humains, fixe la particularité cristallisée dans l'œuvre poétique, pour en conclure aux attributs de la capacité existentielle et imaginaire de l'espèce, des races et des groupes. L'anthropologue décrit et interprète les procès de symbolisation, tandis que le poéticien est un *anti-herméneuticien*, qui suit les lignes de forces de ces procès, en vue de deviner quels sont les sens multiples propres de leur développement, quels univers imagés, selon quelle dynamique une œuvre poétique pourra-t-elle produire.

Voilà pourquoi on peut dire que le domaine de la poétique et de l'an-

thropologie – selon Jean Burgos – ne sont pas identiques, mais complémentaires dans un sens. Aussi aimerions-nous constater qu'une *anthropologie poétique, dans le sens strict du terme, ne puisse guère se faire prétendre*. La poésie, pour être lue et saisie, ne peut se rabattre à l'anthropologie, bien qu'il existe un matériau, l'œuvre poétique, qui peut servir de document pour un anthropologue.

Un des grands mérites donc de Jean Burgos, c'est d'avoir discerné et séparé les fonctions de la science poétique et des sciences humaines psycho-anthropologiques, mérite qu'on ne peut pas suffisamment mettre en valeur, car les représentants des sciences humaines ont tendance à empiéter sur le domaine spécifique des poéticiens, d'ignorer la nature des matériaux qu'ils traitent.

Mais Burgos ne dit pas ce qu'il pense de la prose que nous ne pouvons pas imaginer – de notre part – sans *chora poétique*. Lorsqu'il parle de la prose, en la retranchant de la poésie, nous pensons qu'il songe à la prose commune des conversations sans poésie. Mais qui peut prétendre – et qui, parmi les théoriciens, depuis Jacobson? – que la prose manque de force poétique? Je pense donc qu'une certaine prose, fictionnelle ou non, oratoire, ou quotidienne, voire scientifique, qui ne manque pas de poésie, ne peut pas se soustraire des distinctions de Burgos. Elle relève de l'écriture poétique. Elle peut servir de matériau à l'anthropologue, qui en fait autre chose que le poéticien, et c'est à ce moment qu'il pratique de l'anthropologie littéraire. La prose sert également au poéticien qui la manie différemment que l'anthropologue et la lit pour sa valeur poétique.

Reste à dire quelques mots sur la façon dont le poéticien s'attaque à ses matériaux en devenant, à ses dynamiques d'images, à ses schèmes – trajets? Si l'on pouvait parler d'imagination sociologique, comme l'avait fait Wright Mills, il faut également parler de l'*imagination du poéticien*. Le poéticien lui-même s'assimile aux poètes. Et les 'Lectures de l'imaginaire' qui constituent la deuxième moitié du livre de Burgos en témoignent. Michaux, Apollinaire, Saint-Pol Roux, Éluard et Saint-John Perse servent de champ d'investigation, chacun pour démontrer un différent aspect du travail du poéticien. Cette division du livre se trouve précédée des 'prolégomènes à une lecture de l'imaginaire' (pp. 203-8), de plusieurs autres passages substantiels qui servent déjà de schéma directeur, et suivi d'une conclusion intitulée: 'Éléments pour une poétique de l'imaginaire.'

Que le dernier mot ici soit celui du pédagogue: le texte de Jean Burgos est à la fois didactique et rafraichissant. Didactique, car il témoigne d'un esprit critique intransigeant exemplaire, dont ses amis et disciples ne tarderont pas à s'inspirer, rafraichissant car il réussit à con-

cilier un sens de l'être humain et l'eschatologie, sans tomber dans le panneau du surnaturel théologique. Quand on se trouve à même des poètes, quel mal pourrait-il déjà nous atteindre? (STÉPHANE SARKANY, UNIVERSITÉ DE PROVENCE ET CARLETON UNIVERSITY)

