

Two pieces in this collection seem to rise above the others. Johann Wolf summarizes the present findings on the influence of Herder on the Romanian generation of 1848 (pp. 180-98). The influence of Herder's concept of national culture and identity was enormous throughout Eastern and Central Europe and this topic was often treated; Wolf's lucid presentation should encourage further research in this very fertile area of intellectual history. The other is Alexandru Duțu's essay on the evolution of Dimitrie Cantemir's thinking from the model of *axis mundi* to that of 'Pluralité des mondes' (pp. 146-60). Cantemir was a brilliant baroque mind, shaped by the East European (Romanian and Russian) environment, but equally well attuned to the Latin and rationalist West and to the still viable culture of the Islamic Ottoman Empire. He deserves to be better known and Duțu does a good analytical job on the *Hieroglyphical Story* (1705), Cantemir's only 'roman à clef'.

It is clear that in the last 10 or 15 years, Romanian comparatist research has been losing ground in relation to other schools of the neighboring area (in particular the Hungarian one); this is due to the unfortunate political climate in the country. Nevertheless a volume like the present one shows that meritorious work continues and that there is reasonable hope for the future. (VIRGIL NEMOIANU, CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA)

*JOHN VERNON. *Money and Fiction: Literary Realism in the Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press 1984. Pp. 213. US\$19.95

Money and Fiction by John Vernon has a twin focus, presenting itself not only as a study of the theme of money in fiction but also as a meditation on the nature of literary realism. Its basic assumption is that the realistic novel (which here means the nineteenth-century novel) was but one manifestation of a more general cultural shift in modes of representation, a shift that was marked, in particular, by the transition from gold and silver currencies to paper money. The book's stated objective, then, is to elaborate on the analogy between these two forms of representation (literary and economic) and also to provide an account of the social and material worlds they in fact represent. Such a task necessarily involves treating the novel as both document and form: 'Money registers the altered sense of reality that is realism's subject and at the same time enables us to understand the forms of

representation realism evolved to record that subject' (p. 9). The novels which deal thematically with the social transformations wrought by changing attitudes to money are assumed to be the same novels which reflect, in their forms, analogous shifts of social and cultural perception.

In this context of large-scale formal and epistemic change, the name of Foucault inevitably springs to mind. However, John Vernon indicates on the first page of his preface that, although he is tempted to call his work an archaeology of ideas, his approach is both more metaphorical and more eclectic than the master's, and Foucault promptly disappears to resurface briefly only once in the rest of the book. Vernon's other mentors, the Marxist and neo-Marxist thinkers — Jameson, Lukacs, Benjamin, Marc Shell, Edward Said — fare rather better as acknowledged sources of inspiration, but here again the similarities seem less important to the author than the differences, and he declares himself to be, in fact, more of a phenomenologist than a Marxist: 'My method, then, is heterogeneous, and my language is as much metaphorical and literary as it is theoretical, if only because in my view theory should always be sullied by the concreteness of events' (p. 23).

The words used by the critic to establish his distance from those who have influenced him are telling: his approach is *metaphorical* and *eclectic*, his method *heterogeneous* and his language *metaphorical* (again) and *literary*. Now, while there is nothing exceptionable in such an approach — indeed, it would be silly to deny that some of the best books of literary criticism are, by choice, both eclectic and metaphorical — it does have obvious dangers, of which authors should be aware. The first of these involves the question of methodological closure, or lack thereof; in the absence of theoretical delimitation, it becomes perfectly natural and legitimate for the reader to look at those aspects of the problem which have been treated and ask why those particular elements were selected rather than others. When the subject of a book is as vast as that of *Money and Fiction* (even allowing for the restriction of 'fiction' to the nineteenth-century realistic novel) it becomes all the more important that we have a fairly clear idea of the criteria informing the choice of texts and topics. Similarly, if a whole work is built around a single metaphor or analogy (as is ostensibly the case here), it is not unreasonable to ask that the analogy be sufficiently compelling to provide a relatively precise focus for the material studied and to guide the reader through the various levels of the argument without allowing them to become blurred.

Does *Money and Fiction* meet these two requirements? Not entirely, and if we start by looking at the central analogy of the book we shall

perhaps see why. Its first invocation is to be found in the book's preface, where Vernon tells us that his 'most persistent analogy is the comparison between the novel's claim to represent reality and paper money's claim to represent things of (presumably) enduring value: gold and silver. Like the nineteenth-century novel, paper money is a fiction with its roots in the actual – but a fiction nonetheless' (p. 7). We are thus given a four-term homology which suggests that paper money is to gold and silver what the realistic novel is to reality.

The next important recourse to the analogy occurs in the Introduction, which is constructed around another metaphor, that of picking pockets. After an excellent discussion of the evolution of paper money from Defoe's Colonel Jack through Fielding's Black George to Dickens's Oliver Twist, tracing the ways in which money becomes progressively more anonymous, universal and convertible, Vernon once more makes the link between the two modes of representation: 'As money was becoming more fictional, fiction was becoming not only more profitable, not merely more concerned with economic themes, but also more mediated, more representational, more omniscient – in a word, more realistic – and consequently less reliant upon the diary, the letter, the memoir, the first person, or the preface that, like so many of Defoe's, claimed the story was literal fact' (p. 18). Unfortunately, because of the interference from other metaphors – of picking pockets and of banks (and novels) as storehouses of desire – it is easy for the reader to miss the fact that we have returned to the central analogy and, more particularly, that there has been an important clarification in that analogy. For the homology does not stop at establishing a comparison between two modes of signifying or representing; it goes beyond a purely semantic point of view to embrace a question of pragmatics, and more specifically a question of *contract*. The analogy, it turns out, is really between the kind of contract or convention that is implicit in the circulation of paper money and the contract or reading pact that the novelist offers to his readers.

Having established this much, it is somewhat disconcerting to find that Chapters One and Two seem to abandon the analogy as they embark on a largely thematic study of the uneasy transition from gold and land based notions of wealth to a market economy involving the universal acceptance of paper money. Thus we look at the miser, the spendthrift and the breaking up of the estate in Dickens, Balzac, Trollope, Eliot and Austen, before coming back, in Chapter Three ('The Revenge of the Material') to the broader question of the nature of realism, approached this time through the image of money (and of physical objects) in novels. It is not, however, until Chapter Four that the

discussion is brought to focus once again on the analogous relationship between paper money and the realistic novel as conventional modes of representation.

Here again, the chapter has a dominant metaphor – this time of the eavesdropper. According to Vernon, eavesdropping provides an image in miniature of realistic fiction, combining a certain objectivity with an element of artificiality (or theatricality). 'The sense of the objective,' he writes, 'is simply a sense of the world happened upon, overheard and overseen, not created for one's benefit, not a projection of one's wishes or fantasies. It is the recognition, often frightening, that the world exists without you' (p. 93). This feeling of having surprised an alien world, not intended for us, is the source, it is suggested, of the credence we give the third-person narrative in fiction: 'The gradual development of the third person in the history of the novel is perhaps simply a refinement of this power of eavesdropping, from the omniscient narrator, the eavesdropper as God, who can see through walls, to the third person as registering consciousness, the moral witness of James' (p. 94). But eavesdropping also contains a theatrical element, framing the world, compressing and dramatizing it, putting it on display: 'When this sense of things unites with its opposite, the feeling of objectivity we associate with unanswered perception, the result is a powerful synthetic reality that is the essence of literary realism' (p. 95).

Thus far the metaphor is, at the very least, interesting. However, it has to be brought back into the focus provided by the analogy between the novel and paper money, and once again we return to the notion of a social contract or convention: Both the conventions of paper money and the conventions of realistic fiction constitute a code collectively shared. And like the novel, paper money in the nineteenth century became mimetic: it stood so accurately for the object of desire that it virtually disappeared in the process, as did the mimetic language of realistic fiction' (p. 96). Not only does this statement shift the ground on which the original analogy is constructed, by introducing the concept of language (and it is curious that Vernon never does develop the obvious Saussurean analogy between language and money), it also leaves us wondering where exactly the new analogy, between eavesdropping and reading, fits into the scheme of things. In fact, it takes yet another shift in focus to bring eavesdropping into the orbit of paper money: 'The world framed by an eavesdropper is both alien and an object of desire. He willingly participates in the creation of an alien object that by definition exceeds his desire. Why? Economic forms of representation offer, if not an answer, at the very least a homologous situation. Paper money represents a world of needs and desires that,

though they may find their origin in the individual, outstrip and exceed him and congeal into an object outside him' (p. 98).

Setting aside all questions of substance that are raised by this claim (and, in particular, the problem of the nature and origin of desire, in which respect the entire book cries out for clarification and some attempt to situate the notion in relation to, for example, Girard's Hegelian theory of mediated desire or Baudrillard's insistence on the social rather than the individual character of desire), we are left with the problem of making sense, not so much of individual metaphors (which succeed in varying degrees) as of the connections which one presumes to exist between them, so that the different analogies might illuminate one another as they shed light on the subject in question. And this is where the book, in my view, lets us down. For, as our reading progresses, the need becomes ever stronger to look back and, like Hansel and Gretel, try and retrace in our mind's eye the metaphorical trail we have followed. But somehow we know that, even as we read, the metaphorical birds are eating the metaphorical breadcrumbs and we shall never see the metaphorical wood for the metaphorical trees. And this is a shame, for the trees are often interesting and useful, as in Chapter Five where a discussion of the relationship between attitudes to money and attitudes to time opens out into an analysis of plot construction in Dostoevskij's *The Gambler* and Balzac's *La Cousine Bette*. As for the rest of the book, Chapters Six and Seven raise the question of Labor and Leisure' (and here the choice of texts – Knut Hamsun's *Hunger* and James's *The Wings of the Dove* – may seem idiosyncratic) while an Epilogue ('Financiers, Counterfeiters, and the Modern Novel') returns to the central analogy in the context of the transition from realism to modernism, but serves only to whet our appetite for more. (The hungry reader can turn to Jean-Joseph Goux, *Les Monnaieurs du langage* [Paris: Editions Galilée 1984].)