*ROGER C. SCHLOBIN, ed. *The Aesthetics of Fantasy Literature and Art*. Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press; Brighton, Sussex: Harvester Press 1982. Pp. xvi + 288. Hardcover US\$19.95, paperback US\$7.95

This anthology of analytical essays on the nature of fantasy in art and literature is a very commendable book. The fourteen contributions by established scholars of research on fantasy and fiction are heterogeneous in the best sense. There is variety, breadth, and condensed information from critics who obviously enjoy what they are doing. The volume fulfills many useful functions: it is an up-to-date compendium, a guide (with highly informative primary and secondary bibliographies by the editor and Marshall B. Tymn), and a critical model of different methods of approaching this elusive theme. The fantastic is understood in very broad terms: as a category which defies genre or trope definitions, yet useful for describing the force producing 'the most creative and imaginative acts' (Schlobin, p. xiv). It has as its single most distinguishing feature 'the criterion of the impossible' (Gary K. Wolfe, p. 1).

The methodological variety is refreshing. There is, for example, the witty semiotic aperçu on 'Recent Developments in the Theory of Spell Construction' by William M. Schuyler, Jr. (pp. 237-48). At the other end of the spectrum there is Francis J. Molson's very concrete sociological analysis of popular Catholic fiction for adolescents (his 'Ethical Fantasy for Children' [pp. 82-104] includes a meaningful discussion of John Caweltz's 'literary formula-thesis in a specific context'). And there is a positivistic descriptive analysis of 'Fantastic Visions, British Illustrations of the *Arabian Nights*' (pp. 143-75) by Terry Reece Hackford, concentrating on the Victorian period. It comes as no surprise that the modern churchfather of fantasy, J.R.R. Tolkien, appears prominently in several of the articles. But thanks to careful editing, the many different aspects under which his tales are viewed acquaint the reader with a corresponding multitude of insights. One of the best contributions is a historical reflection: Raymond H. Thompson's 'Modern Fantasy and Medieval Romance, A Comparative Study' (pp. 211-25), in which

concise information is thematically presented and, without undue simplification, the historical link is reconstructed with the concepts of chivalrism, fantasy, and self-realization.

For the student of comparative literature, the volume has two limitations. Such established interdisciplinary figures as Mikhail Bakhtin are neither mentioned in name nor in spirit! And the lack is indicative of the almost exclusive restriction to Anglo-Saxon culture; this goes for both primary sources and literary criticism. Another limitation is that the essays draw almost exclusively on literature or art of the last one hundred years. The medieval heroic epic (pp. 211-25) and a lonely study on 'From Fancy to Fantasy: Coleridge and Beyond' by W.R. Irwin (pp. 36-55) are the exceptions. This reviewer would have liked the inclusion of such creators of fantasies as William Blake or Heinrich Fuessli (Fuseli). These two areas should be included if a second collection would attempt to expand on this achievement.

The above qualifications should not obscure the fact that one of the book's appealing features is its lack of false pretense: whatever dimension of fantasy is touched upon appears in a clear and lucid manner. (JOSEF SCHMIDT, MCGILL UNIVERSITY)

*JACK ZIPES. *Fairy Tales and the Art of Subversion: The Classical Genre for Children and the Process of Civilization*. New York: Wildman Press 1983. Pp. 214. Hardcover US\$22.50, paperback US\$9.95

*JOHN M. ELLIS. *One Fairy Story too Many: The Brothers Grimm and Their Tales*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press 1983. Pp. ix + 214. US\$17.50

Habent sua fata libelli. Who would ever have thought that the fairy tales of his childhood would become one of the hot critical properties of the 1980s? Cinderella, Little Red Riding Hood, the Ugly Duckling were, so it seemed, a province of folklorists, below and therefore safe from the attention of literary critics. In America, psychologist Bruno Bettelheim's book *The Uses of Enchantment* (1976) changed all that. He insisted that fairy tales are an enormously beneficial tool in child development and suggested that they be permitted to work on children without being explained to them. Like Voltaire's Pangloss, however, critics cannot exist without explaining. And do we not hear every day that the world has become a bad place to live in because

parents have been bringing up their children as capitalists, imperialists, racists, and sexists? Since fairy tales make up a large part of children's literature, it follows that critics have begun talking about the tales' influence on children.

That influence, according to Jack Zipes, has been pernicious rather than beneficial. Roger Sale and others before him, including J.R.R. Tolkien, have cautioned against giving the fairy tale over to theists:

If one reads many fairy tales, one sees along the way that there are many things to interest the folklorist, the psychologist, the cultural anthropologist, but since their professions are all distinctly modern and fairy tales are all distinctly old, the evidence they look for and find is probably never the most distinctive evidence in the tale, that which sets one story, or even one version of the same story, apart from another. (*Fairy Tales and After* [1978], p. 36)

Jack Zipes's approach, however, not only invites the cooperation of modern disciplines but also dismisses aesthetic consideration of fairy tales as irrelevant: 'My foremost concern is how fairy tales operate ideologically to indoctrinate children so that they will conform to dominant social standards which are not necessarily established in their behalf' (p. 18). Sale sees as 'the great traditional motive of fairy tales, to triumph over our deepest fears with our deepest wishes' (p. 51). Zipes wants to know who uses the fairy tale to instill the fears and formulate the wishes.

He has no doubt that from Perrault on, the fairy tale has become the classic medium of the bourgeoisie to ensure 'that children would learn docilely to serve church and state' (p. 22). Hans Christian Andersen 'was able to receive the bourgeois seal of good housekeeping' (p. 71). Wilhelm Grimm is the 'moral sanitation man' (p. 48) of the nineteenth century and only slightly more respectable than Walt Disney, his successor in the twentieth. In fact, the traditional fairy tale is apt to lead to fascism. But what intrigues Zipes even more than the supposed negative historical effect of the traditional fairy tale is the tale's power, and much of his book, therefore, concerns itself with the harnessing of that power for presumably better purposes. He discusses a number of writers who have not contributed to the good housekeeping, among them several German Romantics, George MacDonald, Oscar Wilde, and Frank L. Baum. Quite recently, European writers have continued to subvert the traditional fairy tale by making it an instrument of social protest and of reeducating children to the goals of cooperation, mutual acceptance, and sexual liberation.

In its ideological fixation, Zipes's book is an overwhelmingly polemical

ical and – the mark of a tract – often hastily written rehash of his more substantial *Breaking the Magic Spell: Radical Theories of Folk and Fairy Tales* (1979); it is also less informative than his *The Trials and Tribulations of Little Red Riding Hood: Versions of the Tale in Sociocultural Context* (1983). It is the sort of enterprise Iring Fetscher, the noted German political scientist who is anything but a worshipper of the bourgeoisie, made look ridiculous in *Wer hat Dornröschen wachgeküßt? Das Märchen-Verwirrbuch* (1972). Zipes cites Fetscher's Little Red Riding Hood subversion but cannot see that his own method is also the subject of Fetscher's Olympian laughter. Equally disturbing is Zipes's systemic failure to realize that the pre-Perrault and pre-Grimm fairy tale, the orally transmitted property of the working class, reflects moral standards far more nefarious than its bourgeois adaptation – though I dare say he would not be at a loss to identify an oppressing class to whom those standards could ultimately be charged.

Can one really subvert a fairy tale? John M. Ellis feels that it is 'immune to subversion by any consciousness of the facts of the real world' (p. 8); however, he uses this thought to introduce not a discussion à la Zipes but a thorough debunking of the myth that the Grimms were faithful editors of the tales they laboriously collected from simple folk – a myth not only dear to the heart of every German who has heard it (and which German has not?) but crucial to the methodology of folklore studies. Surveying sources as far back as the early editions of the *Kinder- und Hausmärchen* and current as well as earlier Grimm scholarship – all of it readily available to anyone who wanted to acquaint himself with it – Ellis convincingly shows that neither were the Grimms faithful and laborious nor the folk simple. The vast majority of the Grimm tales are neither of immediate peasant origin nor specifically German. For a variety of reasons, chief among which seems the German urge to draw together as a nation against Napoleon, the Grimms fabricated the image of an authentic collection of tales. This fabrication, Ellis points out, is far graver than James Macpherson's celebrated Ossian forgeries, yet where Macpherson was swiftly condemned in his time, the Grimms have been eulogized from theirs to ours.