I have suggested that a book of criticism which presents itself as metaphorical and eclectic should meet two basic requirements. Having looked at some length at the problems raised by the use of a central analogy, I should like to turn briefly to the question of the delimitation of the subject and the choice of texts. Here it seems that perhaps the most honest thing to do is to make a list of one's own hobby horses, of the topics and texts which one would have liked to figure in a book on money and fiction and which do not here.

In this respect, I have already noted the absence of a theoretical framework for the discussion of desire as well as the lack of any significant reflection on language or other semiotic systems. One might add that there is, similarly, no account of symbolic (as opposed to eco-

nomic) forms of exchange and no consideration of the sacred (or, more particularly, of forms of sacrifice and suicide) as a nostalgic, agonistic response to economic hegemony. (The closest we come is in a passing reference to the spendthrift as a 'holy fool' [p. 37].) There is also an unfortunate tendency to reduce history to economic and social questions and to neglect political issues. This, it seems to me, is especially dangerous in any discussion of the early nineteenth-century French novel, where the accelerated rhythm of political change (from the Ancien Régime through Revolution, Empire and Restoration to the Bourgeois Monarchy) is every bit as important to an understanding of the relationship between money and the development of the novel as is the Industrial Revolution. In this respect, it is significant that Stendhal appears only twice and that *Armande* and *Lucien Leuwen* – two novels which ought to be indispensable to any discussion of money and fiction in the period – are never mentioned.

Clearly, such a list of omissions could be extended indefinitely and my point is not that a book on money and fiction should attempt to exhaust the subject. It is simply that, confronted with an eclectic approach, I for one should like to know more about why the book is constituted as it is and not in some other way. *Money and Fiction* is an interesting book with good ideas and some fine passages and should be read by anyone interested in the subject. It is, however, a book which does not entirely fulfil its own promise, which falls short of the very ambitious task it sets itself of providing a new rhetoric or, as John Vernon prefers to call it, a new semantic of fiction. (ANTHONY PURDY, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*STÉPHANE SARKANY, éd. *Lectures et lecteurs de l'écrit moderne*. Groupe de Recherches International '1900'. Ottawa: Carleton University Press 1985. Pp. 373. No price

Publié dans le cadre des Travaux du Groupe de Recherches International '1900', *Lectures et lecteurs de l'écrit moderne* réunit des textes présentés sous forme de communications dans un colloque organisé à l'Université Carleton en 1976.

Dans le chapitre d'introduction Stéphane Sarkany dégage les voies principales du livre en signalant qu'il s'agit d'une confrontation de chercheurs des deux côtés de l'Atlantique autour de la question de la *lecture*. Le champ d'observation étudié est celui de la modernité, étiquette

qui désigne dans ce contexte la littérature depuis la fin du dix-neuvième siècle. Sarkany fait aussi remarquer que les textes réunis expriment des opinions divergentes sur les notions de texte, discours, acte, processus. Ces remarques (corroborées dans la conclusion proposée par Dominique Baudoin) sont tout à fait pertinentes dans la mesure où elles dégagent les traits majeurs du livre: hétérogénéité et confrontation de divers points de vue. Le concept même de lecture se voit soumis à des interprétations et des exploitations fort diverses. Par la variété des points de vue adoptés, ces articles mettent en relief la polyvalence de la problématique visée. Aucun monolithisme ne règne ici: il s'agit bien de lectures et de lecteurs divers.

Axé sur une perspective à la fois synthétisante et analytique, Wladimir Krynski entreprend une lecture attentive et nuancée des discours critiques français sur Pirandello. En examinant de nombreux ouvrages critiques, il présente non seulement un résumé de différentes lectures mais il en dégage les discours principaux. Ce critique démontre que dans le contexte français trois discours sont dominants: un discours doxologique où Pirandello détient la valeur d'un signifié, un discours analytique et un discours dont le but est de cerner l'influence notion simplifiée d'influence en signalant la nécessité d'une mise en perspective qui... donnerait une vision à la fois adéquate, démythifiée et conforme aux visées complexes du problème d'influence' (p. 73).

Un autre genre de lecture, plus détaillée et plus délimitée, est entrepris par plusieurs collaborateurs du volume. Ce sont des analyses immanentes dont le but est de mettre en place les mécanismes de la production du sens. Jean-Marie Klinkenberg, par exemple, se propose de démontrer que la spécificité poétique réside dans la forme d'un modèle triadique: 'Tout poème comporte au moins deux isotopies qui modalisent nécessairement un divage fondamental de l'univers sémantique immanent aux énoncés performés' (p. 233). Ces isotopies, en outre, s'insèrent dans les catégories *Anthropos* et *Cosmos* où un troisième terme, *Logos*, fonctionne comme médiateur. Cette analyse suscite toutefois une question fondamentale. Ce modèle triadique peut évidemment rendre compte de la spécificité structurale de certains poèmes mais détermine-t-il toute spécificité poétique?

Par le truchement de l'analyse d'une page du *Chant du monde* de Giono, Michel Adam procède lui aussi à une lecture sémiotique mais selon un programme différent: contextualisation du passage, étude de la progression thématique des comparaisons et ensuite étude du paragrammatisme et de l'intertextualité. Toujours dans le cadre d'analyses détaillées, Paul Vernois met à jour la structure plurielle du *Mal*

court d'Audiberti alors que Sarkany examine les figures rhétoriques et sémantiques dans *La Disparition d'Honoré Subrac* d'Apollinaire. Et enfin, c'est aussi la question du sens qui fait l'objet de l'étude d'Owen Miller. S'attachant à l'exemple de la poésie néo-zélandaise, ce critique pose la question de savoir quels sont les critères employés pour 'consacrer' les nouvelles littératures? Des critères esthétiques ou sociologiques? Dans les deux cas, ceux-ci sont jugés insatisfaisants. Pour rendre compte du caractère spécifique des nouvelles littératures, Miller utilise les notions fructueuses de 'littérisation', c'est-à-dire intégration d'un discours à celui du pays colonisant, et 'délittérisation' où selon un mouvement contraire, l'œuvre se conforme au discours du pays colonisé.

La notion de lecture ne recouvre pas uniquement des démarches synthétisantes ou des entreprises analytiques puisqu'elle peut aussi représenter un processus inhérent à la production du sens. Pierre Gobin propose à cet effet que dans le cas du texte dramatique de nombreuses 'lectures interprétatives' influencent la production du sens. Il souligne qu'entre la production initiale d'un texte rédigé et la production ultime d'un spectacle représenté, il y a toute une série d'étapes interprétatives et médiatisantes dont la lecture du script par les acteurs, les musiciens, les metteurs en scène, sans oublier la lecture du programme par le spectateur. D'où la conclusion proposée par Gobin que le texte dramatique (celui qui est représenté) 'se construit par une série de lectures partielles' (p. 35). Pour Jean Fiset, la lecture peut également contribuer à la production du sens dans le cas de la poésie. Par le biais d'une analyse très fine du poème 'Autrefois' de Saint-Denis Garneau — analyse en partie inspirée par la psychanalyse — ce critique suggère que l'inscription du sujet au niveau de l'énonciation peut marquer l'inscription d'un acte de lecture. Dans sa conclusion, Fiset problématise sa propre démarche en confrontant les données d'une perspective psychanalytique au programme textuellement délimité de la sémiotique. En dernier lieu, l'étude de Patrick Imbert révèle que dans le cas du pastiche la lecture s'inscrit de façon magistrale dans la production du sens. En entreprenant une lecture du 'Cable' de Reboux et Müller à la lumière du poème 'Le Récif de corail' de Hérédia, Imbert montre comment tout pastiche représente une lecture qui révèle les stéréotypes, les clichés et les topoï du texte pastiché.

En dépit de ces nombreuses analyses, la polyvalence de la notion de lecture n'est toujours pas épuisée car ce mot s'indexe naturellement à celui de lecteur (et, bien entendu, à celui de lectrice). Réfléchir à la notion de lecture, c'est aussi tenir compte de la modification des publics, de leurs goûts et de leurs pratiques de lecture. Dans cette optique,

Pierre Laurette signale que la fin du dix-neuvième siècle a marqué des changements dans la production et la diffusion qui ont métamorphosé le monde culturel. À partir de ce constat, Laurette étudie la corrélation entre certaines pratiques d'écriture et la conjoncture d'un marché littéraire. D'un côté, il examine les questions de surproduction de livres, d'accroissement de la production de masse alors que d'un autre côté, il rend compte d'une spécialisation croissante dans le domaine artistique. Ce critique affirme, par exemple, que les symbolistes se sont opposés au quantitatif par un mouvement incessant de relation négative (p. 300). Important par l'éclairage qu'il apporte à la pratique littéraire de la fin du siècle, cet article a aussi le mérite de nous rappeler que toute pratique scripturale – critique ou littéraire, savante ou populaire – est surdéterminée par des conditions économiques et socio-culturelles: rappel pertinent et même inquiétant dans le cadre de l'état actuel des recherches au Canada.

Stéphane Sarkany vise lui aussi la question des goûts de lecture du public à l'orée du siècle. L'examen des feuilletons-courts dans les journaux de l'époque lui permet de relever quatre codes de lecture: code petit-bourgeois populaire, code des nantis, code de l'ouvrier politisé et le code aristocrate. Dans sa conclusion, Sarkany déplace sa problématique dans le champ des études littéraires pour suggérer que 'la *production des interprétations* ... se trouve assignée à des champs culturels' (p. 332).