In his own way, Ellis is as vituperative as Zipes. He calls the Grimms deliberate liars and frauds, but he has a case where Zipes has only a guess. Ellis wonders how his book will be received in Germany; my guess is that, as before, all good Germans will come to the aid of their Grimms and explain why the brothers did what they did. Though in truth, I do hope that Ellis' book will not just become one more unsuccessful attempt to set the record straight. One thing is certain: there

will be more books on the fairy tale, of this kind and of that. (FRANK BERGMANN, UTICA COLLEGE OF SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY)

*ELIZABETH GECK. *Grundzüge der Geschichte der Buchillustration*. 'Grundzüge' series, Volume 46. Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft 1982. Pp. iv + 158 and 14 pp. of plates. DM38.50

Elisabeth Geck's slender volume is number 46 in the important series published by the Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft Darmstadt, which provides introductions to a variety of subjects. As is usual in this series, the topic of book illustration is formidable in its scope. The author must deal with forms of illustration as varied as the decorations in medieval illuminated manuscripts to the latest technological innovations, and what is more in books written in most European languages. However, by the time the reader reaches the end of the one hundred and forty-two pages of text, he has an understanding that is both broad and firm.

Geck discusses the history of book illustration from the Middle Ages to the present in most of the European cultures. The nine chapters deal with medieval illuminated manuscripts, the invention of the printing press, the fifteenth, sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Jugendstil and the twentieth century.

The approach is necessarily historical. In the course of her survey Geck deals with the function of book illustrations, the different ways in which text and picture are interrelated, and the differing techniques of woodcut, engraving, lithography and photography. She also considers the ways in which book illustration relates to society and the Zeitgeist, as well as to the other arts. Geck does not overlook the question of reception.

The book is provided with 14 excellent, well chosen illustrations ranging from the late medieval *Der Ackermann von Böhmen* and Dürer's *Apokalypse* to a nineteenth-century illustration of Goethe's *Faust*. (PETER M. DALY, MCGILL UNIVERSITY)

*THOMAS M. GREENE. *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1982. Pp. 354. US\$27.50

Thomas Greene's book on imitation and discovery in Renaissance poetry is, among other things, a thorough survey of ideas about rhetorical imitation held by practitioners and theorists over a period of two millennia, from Aristotle to the establishment of a neoclassic orthodoxy in the seventeenth century. There have been similar surveys, and few of the materials and arguments are in themselves new. But Greene's treatment of this often dry and repetitious tradition is interesting because he treats his authors with respect and has a fine ear for the affective power of the metaphors that have governed the discussion of imitation. Poets gather nectar and turn it into honey. The poet digests what he assimilates. The different models of a work blend like a chorus of voices. The poet should not ape his models. The relationship of a good poem to its model is not like that of portrait to sitter but of son to father. Greene's sympathetic and patient tracing of these clichés unlocks their wisdom and conveys a sense of the wide range of model-copy relationships.

As a summary of a particular intellectual tradition this book has few equals and will be of great use to teachers and students alike. That, however, is only a subsidiary aim of the book. Its major aim is to articulate the structures of historical understanding that govern European poetry from the mid fourteenth to the early seventeenth century. The pivotal figure in this enterprise is Petrarch, who discovered what Greene calls the 'humanist hermeneutic' and in his poetry and writings enacted a radically new sense of the past.

The opening chapters of the book set up a framework for this enterprise by skilfully bringing together some very old and some fashionable ideas. The old ideas concern the mutability of human affairs and the reflection of that mutability in linguistic change. The epic simile that compares the generation of mortals to leaves is echoed in Horace's comparison of words to leaves, a famous passage that Dante echoes in the *Paradiso* (26. 133-8). The fashionable idea is Derrida's concept of linguistic drift, the unbounded play of the signifier. 'What are the properties of language that resist drift sufficiently to enable us to use it at all?' Greene asks (p. 11), and answers his own question by elaborating on the leaf/word metaphor: 'The leaf has not fallen from the branch to be replaced by an altogether new one. An errancy is taking place that is not purely random or destructive because it is observable within a specific cultural historical situation and under the control of a self-

conscious artistic intelligence' (p. 13). Elsewhere Greene speaks of a 'ballast and tendency' inherent in the drift of language (p. 16).

There is a peculiar moral and elegiac quality to Greene's argument: we are not complete prisoners of linguistic drift, but human speakers can and should establish a coherent relationship to the language they inherit. A writer who succeeds in this endeavor has what Greene calls a 'moral style.' The elegiac note enters because for Greene the omnipresence of the past in modern culture, the ease with which we acculturate violent spatial and temporal dislocations, appears irresponsible and a threat to meaning. The work of culture for Greene is the struggle against the aimless and accelerating drift of language; and his analyses of Petrarch, Poliziano, Ronsard, Du Bellay, Wyatt, and Ben Jonson trace both the moral and stylistic triumphs and failures of such an enterprise: 'the poetic word achieves its brilliance against the background of a past which it needs in order to signify but which its own emergence is tendentiously and riskily shaping' (p. 19). While Greene's work has many points of contact with Bloom's theories about influence and its anxieties, its orientation is moral rather than psychological. The connection of that orientation with theories of imitation and their obsessive concern with the moral problem of plagiarism is evident.

Despite the central role that intertextual criticism has played for the past two decades, there still is no good jargon to describe the operations of intertextual readers and critics. Greene's 'subtext' and 'sub-read' are likely to enter the critical vocabulary as useful terms to describe a whole set of intentional relationships between a work and its 'sources.' Like Bloom, Greene also offers a typology of imitative relationships from 'sacramental' through 'eclectic' and 'heuristic' to 'dialectic' imitation. In 'sacramental' imitation 'the model or subtext is perceived as a fixed object on the far side of an abyss, beyond alteration and beyond criticism' (p. 38). Sacramental imitation exhausts itself in repetition. Eclectic imitation 'treats all traditions as stockpiles to be drawn upon ostensibly at random. History becomes a vast container whose content can be disarranged endlessly without suffering damage' (p. 39). In 'heuristic' imitation the poet finds his own voice by finding a proper distance from and relation to the model. This is a type that never appears in Bloom's anxious struggles, and Greene, giving to the filial metaphor of imitation a slight Bloomian twist, writes: 'he is rather like the son in a classical comedy who displaces his father at the moment of reconciliation' (p. 41). In 'dialectical' imitation, finally, the subtext is submitted to a critique.

The story Greene tells through his analyses of individual Renaissance

poets is, however, more melancholy than this ascending pattern suggests. If his book has a hero, it is Petrarch, in whom a Renaissance sensibility first achieves the level of heuristic imitation. For medieval writers, the texts of the past exist in a community of 'metonymic intertextuality' in which there is little or no awareness of the pastness of the past. In Petrarch, we first find a full awareness of temporal distance. There are personal reasons why a new sensibility found prototypical expression in him: Petrarch spent most of his life away from home, and 'his bookish genius transformed a dislocation in space into a dislocation in time' (p. 101). He looked at ruins in a new way and he found it natural to think of lost or fragmentary literary works as ruins: 'the image that propelled the humanist Renaissance and that still determines our perception of it was the archaeological, necromantic metaphor of *disinterment*, a digging up that was also a resuscitation or a reincarnation or a rebirth ...' (p. 92).