Et la lecture comme activité critique? Quelles en sont les bases, les postulats et les finalités? Quelles en sont les limites et les impasses? Michel Pierssens débloque ce champ d'investigation à l'appui des lectures de Lautréamont. Il constate qu'en dépit d'une apparente multiplicité textuelle, les études consacrées à cet auteur sont ordonnées par un principe de cohérence. Ce sont des lectures thématiques faites à partir du repérage et de la mise en série des transformations d'un signe. Or, selon Pierssens, le texte de Lautréamont interpelle une lecture qui, pour être fidèle à la spécificité de ce texte, devrait renoncer au principe de totalité. Dans la deuxième partie de son article, ce critique se sert de l'exemple du 'cas Lautréamont' pour avancer une théorie de lecture selon laquelle le texte serait lu 'comme un réseau inépuisable d'événements et de singularités, comme une collection de fragments où toute liaison vient par surprise' (p. 164). Inscrite sous le signe de la pluralité, une telle lecture pourrait se faire dans le cadre de n'importe quelle interdiscursivité.

L'apport de l'article de Pierssens est capital dans l'ensemble du volume parce qu'il produit une confrontation de différents points de vue. C'est en effet tout le programme de la sémiotique et du thématisme

qui est fortement contesté par l'approche 'épistémique' de Pierssens. Autrement dit, ce sont les bases mêmes de l'activité critique qui sont remises en cause par cette confrontation salutaire. Mais c'est précisément parce que ce genre de questionnement est urgent, puisqu'il se situe au cœur de toutes nos recherches, qu'on peut regretter que des communications présentées en 1976 ne soient pas publiées avant 1985. Ce long délai diminue l'originalité de certains textes et ralentit notre dialogue inter-universitaire. Néanmoins, en mettant en évidence la complexité du concept de la lecture et en l'annexant à divers domaines du savoir (linguistique, sociologie, philosophie), ce volume contribue incontestablement à l'interrogation qui s'est faite et qui continue à se faire au sujet de la lecture. (J.M. PATERSON, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO)

*MICHELINE TISON-BRAUN. *Ce Monstre incomparable: Malraux ou l'énigme du moi*. Paris: Armand Colin 1983. Pp. 165. FF52.90

La réflexion sur l'essence du moi se poursuit depuis près d'un siècle; Micheline Tison-Braun en a fait l'objet d'une vaste étude commencée avec *La Crise de l'Humanisme* (Paris: Nizet 1959-1967). Après s'être penchée sur les écrits de Flaubert, Rimbaud, Mallarmé, Bergson, Claudel et Proust, elle concluait *L'introuvable Origine* (Genève: Droz 1981) en rapelant que Malraux situait l'essence de l'homme dans son aptitude à mettre le monde en question. Il est donc logique qu'elle consacre son dernier livre à l'auteur de *La Condition humaine*. Tout être, écrit-il, est, pour lui, un 'monstre incomparable.' D'où le titre donné à un essai dense et riche.

Sur quoi fonder la notion d'homme? Rejetant l'individualisme et l'introspection éthérée, la pensée 'éruptive' de Malraux est une exploration angoissée de l'humain, exploration où se croisent et s'amalgament éthique, métaphysique, esthétique et politique. Micheline Tison-Braun propose une lecture diachronique des principales œuvres. La première partie de son livre est consacrée aux romans, la seconde à une réflexion sur les images, les rêves et les mythes de Malraux, la troisième à la question de l'art. L'ensemble comporte de fines 'microlectures' – on notera tout particulièrement l'étude des images dans un fragment des *Temps du mépris* et l'examen de la figure du gisant – mais il se présente comme une série de 'méditations' qui font défiler le sens, le sacré, le destin, l'absurde, les valeurs, l'art, la mort, le tragique, etc., notions attendues dès qu'on évoque Malraux.

La conclusion de Mme Tison-Braun est ferme. 'Passionné de métaphysique' (p. 161), Malraux se méfie des systèmes, il est l'homme du questionnement. Son expérience le fait osciller entre l'angoisse et la fascination pour la création — civilisations et art. Le seul sens qu'on puisse donner à la vie réside dans la résistance, active ou contemplative, à l'absurde. L'homme est précaire, comme ses œuvres; mais l'homme aléatoire est le contraire d'une "passion inutile"; c'est une passion tragique et condamnée, mais noble' (p. 163). Romantique et humaniste à la fois, Malraux se dépense d'une révolution portuese de totalitarisme pour s'éprendre des civilisations et de leurs fragiles traces. Sa sagesse ne conduit ni au nihilisme ni au fanatisme. 'C'est pourquoin son œuvre est l'une des rares qui, littérairement, politiquement et philosophiquement, soit restée ouverte' (p. 164).

Tout cela est juste sinon neuf. L'étude perspicace et, chose rare, joliment écrite de Mme Tison-Braun ne sort pas de l'espace épistémologique dans lequel se meut la critique 'malrucienne' depuis de nombreuses années. Comme le livre d'André Marissel (*La Pensée créatrice d'André Malraux* [Toulouse: Privat 1979]), il s'agit d'une lecture interne, philosophique ou philosophisante, visant à cerner la 'pensée,' la *Weltanschauung* de Malraux. Voici plus de vingt ans que le Père Joseph Hoffmann (*L'Humanisme de Malraux* [Paris: Klincksieck 1963]) frayait cette voie qui depuis a été souvent parcourue. Il est à souhaiter que de nouveaux chercheurs soumettent les textes aux outils forgés ou affinés par la critique contemporaine, analyse structurale du récit, sémiotique, etc. L'œuvre de Malraux a tout à y gagner. (JEANYVES GUÉRIN, UNIVERSITÉ DE PARIS X NANTERRE)

*MAX DORSINVILLE. *Le Pays natal*. Dakar: Les nouvelles éditions africaines 1983. Pp. 193. FF220.00

Only nine years have passed between the publication of this volume of articles and Max Dorsinville's first book, *Caliban Without Prospero: Essay on Québec and Black Literature*, but much has changed both in Québec and in the various Caribbean and African cultures marked by the anti-colonial myth of the *retour aux sources*.

In 1975 when I asserted, perhaps a little too stridently, that Dorsinville ought to broaden his sociological perspective to include an analysis of the status and relative isolation of the elites who employed the *Caliban Stoff* and its attendant ideology, the parallel between Québec

and the Third World seemed plausible in historical as well as literary terms. Such a parallel still makes some literary sense, as Dorsinville shows, but only in a very restricted way. In the fifties and sixties a group of Québec poets did in fact 'receive' the elements of a style and a body of themes from the Négritude poets, especially from Aimé Césaire, and did so in a context of nationalist and, to some extent, revolutionary agitation. The literary movement in question, known as 'poésie du Pays' (and which Dorsinville considers the most important since *La Relève*, p. 31), was on the wane already in 1971 when Dorsinville traced its sources in an article drawn from *Canadian Literature* (pp. 31-40). Despite their common encounter with the poems of Aimé Césaire, Paul Chamberland, Yves Préfontaine and Gaston Miron had taken diverse directions by the late sixties and their literary organs had withered. Nonetheless, the ideology 'of the Native Land' had spread far beyond its original poetical milieu and had merged with larger nationalistic concerns. The themes espoused by *Pays* poetry were integral to the *Parti Pris* movement and did find a distant but faithful echo in the pre-electoral Péquiste cultural policy. Indeed, the soil upon which the seeds of Négritude fell was so propitious that despite persistent racism in Québec, with which Dorsinville deals in another chapter drawn from *Canadian Literature* (pp. 117-31), it would be accurate to speak of a Third World fashion or fad among leftist Québec intellectuals. This *mode* was of course not unique to Québec. It is, moreover, a finished thing, which perhaps enables us to speak of it with a more detached voice and which has allowed Dorsinville to evolve from the polemic subject and tone of *Caliban Without Prospero* to the more academic Stände of *Le Pays natal*.

Apart from the variety of information regarding the fairly diverse cultures about which Dorsinville is personally as well as intellectually well-informed, the comparatist will likely be most interested in the theoretical postulates underlying his research, for work on the marginal literatures often raises old questions in a new light. Interestingly enough, Dorsinville is conservative in his orientation, deliberately so. He is an overt proponent of the so-called French school of comparatism that some have attacked as being naively positivist, and he justifies this approach by suggesting that 'il n'est pas impossible qu'une méthode jugée "dépassée" par certains comparatistes contemporains étudiant les littératures européennes soit au contraire réactualisée à mesure que l'étude comparée des jeunes littératures du Québec et du Tiers-Monde prend de l'ampleur' (p. 41). I am somewhat uncomfortable with this reasoning, for it appears to renew, though in veiled form and to be sure unintentionally, the all-too-familiar proposition that

'young' literatures are in some way inferior to 'old' ones, such that a critical tool inappropriate for the latter still suffices for the former, while only the most advanced techniques can render the latter – which is obviously not the case. Our Eurocentric prejudices and personal tastes notwithstanding, there are clearly no qualitative differences among literatures; each is itself; none is more 'evolved' than any other. At best then, we should explain the success of Dorsinville's application of strictly positivist and at points practically Tainian methodology (p. 58) to younger literatures by allowing that these latter have not been so thoroughly quarried for comparative gems and that *rapports de faits* are therefore not so wearisome therein as in older literatures. This explanation has the advantage of skirting the tedious debate over positivism in comparative methodology and places the onus for any given approach where it belongs: on the predisposition of the scholar rather than upon the putative qualities and quality of the works.

The most fruitful reflections of this nature are raised by the first section of *Le Pays natal*, which bears the subtitle 'Les Antilles' although it is basically a study of the impact of Césaire on the *Pays* poets. Dorsinville criticizes René Wellek for propounding 'une théorie universelle de la littérature quand elle ne repose dans les faits que sur les acquis d'une seule civilisation...' (p. 15), but he himself commits a similar extrapolation. Wellek's aim was to establish the essence of national literatures by evoking the numerous contradictions which minor or marginal literatures raise in literary history. Dorsinville claims in return that the veritable distinction is not among national literatures, but between *dominant* and *dominated* ones, and he argues that the literary complex best expressed in Aimé Césaire's *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* (1956), which has echos throughout the Third World and in Québec and which includes not only a cluster of images and symbols, a set of personae, a panoply of narrative techniques and a given ideological content, but also an explicit sociology of art that is the ideal touchstone for such a distinction (p. 29).