But rebirth and the creation of a new and peculiarly divided sensibility are far from joyful events. Greene shows how Petrarch's classical subtexts typically appear as images of unattainable stability and plenitude; his own poems dramatize 'a kind of fall out of a fiction of absolute verbal incarnation into a discourse divided against itself, threatened at every syllable with the disintegration of statement, but capable through this very risk of rendering a more intimate, insidious, and labyrinthine consciousness' (p. 118).

Not all of Petrarch's successors were equally haunted, and in his discussion of Jonson's transformation of Martial's poems of invitation, Greene describes a genial and enlightened (though not especially difficult) triumph over the subtext. But on the whole Greene's Renaissance is a shadowy world, more given to necromancy and disinterment than to rebirth. And while the author's eloquence is persuasive and often intensely moving, from time to time some doubts arise. After a very interesting catalogue of Renaissance passages against imitation, Greene notes 'with astonishment' Dr. Johnson's observation: 'no man ever yet became great by imitation' and asks 'How does one interpret that remark from the pen that produced "The Vanity of Human Wishes?"' (p. 44). But if one takes 'great' in a very demanding sense, Johnson's poem confirms rather than disproves his remark about the limits of imitation, and Greene's 'astonishment' points to limits of his study that he does not sufficiently articulate. He does so on one occasion when he notes that classical genres did not take hold as firmly in England as on the Continent and that their 'naturalization lacked – perhaps salutarily – the close imitative reference of so many continental texts' (p. 270). The aside is very telling and directs our atten-

tion to forms of creation and recreation that even the most generous theory of imitation can only grasp imperfectly. But whatever reservations one may have about the way in which the author defines the range of his subject, there can be no doubt about the importance of his work. *The Light in Troy* is a major work of literary scholarship and its combination of philological learning, subtle readings, and theoretical sophistication will make it a daunting model for future students of Renaissance poetry. (MARTIN MUELLER, NORTHWESTERN UNIVERSITY)

*KARINA GORDON. *Untersuchungen zum russischen romantischen Versmärchen*. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag 1983. Pp. xxvii + 226. DM35.80

*UTE HERDMANN. *Die südlichen Poeme A. S. Puškins: Ihr Verhältnis zu Lord Byrons Oriental Tales*. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag 1982. Pp. 165. DM28.80

The two volumes under review have three things in common: they are both dissertations written at German universities; they both focus on Puškin and the Puškin period, and they were both published in the new series *Slavistische Texte und Studien*. Here, however, the similarities end, for the two studies are very different in level and rigour.

The volume by Ute Herdmann discusses yet again, and, to my mind, somewhat unsatisfactorily, the problem of Byron's influence on Puškin's Southern poems. One of the problems with the book is that it does not get into any solid discussion of the poems until page 99. Most of the discussion up to that point is devoted to a potted history of Byron's and Puškin's work, especially the Romantic element in it. The reader is likely to get very impatient with these lengthy initial discussions, which have a derivative and secondary quality to them. The analysis of the Southern poems which follows (and to which only some sixty pages are devoted, although this is the meat of the thesis) consists of a rather subjective and unfocused analysis of the Byronic elements in the texts. This is not to say, however, that interesting points are not made. Herdmann shows an awareness of the elements of the Byronic poem – the three-character structure, the mysterious past of the hero, etc. – and offers some intelligent analysis of the poems in the light of these. One wishes that this part had been further developed with greater theoretical precision.