Given that the old guard Wellek chastizes was indeed positivist, Wellek himself has seemed, to me, somewhat essentialist. He presumes that the intrinsic nature of national literatures will emerge through a sort of critical triangulation without considering that each sphere of literary activity may be provisory, contingent, transitory, alien to our terminology, irreducible to our terms. I am suggesting that *national literatures are the exception, not the rule*, for the networks of writers, publishers and readers which make up a literature rarely coincide with a nation-state.

An analogous objection must be raised to Dorsinville's typology of literatures as *dominantes/dominées*. Capable of proving with even a rather conservative critical tool that the *Pays* complex takes virtually identical forms in Québec, Africa and the Caribbean, he then slips from modest correlation of events to schemes as grand and universal as Wellek's. Of course there are those who are dominant and those who are dominated, and within each category persons who write (and publish and read), but social exploitation itself cannot be the criterion for a general typology of literatures, not because it is not a factor, but because typology on such a scale is fraught with contradictions, and in any event cannot be deduced from what Dorsinville does prove.

Like any literary and ideological configuration, the *Pays* complex is a very fugitive thing, a form of spiritual radiation, if you will, with a very short half-life. The brief flash of inspiration *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* sparked in Québec in the mid-sixties left but an afterimage by 1971, and was only one light source among many. Dorsinville mentions the impact of Rimbaud upon the *Pays* poets. *Une saison en enfer* contains as much of Césaire's *Cahier* as the *Cahier* contains of Yves Préfontaine's *Pays sans paroles*. The influence of Aimé Césaire upon Québec is no hallucination, but its tenuous nature and limited scale should deter us from postulating any larger or permanent alignment between Québec literature and the literatures of Africa and the Caribbean.

This is not to deny the possibility of literary history, only to narrow its scope and refine its terms. It is to Max Dorsinville's credit that he essentially respects the limits, deliberately embracing the old school's dictum of strictness and, in all but a few scattered passages, restraining his remarks to evidence at hand.

As for the objection that a collection of short articles accumulated over a decade may not merit serious interest (or be too obviously the fruit of the academic's need to place *books* as well as articles in order not to perish), I find instead that the publishers have rendered a service. True, the price to pay for such motley volumes is a certain lack of theoretical cohesiveness. But those of us in Canada who are familiar with one or another passage reprinted from *Canadian Literature* or *CRCL* are not at all as likely to have perused the pages of *Ethiopiennes* or *Le Soleil* (from Dakar, not Québec). Nor will many Africanists have followed the career of Yves Préfontaine or Paul Chamberland.

Oeuvre à diffusion, then, *Le pays natal* possesses the primordial qualities of a good book, academic or not: it is interesting; it informs.

(GEORGE MACLAINE LANG, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*ROBERT A. GEORGES and STEPHEN STERN. *American and Canadian Immigrant and Ethnic Folklore: An Annotated Bibliography*. New York and London: Garland Publishing 1982. Pp. 300. \$91.00

This is an extensive bibliography of some 1900 entries covering a period from 1888 through 1980 and focusing on published works written in English. It is divided into fifty-seven sections: one general, and the others representing fifty-six different ethnic groups, from Armenian to Yugoslav. The format is convenient, with items coded by the first two letters of the ethnic group: IR for Irish, JE for Jewish, etc., and numerous useful cross-listings. The arrangement is practical and the annotations informative. There are four indexes: 'Folklore Forms and Topics,' 'General Subject,' 'Geographical,' and 'Authors.'

I must say that I found this book puzzling. The compilers write: 'This is a bibliography of the *folklore of European and Asian immigrants* and their American- and Canadian-born descendants' (p. xi, italics added). That apparently includes *all* North American folklore except that of the native peoples, the blacks, and the Mexican-Americans (which are omitted because substantial bibliographies for those groups already exist). The coverage is not restricted to lore imported from European and Asian countries: included are 'transformations of immigrants' homeland traditions' and 'folklore generated as the result of the experiences of immigrating and adapting to New World environments' (p. xi). That seems incredibly broad, and if taken at face value it means that this huge bibliography is very incomplete.

Despite the compilers' claim to cover 'the folklore of European immigrants,' they have apparently interpreted 'immigrant and ethnic folklore' to mean everything except English. Although there are sections headed Irish, Scottish, and Welsh, there is no English chapter. It is obviously assumed that Irish and Scottish North Americans are ethnic, while Anglo-Americans are not. I do not see how it can be denied that the English, like all the other Europeans, were immigrants, and therefore fall within the definition offered.

This basic assumption results in strange inclusions and exclusions. For example, one article by Roy Mackenzie ('Ballad-Singing in Nova Scotia,' [SC 26]) is included, but his two major books dealing with the same kind of songs discussed in that article are not. An article about one Scottish ballad, "'Donald Monroe": A Canadian Version of a Scottish Folksong' (SC 6), is included, but half a dozen major Canadian books containing many similar ballads are not. Unless the items were labelled as Irish or Scottish, all British-Canadian material was ignored.

My *Traditional Singers and Songs from Ontario* contains songs mainly from Irish tradition, but it, like all of Helen Creighton's books which have songs of Irish and Scottish origin, was not listed.

Even allowing for the omission of the British-Canadian material, the Canadian coverage is very spotty. The compilers do say that 'a lesser number of Canadian resources were available' (p. xvi), but the omissions render the book practically useless as a reference for Canadian folklorists. Three important periodicals: *Canadian Folklore Canadian*, *Culture and Tradition*, and *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, are not covered at all; *Canadian Folk Music Journal* is listed and some items from it are given, but again, unless the title mentioned a particular ethnic group, the article was ignored. Most of the National Museum's Mercury Series titles appear, but quite a few other National Museum publications do not: for example, Kenneth Peacock's *Songs of the Newfoundland Outports* and MacEdward Leach's *Folk Ballads and Songs of the Lower Labrador Coast*, both of which have many Irish songs.

There is no listing for the French-Canadian tales translated by Margaret Low and the Jewish-Canadian tales collected by Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett which appeared in Richard Dorson's *Folktales Told Around the World*. The only book of mine listed is *Folk Songs of Quebec*, although *Folk Songs of Canada* vols. 1 and 2, *Canada's Story in Song*, and *The Penguin Book of Canadian Folk Songs* all contain French-Canadian songs.

In addition to the omissions, there are a number of minor errors in the annotations of the Canadian items, but that is hardly surprising in a bibliography of this size.

So much for the Canadian content, which I am qualified to judge. Presumably the United States content is better, but again there is the anomaly of the exclusion of material not specifically labelled as something other than English. For example, Cecil Sharp's *English Folk Songs from the Southern Appalachians* is naturally omitted, although it contains songs of Irish and Scottish origin as well as English: Sharp obviously used 'English' loosely for not only does he include songs from the British Isles but also some native American items. One article by Norman Cazden on a song labelled as Irish appears (IR 14), but his *Abeland Folksong Book* which contains many similar songs does not. The same applies to most of the major song collections. Similarly, tales and superstitions collected from English-speaking Americans nearly always have material from Ireland and Scotland as well as England.

Considering the work that went into this volume it is unfortunate that its limits were not more carefully defined. Perhaps the compilers

should not have tried to include Canadian material, with which they obviously were not sufficiently acquainted, and should have specifically excluded all items from the British Isles, for much English, Scottish, and Irish folklore is inextricably intertwined. (EDITH FOWKE, YORK UNIVERSITY)

*JARS BALAN, ed. *Identifications: Ethnicity and the Writer in Canada*. Edmonton: The Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies, The University of Alberta Press 1982. Pp. 158. Cdn\$7.95

The work under review is a collection of papers that resulted from a conference organized by the Canadian Institute of Ukrainian Studies in September 1979, in commemoration of the 75th anniversary of Ukrainian publishing in Canada. It was held at the U of A campus in cooperation with the Departments of English and Comparative Literature.

The editor, Jars Balan, outlined the aims of the organizers: it was ... 'to challenge the perception of anglophone Canada as a cultural monolith' (p. xi), to discuss 'the ethnic dimension in Canadian literature' (p. x), and to 'deal with the question of ethnicity in some of its contemporary aspects' (p. xi).

The participants, writers, poets, literary critics and teachers represented a number of ethnic groups: Ukrainian, Hungarian, Icelandic, Jewish, and Canada's native peoples. In his paper, 'Ethnic Writer in Canada' (pp. 1-13), Henry Kreisel spoke of the importance of language which he considered as crucial for the first generation of 'ethnic' writers. He further noted the still existing ethnocentricity in the community of writers and stressed the importance of exploring the dimension of multiculturalism.

Ukrainian literature in Canada was the subject of three essays. The Ukrainian poet, Yar Slavutych, discussed in 'Expectation and Reality in early Ukrainian Literature in Canada, 1897-1905' (pp. 14-21), works of Ukrainian writers of the first wave of immigrants. Slavutych gave a romanticized account of the literature of that period. The literary critic, Danylo Struk, in his essay 'Ukrainian Emigré Literature in Canada' (pp. 88-103) considered the evaluation to be rather inflated, and instead, singled out eight authors as deserving recognition. In his concluding remarks Struk expressed the hope 'that the upcoming generation will manage to take root without loosing its identity, and that perhaps a

new vibrant literature ... a distinctly Ukrainian Canadian literature ... will eventually emerge' (p. 102).

Balan's contribution, 'Ukrainian Influences in George Ryga's Work' (pp. 36-52), was in essence an analysis of the writer's background and literary output. Balan tried to show how Ryga's rural Ukrainian Canadian background consistently percolates much of his creative work (p. 51).

The story of settlement and the nature of the Icelandic community in Canada was the subject of David Arnason's essay 'Icelandic Canadian Literature' (pp. 53-66). In addition to a discussion of the writings of the noted Icelandic poet, Stephen G. Stephansson, Arnason presented a concise but informative narrative of the Canadian Icelandic community. Similarly, George Bisztray, head of Hungarian studies at the University of Toronto, dealt with the Canadian Hungarian community. He tried to explain the nature of Hungarian immigration to Canada and the growth of Canadian Hungarian literature. He thought that the linguistic uniqueness of the Hungarian language was the cause of the isolation of the Hungarian Canadian writer. An added feature in Canadian Hungarian literature was the political aspect of the works. A significant part of Bisztray's paper was devoted to an evaluation of the works of individual poets and short story writers. He concluded his discussion on a rather optimistic note saying that the Hungarian writers, although still alienated, were becoming aware of their isolation and that he considered it to be a step toward integration into the Canadian literary community (p. 33).

Seymour Levitan's contribution was the essay 'An Introduction to the Canadian Yiddish Writers' (pp. 116-34). Levitan was concerned in the main with the work of one Yiddish poet, a post-world War II emigré, Rochl Korn. Also contained in the discussion was an overview of Yiddish literary output as well as mention of the better known writers whose works are written in English: Adele Wiseman, Mordecai Richler and A.M. Klein.

The problem of producing adequate bibliographies of literatures written in languages other than English or French was the subject of the essay 'The Unheard Voices' by Judy Young, the Literary Project Officer of the Multiculturalism Directorate. She spoke of the difficulties encountered by literary critics in reviewing ethnic Canadian literature in order to bring it closer to Canadian audiences whose languages is English or French, and of the lack of adequate bibliographies of works written by the so-called 'ethnic' writers.

Included in the volume are notes of two panel discussions entitled 'Ethnicity and Identity' (pp. 67-87), and 'Hyphenated Canadians'

(pp. 135-56). Here one finds a very interesting and often provocative exchange of views on the themes as indicated in the titles. Here too was the possibility of additional input by participants others than those who were presenting papers. A number of well-known writers and poets expressed their ideas on the many problems facing the 'ethnic' writer and his/her place in Canadian literature. Heard were voices of Rudy Wiebe, George Ryga, Myrna Kostash, Maria Cambell, Pier Giorgio di Cicco and Andrew Suknaski.

The conference and the resulting compilation was a pioneering venture and the organizers as well as the participants ought to be commended for the effort. The work is an interesting introduction to 'ethnic' literature. In addition, the uninformed will learn some of the background of a number of communities that make up the Canadian mosaic. There is no index or bibliography. Still, the book will be of interest to the specialist in the field of ethnic studies, to the interested lay reader and, last but not least, to writers and literary critics. (T. YEDLIN, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

*JOHN MOSS. *A Reader's Guide to the Canadian Novel*. Toronto: McClelland and Stewart 1981. Pp. xvi + 399. Cdn\$12.95

John Moss's roles as critical reader and teacher come together in this inventory which combines his own pleasure with a desire to enlighten. In a series of more than two hundred discrete critical essays, each devoted to a single work, Moss attempts to give a sense of the range and particularity of selected novels or 'a closely related form' (p. x) such as *Roughing It in the Bush* or *Who Do You Think You Are?*, by approximately 150 writers, most of whom were or are Canadian and whose work appeared between 1759 (the date of publication of *The History of Emily Montague*) and 1980. The list is divided into three categories – 'English-Canadian Novels,' 'Québécois Novels in Translation,' and 'Canadian Novels for Young Readers' – and each category is organized alphabetically by author. There are two appendices. Appendix A has five sections: 'Selections in Chronological Order,' 'Selections by Primary Setting,' 'Winners of the Governor-General's Award for Fiction,' 'A Canadian Novel Short List,' 'Canadian Poet Novelists.' Appendix B consists of 'Selections listed by form, type, theme and motifs.' The organization is clear and both the 'Selections by Primary Setting' in

Appendix A and all of Appendix B will be very useful in the classroom context.

The preface, however, is indecisive. It states that the essays represent 'an attempt at functional criticism' (p. ix), that 'critical theories and cultural generalizations have been kept at bay' (p. ix), that 'significance,' the basis on which the works were chosen, 'is an elusive concept' (p. x), and that 'apart from significance, the factors determining selection were practical and arbitrary' (p. x). Moss assures us that 'the standards of evaluation and analysis remain, as much as possible, constant throughout' (p. x), but we are not told what those standards are. 'Canadian' is purposely not defined by theme or critical system but by one or more of authorial nationality, form, and content. While the first and third criteria are largely self-explanatory, some elaboration of the question of Canadian 'form' is needed. In a popular guide of this kind, 'significance,' 'standards,' and national definition are immensely difficult to characterize as is apparent in Moss's naming of books that might have been included, but weren't and why. As he indicates, 'authorial bias' (p. xiv) has a significant part to play and no preface can really explain or allay charges of arbitrariness or even misjudgment. Faced with these inevitable risks, a briefer preface eschewing any reference to significance or standards or national form might have been more satisfactory.

In a sense, the first and most valuable quality of this survey is its intention to open up and popularize the Canadian novel. Although Moss defines his audience as 'the general reader and specialist alike' (p. ix), his real audience is the former as the appendices confirm. The general reader, however, still is included in a broad spectrum ranging from senior high school students, through undergraduate and graduate students, to high school teachers and, in the burgeoning world of Canadian studies abroad, to university teachers outside Canada who are coming to our literature for the first time. For better or worse, most specialists are now interested in some kind of conceptual synthesis or in the systematizing criticism which Moss in his preface labels 'critical fallacy' (p. xi). By implication, *A Reader's Guide* is designed as an alternative to the thematic schematizing of *Survival* (1972), of Moss's own *Patterns of Isolation* (1974) and *Sex and Violence in the Canadian Novel* (1977). The new *Oxford Companion to Canadian Literature* (1983), published two years after *A Reader's Guide*, does contain brief entries devoted to and published under the title of various novels.

In general, the essays in *A Reader's Guide* hold to the following pattern: general introductory remarks about the writer and/or the work; a summary of the plot; remarks about technique; some conclusion

about the success of the novel. Apart from exceptions like Bertam Brooker's *Think of the Earth*, Ralph Connor's *The Man From Glengarry* and Arthur Stringer's *The Prairie Mother* – 'with children called Dinkie and Pee-Wee and Popsy and a husband called Dinky-Dunk, the narrator of this novel begins at a distinct disadvantage' (p. 264) – Moss is obviously doing a job that he thoroughly enjoys.

One problem with a book of this kind is the extent to which the critic's summary of the plot may or may not be of interest to the potential reader. Moss's estimation, for example, of Lily Dougall's *What Necessity Knows* as a 'remarkable novel' (p. 61) and the product of 'an excellent if somewhat prolix prose stylist, a writer of fire and compassion, of great intelligence and imagination' (p. 63) is undermined by the unintentionally hilarious plot summary of the novel itself. However, the fine discussion of *The Temptations of Big Bear* contains practically no plot summary and here John Moss seems to be caught between the specialist who presumably knows the story and the general reader who needs to know as much about the story as about theme and technique. There are works, of course, like George Bowering's *A Short Sad Story* and Michael Ondaatje's *Coming Through Slaughter* which defy plot summary, but on the whole, Moss is able to balance discussion of context, content, form and evaluation in most of his essays.

Though Moss's choice of writers and works seems sometimes idiosyncratic, it gives the *Guide* its individuality. By and large I have no trouble with his selection but there are instances where distinctions are somewhat pedantic as in Moss's statement that 'autobiography is only represented here when it is a fictional mode' (p. xi). This is, in my opinion, not sufficient grounds for including *Roughing It in the Bush* and omitting *Memoirs of Montparnasse*, for I cannot agree with Moss that 'the object of Glassco's narrative is the elucidation of Glassco, not his re-creation in art' (p. xi). In a sense, this kind of distinction is as selective in its way as the thematic and critical systems alluded to in the preface.

The inclusion of several novels by the same author gives us a sense of those writers – Callaghan, Cohen, Davies, Gallant, Grove, Hood, Kroetsch, Laurence, MacLennan, Richler, Thomas, Wiebe – whom Moss considers to be major novelists. He shows himself to be not only a sensitive and intelligent reader, but also a persuasive writer. He makes no pretense at objectivity and clearly conveys his evaluation of the work under consideration. The writers he most admires – Matt Cohen, Margaret Laurence, Rudy Wiebe – are those in whose work imagery, language, and vision come together in an aesthetic and visceral complement characterized by 'resonance.' Moss is sometimes able

to crystallize in a phrase an essential characteristic as in his statement that Morley Callaghan's métier is 'idea wedded to character rather than the dramatic revelation of plot' (p. 37) and he underlines the importance of theme in Hugh MacLennan's work by arguing that his novels 'engage the reader's mind and heart, though seldom his imagination' (p. 176). He rightly, in my opinion, argues that Thomas Chandler Haliburton's *Old Judge* is that writer's primary achievement and that Raymond Knister's *White Narcissus* is 'celebrated in our tradition because of the promise it shows rather than for its own achievement' (p. 145). Less clear, however, is his statement that A.M. Klein's *Second Scroll* 'is entirely a thing in itself, yet wholly accessible to those who will work to hold it in their minds and immerse themselves within it' (p. 144). Of all the works discussed in *A Reader's Guide*, Klein's book, for its sheer learning alone, is difficult to the point of being, at best, partially accessible if only because it cannot be all held in the mind.

The bias toward the generalist rather than specialist reader has resulted in the omission of any comment about publishers' abridgements of many of the nineteenth-century works of fiction he discusses, though Moss says in his preface that he has not indicated 'abridgement or revision or other textual aberrations except when these might be of special concern. The reader should bear in mind that although I have tried to be thorough and accurate in the bibliographical descriptions of each selection, this is a critical study, not a bibliographical document' (p. xv). This policy is tenable if the critic is writing for a general audience, but it does not satisfy the specialists he also wants to reach and who need to know at least the nature of the abridgements to *The Golden Dog* and *Wacousta*.