The second volume under review is, to my mind, a much more rigorous and far-reaching piece of work. It consists in an attempt to apply the analytical techniques of V.V. Propp to the literary 'folk-tales' of Puškin and Žukovskij. Gordon is exhaustive and rigorous in her approach to the analysis, in which she produces Proppian formulae to characterise the composition not only of the literary folk-tales which are the subject of the study, but also of the tales – whether of literary or folk origin – which served as sources for them. The result is that Gordon is able to draw some revealing conclusions about the genre of the artistic folk-tale as opposed to its home-spun model. Thus, whereas in the folk-tale the sequence of functions is constant, 'bei den Kunstmärchen hingegen zeigt sich eine durch diese Gattung bedingte Auflösung der Märchenstruktur' (p. 209). The beauty of the formulae developed by Propp lies in the fact that they permit the nature of a genre to be defined with precision. Thus, Gordon notes, apropos Puškin's magic tales, 'Aus den 16 nicht vorhandenen Strukturelementen ist das Fehlen von A [Schädigung] oder α [Mangelsituation] entscheidend. Dadurch wird das Schema des Zaubermärchens endgültig aufgelöst' (p. 209).

Both of the volumes reviewed are in the form of off-set printed typescript. In Gordon's case the errors are minimal, while Herdmann's text contains numerous typos, especially in the Russian quotations. At least one of the studies – that by Gordon – constitutes research to which all subsequent students of the topic will perforce return. (J. DOUGLAS CLAYTON, UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA)

*VIRGIL NEMOIANU. *The Taming of Romanticism: European Literature and the Age of Biedermeier*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 1984. Pp. ix + 5 + 304. US\$25.00

Few terms in the history of literary periodization can have been more troublesome than 'romanticism.' Push that button, and the response you trigger in scholars – not to mention the 'general reader' – will vary wildly from one national literature to the next, from generation to generation, and from theory to theory. Yet we have come a long way from the despair of A.O. Lovejoy, who some sixty years ago urged us to discard the term altogether. Scholars following in the footsteps of Wellek have identified a small cluster of general characteristics that seem to recur with predictable frequency in the major European liter-

atures of the decades following 1790. Wellek focused on the vision of an organic unity of nature expressed through a poetry of myth and symbol; M.H. Abrams traced the secularization of the biblical pattern of Paradise, Fall, and Redemption; Morse Peckham, Henry Renak, Lilian Furst, and others have offered further suggestions. But large questions remained, prominent among them the relationship between high romanticism in England and Germany from the time of the French Revolution to Waterloo and that typological reflection of it that seemed to follow after 1815, as the shadow of reality, in most of the other national literatures of Europe.

In his often brilliant and impressively learned book, Virgil Nemoianu offers a generally lucid account and persuasive theory of what he calls 'the taming of romanticism' as a phenomenon permeating European literature between 1815 and 1848. Nemoianu proposes as a model the relationship between high romanticism in Germany and the age of Biedermeier that followed. With the common sense that is characteristic of the book, he does not insist on the label, which probably stands small chance of being accepted by French or English literary scholars to designate their literatures in the period under discussion. But as far as its substance is concerned, the situation in Germany provides an excellent and often exemplary model for the rest of Europe.

The opening chapter on 'The Dynamics of the Romantic Period' accepts as a base the Wellek-Abrams understanding of high romanticism and goes on, using the work of Friedrich Sengle, to show how later romanticism, or Biedermeier, became weaker and relativized as it domesticated the original romantic secularization. Nemoianu notes four aspects of the Biedermeier 'retreat' from romanticism: the turn to history; the relaxation of integrative unity; adaptation and compromise of the original romantic absolutes; and ironic relativization of the original philosophical shapes. It is the thesis of the book that these avenues of retreat constitute a paradigm of late romanticism in much the same manner as does Abrams's model for high romanticism in Germany and England; and, moreover, that the widespread appeal to a vanished romanticism provides a common reference point for writers of that epigonal generation. Indeed, the keenly felt absence of the romantic past justifies the central idyllism that unifies the age of Biedermeier. It is this theory that Nemoianu tests in the following chapters, which turn first (chs. 2-4) to a series of national literatures and then (chs. 5-6) to two genres characteristic of them all.

Chapter 2 seeks 'Support for an English Biedermeier' in the perception that a similar pattern emerged in Germany and England after 1815. First, the marked change in attitude of high-romantic leaders like