John Moss has written an immensely useful book for those with some or perhaps no knowledge of Canadian literature who want to have a guide that will take them further into the country of the Canadian novel. The specialist may, in some cases, find entries which recall the outlines of an imperfectly remembered story, but beyond that, what he or she requires is likely beyond the borders of this compendium. For the general reader, however, the limitations of *A Reader's Guide* are minor, for it is, on the whole, a well-written, wide-ranging, perceptive, and lively response to many different Canadian novels whose abundance will come as a surprise to many. That awareness coupled with John Moss's persuasive commentary can only help prompt or enhance the reader's sense of the variety and strength of this country's fiction. If so, the *Reader's Guide* will have served its subject matter extremely well. (JOHN LENNOX, YORK UNIVERSITY)

* ALLISON MITCHAM. *A Northern Imagination: A Study of Northern Canadian Literature*. Moonbeam, Ontario: Penumbra 1983. Pp. 103. Hardcover \$17.95, paper \$7.95

One myth has persisted with special tenacity in the definition of Canada's national image: that of its Northern qualities. First formulated in 1869 – as Carl Berger points out in his survey 'The True North Strong and Free' (in Peter Russell, ed., *Nationalism in Canada* [1966]) – by an associate of the Canada First Movement, Robert Brant Haliburton, the Northern Myth was periodically revived during times of national crisis and growing self-awareness. Thus, the Group of Seven's and their contemporaries' fascination with the harsh landscapes of Algonquin Park as 'another nature fostering a new race and a new age' anticipated and reinforced the *prise de conscience* accompanying the events of the First World War, and recent criticism, like Sherrill E. Grace's 'A Northern Modernism, 1920-1932: Canadian Painting and Literature' (*The Literary Criterion* 29, iii-iv [1984]) and 'A Northern Quality: Herman Voader's Canadian Expressionism' (*Canadian Drama* 8, i [1982]) has underlined the geographical orientation of Canadian Modernism. Northrop Frye's influential theory of the 'garrison mentality' clearly subsumed elements of the Northern myth, so much so that as late as 1980 Ralph Gustafson, in a survey of contemporary Canadian poetry published in the *University of Toronto Quarterly*, formulated his views in contradiction to Frye's and his followers' as pertaining to 'New World Northern.' The same periodical printed, in belated response to the nationalism of the late 60s and early 70s, T. D. MacLulich's 'Our Place on the Map: The Canadian Tradition in Fiction' (*University of Toronto Quarterly* 52 [1982-83]), which – using Leslie Fiedler's map of American literature in *The Return of the Vanishing American* (1968) – declares the typical Canadian novel as a 'Northerner.' All of these efforts define the Canadian mentality as morally superior to the cultures of the South. Interpretations of the 'South' have somewhat shifted from post-Confederation days when it embraced all undesirable ethnic groups, that is to say practically all immigrants of non-Anglo-Saxon background, to an assertion that Canada provided a sanctuary for the values submerged in British imperialism, and finally to an almost exclusive hostility toward the Americans. MacLulich, for instance, claims that '[T]he works of Harold Innis, Donald Creighton, and George Grant have helped to define a Canadian tradition of social thought that is cautious, deferential to authority, and community-minded, in contrast to the dominant American tradition, which is optimistic, assertive, and aggressively individualistic' (p. 205). Even the largely negative implica-

tions of Margaret Atwood's survival theory postulate – says MacLulich – 'a "moral imperative" linking modern Canadian writers with the conservative tradition that dominates Canadian intellectual history' (*Ibid.*, p. 206).

Given the venerable tradition of the Northern myth in Canadian culture, it is amazing that Allison Mitcham's *The Northern Imagination: A Study of Northern Canadian Literature* (1983) (mostly containing essays previously published in various periodicals) should announce in the introduction that 'only recently indeed has [the North] begun to impinge deeply on the English-Canadian consciousness' (p. 9), for, besides the critical texts mentioned above, there have of course been numerous popular novels such as Agnes Laut's *Lords of the North* (1900), Gilbert Parker's *An Adventure of the North* (1905), Ralph Connor's numerous works, and many others, all mentioned by Carl Berger. Nor is Mitcham's assertion fully correct that 'in French Canada the northern wilderness has long symbolized escape from dreary settlements and conventional responsibilities' (p. 9). The legends surrounding the life of voyageur and lumberjack are only part of French-Canada's associations with the North: another, perhaps equally strong, idea concerned the extension of French-Canada's agricultural mission into northern territory surrounding Lac St. Jean and elsewhere, the infertile soil extolled by Antoine Gérin-Lajoie's *Jean Rivard économiste* (1862) and *Jean Rivard le Défricheur* (1864) and damned as 'the ungrateful land' in Roch Carrier's novels and stories. Mitcham's book lacks a solid introduction into the myth of the North in Canada's history of ideas. Moreover, it fails to provide an exhaustive discussion of the comparative basis informing her analysis of works in English and French, where the concept of the North has indeed not always implied similar connotations. Neither language furthermore represents a cultural monolith. Mitcham correctly points out that Grove was 'not after all a Canadian by birth or education,' but fails to establish his specific cultural interpretation of the 'North,' although background materials on this author are now richly available.

This lack of cultural perspective also comes to bear an individual section in *The Northern Imagination*. The chapter entitled 'The Violence of Isolation' (pp. 53-63), for instance, speaks of Langevin's *Le Temps des hommes* (1956), Anne Hébert's *Le Torrent* (1973), and Marie-Claire Blais' *La Belle Bête* (1971), making geographical isolation and climatic conditions responsible for the mental anguish experienced by the protagonists. Yet both Hébert and Blais have been noted for their non-realist evocation of landscape and Langevin has long been recognized as an existentialist, for whom external dreariness is a correla-

tive, not cause, of inner desolation. Mitcham claims that '[i]n both *Le Torrent* and *La Belle Bête*], because the action takes place in the depths of the country where there is no stranger or neighbour to see or interfere, the cruelty and violence of the mothers to their children is unbounded' (p. 56). Yet similar cruelty, physical or emotional, occurs in the midst of a community, whether it be the loyalist settlement in *Les Fous de Bassans*, or the modern city in *Les Visions d'Anna*. Carrier's visions of the city, as Gaile McGregor has recently pointed out in her often superb *The Wacousta Complex: Explorations in the Canadian Landscape* (1985), are often those of an anonymous wilderness. Mitcham's index promises a richly textured study, containing – among others – the names of Dostoevskij, Solzhenitsyn, and Tolstoj, of Emerson, Whitman, Melville, and Thoreau, of Conrad, Orwell, and D.H. Lawrence, but the study itself does regrettably not confirm the high expectations conjured up by these names. Mitcham's efforts at comparative analysis, as in the aforementioned chapter on 'The Violence of Isolation' where she makes a brief foray into D.H. Lawrence and the Russian novel to find a parallel for 'the indoor claustrophobic tension' in Canadian fiction, remain tantalizingly allusive, sometimes so much so that they appear gratuitous. And this lack of development is truly a pity: had this book – ten chapters in only 103 pages – been given more room to breathe, it might have become a useful and intriguing study, perhaps a valuable contribution to Canadian history as myth-making. The book is beautifully produced, with vignettes by Carl Schaefer prefacing each chapter. Considering the stylized, art-nouveauish depictions of the North in these pictures, the book too would have gained from paying tribute to the artistry (and artificiality) of the 'Northern Imagination.' (EVA-MARIE KRÖLLER, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA)

*PIERRE HÉBERT. *Le Temps et la forme: Essai de modèle et lecture de trois récits québécois*. Sherbrooke: Naaman 1983. Pp. 110. \$12.00

C'est dans la lignée des recherches en sémiotique littéraire et notamment au point de croisement de Genette et de Claude Bremond que se situe *Le Temps et la forme*. L'ouvrage assez court débute par un bref exposé théorique reprenant les acquis de la critique proprement et barthésienne pour approfondir la temporalité. Celle-ci, qui comprend la temporalité discrète et la temporalité non-discrète, est décomposée

selon trois catégories: l'ordre, la durée et la fréquence. Ceci permettra alors d'approfondir les récits québécois dans le but d'établir des constantes permettant de classer des genres ou des sous-genres. Sont donc appelés à la rescousse le Jean Rousset de *Forme et signification* et André Niel dont le moins que l'on puisse dire est que certaines de ses assertions sont sujettes à caution. Le manque de rigueur de ce dernier critique sied d'ailleurs mal avec le nombre très grand de tableaux et de schémas émaillant l'ouvrage de Pierre Hébert.

L'approche théorique présente aussi, quoique trop rapidement, l'espace qui n'a rien à voir avec les lieux, la topographie et la géographie mais qui aboutit à un espace textuel, 'c'est-à-dire à une géométrie des signes du texte en zones, en territoires délimités, finis, étant donné que la temporalité textuelle aura permis de faire voir des réseaux de complexité' (p. 21). Ces deux dimensions permettent donc de se référer à la théorie de l'information 'fondement de la valeur signifiante ou informative de l'espace-temps' (p. 21). Toutefois, comme dans un certain nombre d'ouvrages en critique littéraire, cette théorie de l'information est beaucoup plus à prendre dans un sens métaphorique ou comme référence culturelle connotant le sérieux de l'ouvrage que comme outil utilisé avec la rigueur scientifique qu'elle demande.

Par la suite, ces points théoriques sont appliqués à trois romans québécois différents: *L'Appel de la race* de Lionel Groulx, *Poussière sur la ville* d'André Langevin et *Quelqu'un pour m'écouter* de Réal Benoit.

Au sujet de *L'Appel de la race*, la temporalité mise en rapport avec la narrativité permet d'établir que la durée consacrée à l'objet narratif baisse de la première à la troisième partie de l'ouvrage. De plus, la diégèse liée à l'action aboutit toujours, à la fin de chaque partie, à l'arrêt selon la mimésis de la voix. Pierre Hébert en conclue donc que c'est la forme même du texte qui porte signification et que dans le rapport histoire/didactisme, c'est le didactisme qui est privilégié (p. 44).

Poussière sur la ville subit un traitement analogue et est, lui aussi, découpé en séquences dont l'ordre, la durée et la fréquence sont étudiés. Analepses du début liés au savoir et prolepses de la fin débouchant sur le faire permettent d'affirmer que, contrairement à ce que l'on a régulièrement soutenu, Alain n'est pas un anti-héros et qu'il ne s'agit pas d'un roman de l'échec. Ces conclusions probantes et cette analyse détaillée gagneraient toutefois en intérêt (comme ailleurs dans l'ouvrage) si des phrases stéréotypées comme la suivante étaient éliminées: 'Art de communication, le roman, en tant que discours narratif, veut établir une liaison entre un émetteur et un récepteur' (p. 53).

L'analyse de *Quelqu'un pour m'écouter* de Réal Benoit obéit au même type d'analyse englobant en séquences larges l'ensemble du roman.

Mais la particularité de ce texte repose sur les points de suspension qui posent, comme le suggère le titre, la question même de la communication.

Le Temps et la forme représente donc une recherche intéressante qui amorce des comparaisons entre trois textes qui chacun ont fait date à leur époque. Toutefois, il reste que l'auteur a toujours tendance à discuter à partir de notions reprises chez d'autres, certes, mais qui sont ce que ceux-ci ont produit de plus sommaire. Ainsi, reprenant la notion de lecture-construction de Todorov, Hébert dit que le lecteur n'a pas de contenant et peut se résumer par sa seule capacité perceptive (p. 87): 'Le lecteur s'offre vierge au texte ...'. Ceci lui permet d'affirmer que 'la forme réduit en partie le narrataire à la passivité ou, plus précisément, dirige son activité, ...' (p. 88). On est loin de H.R. Jauss ou de C. Grivel. Ce sensualisme naïf est bien loin de toutes les recherches sur l'idéologie et presque en contradiction avec ce qui est affirmé plus bas: 'En ce sens, nous pouvons parler d'une lecture sociale, c'est-à-dire de la forme d'un roman jugée acceptable par une société donnée à une époque donnée, en fonction de l'idée qu'elle se fait à ce moment de la littérature' (pp. 88-9). Le lecteur individuel n'est-il pas en relation dialectique avec l'idéologie de sa société? C'est ce que cet ouvrage ne pose pas clairement.

Notons enfin la phrase suivante: 'Ce qu'il y a d'essentiel, d'unique dans un texte ne peut être extrait de celui-ci, ne se prête à aucun résumé, et répugne même à se trouver dans une anthologie: le texte est sa seule explication, ou mieux, hors du déroulement textuel intégral, point d'information possible' (p. 12). À la limite, pour un esprit chagrin qui la prendrait à la lettre, elle remettrait en question l'intérêt de cette étude qui ne pourrait pas parler des textes choisis sinon, à l'instar du Pierre Ménard de Borges voulant réécrire mot pour mot le *Don Quichotte*, en faire un plagiat intégral. Mais, fort heureusement Pierre Hébert a échappé à la contrainte de la lettre. (PATRICK IMBERT, UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA)

*EVA KUSHNER et MICHAEL BISHOP, éds. *La Poésie québécoise depuis 1975*. Dalhousie French Studies, Vol. 7. Halifax: Dalhousie University Press 1985. Pp. 201. \$7.00

Singulier numéro que celui de 'Dalhousie French Studies' sur *La Poésie québécoise depuis 1975*. Préparé et présenté par Eva Kushner et Michael Bishop, ce numéro propose pêle-mêle des textes de poètes qui ont marqué, à des degrés divers, la poésie québécoise depuis 1975, des études sur certains d'entre eux, des essais qui mettent en relief quelques aspects de cette poésie, et d'autres, plus théoriques, qui tentent de circonscrire les enjeux récents de ce genre littéraire marginalisé. Voyons d'abord le choix des poètes québécois.

Si je ne révoque pas en doute les présences de Michel Beaulieu, Claude Beausoleil, Marcel Bélanger, Nicole Brossard, François Charon, Madeleine Gagnon, Philippe Haeck, André Roy, France Théoret, Denis Vanier et Josée Yvon, je m'interroge, en revanche, sur l'absence de Jacques Brault, Gilles Cyr, Robert Mélangon, Roger Des Roches, Gilbert Langevin, Marie Uguay, Yolande Villemaire, Normand de Bellefeuille, etc. Il est dommage qu'Eva Kushner et Michael Bishop n'aient pas cru bon de commenter leurs choix éditoriaux. L'eussent-ils fait, ils auraient pu justifier l'absence de plusieurs noms et légitimer la présence de quelques autres. Sans ces précisions, les questions surgissent: pourquoi avoir retenu les noms de Jean Éthier-Bias et de Suzanne Jacob? Comment expliquer la présence de Roland Giguère alors que, par exemple, Paul-Marie Lapointe et Fernand Ouellette (qui ont continué de publier des poèmes après 1975) n'y figurent pas? Ces questions cependant ne nous empêchent pas d'apprécier le poème de Giguère, 'Feu la poésie': 'la poésie n'a plus de voix / la poésie n'a plus de mots / pour vous dire qu'elle se meurt / la poésie n'en peut plus' (p. 197).

Par ailleurs, les articles consacrés aux poètes me laissent songeur. En voici la liste: Henri-Dominique Paratte, 'Gatien Lapointe: ouïr l'inouï', Eva Kushner, 'La Seconde Jeunesse de Gatien Lapointe', Michel Lemaire, 'Pierre Nepveu dans la poésie québécoise contemporaine', Clément Moisan, 'Marie-Josée Thériault: Lectures d'une œuvre poétique', Patricia Smart, 'Quand la fille du bar se met à parler: la poésie de France Théoret', et Danielle Fournier, 'Carole Massé: le texte de la langue maternelle'. Ainsi, je ne doute pas de l'importance de l'œuvre de Gatien Lapointe, mais appelait-elle deux études? De même que Carole Massé, malgré le métissage des genres qui marque son entreprise scripturaire, n'a-t-elle pas fait paraître des 'romans'? De plus, pour révélateur que soit l'article de Clément Moisan (révélateur puisque

l'auteur donne un aperçu du 'circuit de la lecture professionnelle qui produit l'accréditation des œuvres, sinon une lecture véritable de celles-ci' (p. 136)), qui porte sur la réception critique dont furent l'objet les recueils de poèmes de Marie-Josée Thériault, trouve-t-il son lieu d'inscription le plus approprié à l'intérieur d'un numéro consacré à la poésie québécoise depuis 1975? Que l'on ne se méprenne pas sur le sens de ces remarques: nous ne remettons pas en question la pertinence de ces textes, mais bien le thème qui les regroupe. Quoi qu'il en soit, outre le texte de Clément Moisan, celui de Michel Lemaire a retenu notre attention. Cherchant à situer Pierre Nepveu dans la poésie québécoise contemporaine, Lemaire s'interroge sur ce qui différencie la poésie de Nepveu 'des nouvelles écritures' qui ont surgi dans le champ littéraire depuis une quinzaine d'années. Je proposerais, écrit Lemaire, le qualificatif de 'lyrisme abstrait' pour catégoriser cette poésie' (p. 49).

Bien sûr, s'empresse-t-il de préciser, il ne s'agit plus du grand lyrisme romantique repris dans une large mesure par les poètes de l'Hexagone ... ; mais il s'agit toujours d'une poésie qui se veut *chant d'expression du moi*. Le moi du poète est toujours le sujet parlant dans le texte, l'expression de son vécu l'objet de l'écriture et la réalisation de son être le but ultime de cette écriture par la métamorphose de ce vécu en chant parfait. (p. 49)

Outre l'article que Lemaire consacre à Nepveu, ces commentaires peuvent servir de prémisses à l'étude de poètes (Michel Beaulieu, Pierre Morency, Marcel Bélanger, Gilbert Langevin) qui ont exploré d'autres avenues que celles empruntées par les tenants des 'nouvelles écritures' (la [Nouvelle] Barre du Jour et les Herbes rouges, entre autres). Et puisque nous faisons allusion aux Herbes rouges, soulignons le texte que leur consacre Louise Forsyth: 'Les Herbes rouges: la pratique poétique de l'écriture, et relevons-y ceci:

Ce qui semble unique et remarquable au Québec toutefois, c'est que le courant de la modernité ait été si richement créateur. La modernité n'a pas produit au Québec de gros volumes philosophiques et théoriques, comme en France. Elle a ouvert plutôt des voies menant à une production littéraire d'imaginaire socialiste, féministe, formaliste et/ou anarchiste du tout premier ordre. (p. 84)

Soutenir que la modernité poétique loge du côté de la production littéraire telle que Louise Forsyth la définit, c'est faire abstraction de recueils qui, sans perpétuer les formes passées de la poésie, se veulent autre chose que théorisation, discours sur le discours, recherches

formelles, ruptures et déconstructions. L'effraction peut agir sans qu'il soit nécessaire de la nommer avec une insistance suspecte, et les codes peuvent être subvertis autrement que par l'élaboration d'un traité sur la subversion. De plus, qu'entend Louise Forsyth par une 'imaginaire socialiste'? Et quels rapprochements devrions-nous établir entre le formalisme et l'anarchie? En voilà une drôle d'anarchie! De celle qui contribue aux gratifications institutionnelles.

Enfin, le numéro de 'Dalhousie French Studies' comprend quelques poèmes d'écrivains français (André Frénaud, Eugène Guillevic et Bernard Noël), qui soulignent le dynamisme et les particularités de la poésie québécoise, et des essais d'Yves-Gabriel Brunet, 'Je suis le geste qui crée', de Rina Lasnier, 'L'iconoclaste en poésie', de Jean-Marc Lemelin, 'Cette chose dont participe aussi la poésie québécoise: le poétique', et de Michel Deguy, 'l'insignifiance de la poésie? Dans les limites qu'impose ce compte rendu, nous nous en tiendrons à l'intervention de Deguy. 'L'une [aporie] propre à la poésie dans sa phase actuelle, et française — qui paraîtra peut-être étrange, voire étrangère, à la "poésie québécoise" — que je formule ainsi: comment regagner du terrain?' (p. 124). Question essentielle s'il en est, qui fait écho au poème de Roland Giguère, 'Feu la poésie'. En ce sens, ne pouvons-nous soutenir que, malgré l'émergence de nouvelles matières poétiques (dérive urbaine, conscience féministe, intelligence de la forme, lyrisme abstrait) au Québec depuis 1975, et dont témoigne, ne fût-ce qu'imparfaitement, le numéro de 'Dalhousie French Studies', le véritable constat à établir demeure celui d'une certaine faillite de la poésie? Certes, une multitude de recueils paraissent chaque année au Québec, mais quelle position la poésie québécoise occupe-t-elle désormais dans les champs littéraire et culturel?

Comment, se demande Deguy, (re)faire parole et œuvre poétique avec tout ce qui fut peu à peu exclu du poème, faute d'y trouver hospitalité de clarté et de complexité, tout ce qui par ailleurs, et par exemples, occupe un anthropologue (le sacrifice), un philosophe du droit (l'accusation), un démythificateur (la fable théologique), etc., etc.? (p. 124)

Voilà, peut-être — paradoxalement — où réside l'intérêt premier de *La Poésie québécoise depuis 1975*. (ROBERT YERGEAU, LE COLLÈGE UNIVERSITAIRE DE HEARST)

*ROBERT KROETSCH and REINGARD M. NISCHIK, eds. *Gaining Ground: European Critics on Canadian Literature*. Western Canadian Literary Documents Series, Vol. 6. Edmonton: New West Press 1985. Pp. 303. \$21.95 cloth, \$11.95 paper

In view of the remarkable growth of the study of Canadian literature in Europe over the past decade this joint venture by Robert Kroetsch and Reingard M. Nischik (University of Cologne), who belongs to the 'second generation of Canadianists in Germany' (p. 262) and in whose hands lies the soliciting of contributions, represents a timely event. The volume offers articles by critics from seven European countries: the Federal Republic of Germany (5), France (3), Great Britain (2), Austria (2), the German Democratic Republic, Italy, and Switzerland (one article each). In addition, *Gaining Ground* contains two contributions by critics who cannot be labelled 'European' in any strict sense of the word, namely Rosmarin Heidenreich (Collège Universitaire de Saint-Boniface) and, even less so, Eva-Marie Kröller (UBC). Significantly, their critical works are not included in Nischik's pioneering 177-page bibliography of 'European Publications on Canadian Literature,' which is appended to the volume along with her informative survey 'New Horizons: Canadian Literature in Europe' (pp. 249-76). Another general point to be made at the outset concerns the question of balance and representativeness. While there may have been various practical considerations at work, one cannot fail to notice a certain overrepresentation of West German critics (who, in the bibliography, share the top rank in total number of publications with the French, followed by Italian and British, Belgian and Danish critics) and, on the other hand, the absence of Belgian and Danish/Scandinavian contributions.

As stated by Robert Kroetsch in his brief preface, it was the policy of the editors to make no prescription of subject to potential contributors and to let their interests shape the book. With two exceptions – Rosmarin Heidenreich on Aquin's *Trou de mémoire* and Cedric May on Alain Grandbois' *Les Îles de la nuit* – those interests are shown to be centered on anglophone Canadian literature (if somewhat less clearly so in the overall list of European publications). Within this area, there is a marked emphasis on the contemporary novel. Indeed, the novels treated cover a substantial portion of a representative reading list for the period 1969-1983: Atwood's *Surfacing*, *Life Before Man*, and *Bodily Harm*, Bowering's *Burning Water*, Findley's *The Wars*, van

Herk's *Judith* and *The Tent Peg*, Kroetsch's *The Studhorse Man* and *Cone Indian*, Wiebe's *The Temptations of Big Bear*, *The Scorched-Wood People*, and *My Lovely Enemy*. A second field of interest, though not nearly as wide as the former, is marked by the short story cycle: Margaret Laurence's *A Bird in the House*, Alice Munro's *Lives of Girls and Women* and *Who Do You Think You Are?*, Jack Hodgins' *Spit Delaney's Island*, and Stephen Leacock's classic, *Sunshine Sketches of a Little Town*. The latter is minutely analysed in terms of its generic structural unity by Karla El-Hassan, while Giovanna Capone is concerned with the thematic unity of *A Bird in the House*. The remaining studies are of Mavis Gallant's well-known short story 'Orphans' Progress' (Michel Fabre), the typology of 'found poems' (Franz K. Stanzel), and nineteenth-century Canadian responses to the Rhine Valley (Eva-Marie Kröller).

Even though a collection of seventeen or so articles would hardly seem an adequate basis for attempting to isolate features of a distinctive 'European' approach to Canadian literature, it may nevertheless be noted in a preliminary fashion that two pervasive traits manifest themselves in this volume: emphasis on aspects of structure and narrative technique, and, second, a comparative focus.

The first trait is exemplified by Reingard M. Nischik's analysis (reprinted here) of Aritha van Herk's first two novels, Rosmarin Heidenreich's article on indeterminacy in Aquin's *Trou de mémoire*, Pierre Spriet's contribution on the 'fusion of incompatibilities' in Wiebe's *My Lovely Enemy*, as well as by Fabre's and El-Hassan's investigations, and reaches a high point in Simone Vauthier's discussion of narrative strategies in Findley's *The Wars*. Wolfgang Klooss offers an illuminating analysis of the sophisticated narrative structure of Wiebe's *The Scorched-Wood People* with reference to the author's concept of history as both a Western writer and a Mennonite. In the context of feminist criticism, Coral Ann Howells traces the interplay of contradictory discourses of realism and fantasy in Munro's *Lives of Girls and Women* and *Who Do You Think You Are?* and Atwood's *Surfacing* and *Bodily Harm*.

A comparative approach is taken by Paul Goetsch in his reading of Atwood's *Life Before Man* as a novel of manners, and by Rudolf Bader in his reconsideration of Frederick Philip Grove's naturalism in relation to European and American developments. The late Jürgen Schäfer, in his article on the function of the Indian past in novels by Wiebe and Kroetsch, points out the parallels between *The Temptations of Big Bear* and Nigerian novelist Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall Apart*, while Waldemar Zacharasiewicz, in his concise contribution

on the short fiction of Jack Hodgins, calls attention to the influence of two writers of the American South, Flannery O'Connor and Eudora Welty. In what is surely one of the most rewarding articles in the volume, Walter Pache discusses Canadian postmodernism relative to the American movement and proceeds to demonstrate the crucial rôle that postmodernism plays in the process of giving Canadian literature its authentic voice. (FRIEDEL H. BASTEIN, HAMBURG)

EDITORS NOTES

Alberta: Studies in the Arts and Sciences is a new multi-disciplinary scholarly journal with an emphasis on the province. Its attention will not be confined to the province in any narrow or exclusive way, but its first aim will be to bring together the best that is being written about Alberta and its people, including distinctive Alberta perspectives on subjects of regional, national, and international concern. The journal's scope will encompass the humanities and fine arts, the social sciences, and certain of the natural sciences as they bear particularly on Alberta, and will extend from the present to the history and prehistory of the province.

Alberta will be published twice yearly and will invite articles of 4,000 to 5,000 words, book reviews, and research notes on a range of subjects that may include history, literature, and the fine arts, sociology, education, popular culture, ethnology, psychology, political science, anthropology, archaeology, geography, natural history, museum studies, material culture studies, palaeontology and native studies. Articles will be refereed; manuscripts should be sent to the editors at: *Alberta*, Rutherford House, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta T6G 2E1. *Alberta*, volume one, number one will appear in the Spring of 1988 and will feature the Tyrrell Museum of Palaeontology in Drumheller.

* * *

We take pleasure in announcing the creation of GRAHAL (4, Avenue Percier, 75008 Paris, France. Tel.: 42.35.91.02). The GRAHAL (Groupe de Recherche art histoire architecture et littérature), founded in September 1986, is an association which centralizes and answers research queries from individuals and government bodies. It also handles the redistribution of research studies and documents to other specialized scholars. The GRAHAL proposes to help researchers wishing to obtain documents or conduct research in France. It can be particularly helpful in overcoming problems associated with 1) distance 2) a lack of familiarity with the French library system and 3) the difficulty in gaining access to various archives. The GRAHAL can: 1) prepare ground work for those wishing to work in France and prepare preliminary dossiers, and 2) facilitate access to various archives, libraries and other research centres. The GRAHAL can also provide documents: copies, photographs, compilations, books and reviews, as well as transcriptions and translations. It can also compile bibliographies, iconographies and go through private and public archives and prepare complete studies.

* * *

Le International Council on Francophone Studies (ICFS) dont le congrès eut lieu cette année à la Guadeloupe, tiendra son prochain Congrès Mondial à Montréal, Canada, du 13 au 16 avril 1988 à l'Hôtel Delta Montréal. Pour tous les renseignements nécessaires s'adresser, dans le plus bref délai, à: Maurice Cagnon, Président, ICFS, Department of French, Montclair State College, Upper Montclair, New Jersey 07043, U.S.A. (201) 893-4283. Le Congrès Mondial du ICFS s'avère une suite essentielle au Sommet Francophone de septembre 1987 à Québec, afin d'assurer le plus grand rayonnement de la culture française / francophone dans son intégralité.

M.V.D.