

Given the deep roots of our malaise, it is unclear whether or not our civilization can alter or minimize the disharmony between the individual and ultimate being. We have used two exemplary texts to illustrate the depth of the problem, and we can only suggest that any proposed solution will be facile if that depth is not taken into consideration.

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#### REVIEWS

\* EARL MINER. *Comparative Poetics: An Intercultural Essay on Theories of Literature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990. 259 pp. + xi. US \$ 35.00

This is a breathtaking, perverse, wide-ranging, provocative, disconcerting, coherently organized — yet at the same time meandering — book. Like any path-breaking effort, there are brambles and nettles aplenty. It is a book that only one man could have written. Earl Miner is virtually unique in being that rarest of treasures, a scholar who straddles East and West (but for his modest demeanor, one might have said, "like a colossus"). He has published important works on English literature — notably Dryden and the Restoration period — as well as on the classics of Japanese literature. His published corpus is an impressive monument to his erudition and to his versatility. A sensitive translator of Japanese poetry, Miner has offered insightful readings of English poetry, written historical as well as hermeneutic essays on literature, and he is as much at home with textual analysis as with theoretical speculation. Before a resource so capacious, it would be capacious to find fault. But Miner blazes trails not out of vanity, but from an earnest heurism and a desire to advance our knowledge and to refine our discourse. He marks out the territory so that lesser souls can more easily till the soil. *Comparative Poetics: An Intercultural Essay on Theories of Literature* coins a brave new word in literary theory: the tempests of previous theoretical debates will henceforth seem parochial by contrast. Miner's work is, for once, not national, not even continental, but global. No longer bound to the insularities of one culture, Miner examines the theory and practice of literature if not *sub specie aeternitatis*, then in what Heidegger would have called an "intra-worldly perspective." Whatever cavils may be raised against some of his formulations, what cannot be assailed is Miner's achievement in being the first to attempt a truly worldly poetics.

There are very few precedents for Miner's work, although I can think of two precursors: Makoto Ueda's still useful, *Zeami, Basho, Yeats, and Pound: A Study in Japanese and English Poetics* (Mouton, 1965), and James J.Y. Liu's *The Interlingual Critic* (Indiana University Press, 1982). Zhang Longxi's

recent *The Tao and the Logos* (Duke University Press, 1992) explores similar territory, but on a more philosophical level.

What is wondrous and wonderful about Miner's book is the remarkable ease with which he negotiates between what may seem like antipodes. He can shift, with scarcely a misstep, from a discussion of Herbert's "Vertue" and his "The Collar" to Yamanoe Okura's elegy on the death of his son in the *Manyōshū*, followed by an illuminating excursus on *The Tempest* and John Donne. Miner has what used to be called "wide reading" and "large sympathies." He is unafraid to venture into other cultures, and he sees the claustrophobic insistence on the Western canon by panicked reactionaries as fear, if not *mauvaise foi*. About the tendency to judge "literary prose narrative written outside the west by culture-specific novelistic features construed normatively," he maintains, "is not relativism, nor is it Comparative Literature. It is Eurocentrism based on ignorance and fear" (226). And Miner is apt when he writes, "It is useful to have evidence from other cultures to show us what we ought to have seen in our own." His own astute analysis of *What Maisie Knew*, exemplifies the reflective insights available in comparative study. Approaching James's novel from perspectives developed out of a study of the Japanese classic, *The Tale of Genji*, and using the concept of *shinwaigo* ("relation in the mind") as well as the notion of "points of attention," Miner manages to advance narrative theory beyond the categorical excesses of those who concentrate only on "points of view." He reminds us that narrative points of view are not always consistently held, nor is there any necessary failure in that inconsistency. Miner's analysis may be overly schematic for some, but it is worth detailed study: he produces literary criticism at its best: a familiar work is thereby made new again, and both our enthusiasm and enjoyment are refreshed by many of Miner's insights.

However, inevitably, Miner's essay at an intraworldly poetics cannot avoid the "slings and arrows" of criticism from many sides. The more global his perspective, the more vulnerable he will be. One could cavil at the only passing mention of Indian and Arabic poetics, at the neglect of any African literature or third world concerns, or at the omission (crucial in my view for any attempt at a truly comparative poetics) of any mention of the oral element in the creation of literature. Leaving aside the question of what literature means (Miner leaves it aside as well), the question of verbal creativity, even of literature in the most restricted belletristic sense of the word, cannot ignore the oral factor. The researches in the last half century by Milman Parry and Albert Lord — and their successors — have reminded us that some of the most revered classics of literature were significantly oral in their composition, development, and transmission. Narrative cannot be addressed without some consideration of the oral. Nor can drama, too often (especially in the last century) regarded as texts rather than "enactments"

prompted by textual cues, be adequately understood without taking the oral element into account. Any analysis of poesis, in the sense of "making" or "making up" a verbal artifact, simply cannot ignore the oral, because the legacy from oral composition impinges crucially on larger issues of literary theory. The relationship of oral to written is not just important to Western cultures, but is a vital factor in any truly comparative perspective on cultures.

The preponderant majority of the world's languages is based on phonetic alphabets or syllabaries, with one notable exception — Chinese, which in addition to being an ideographic language is also tonal. The "textual" study of Chinese literature in the West, without due regard for its oral content is one of the great shortcomings of that field known as "sinology." In the case of Western languages, it would be unthinkable to respect any translator who does not speak the language which he or she translates. Imagine a translator of French who was inarticulate in French.<sup>1</sup> Yet, this is precisely the situation that obtains with the major translators of Chinese literature in the early part of this century (neither Ezra Pound nor Arthur Waley could speak Chinese).

The point is that the differential relationship between oral discourse and textual production in different literatures must be measured before one can achieve balanced comparative insights.

Another paradigmatic miscalculation in Miner's analysis is his insistence on seeing all literatures through the tripartite genre theory that divides literature into drama, narrative, or lyric. By contrast, the corpus of Chinese "literature" divides its collectanea into: "masters" or *zi* (philosophers); "collections" or *ji*; "histories" or *shi*; and "classics" or *jing*. These are, unlike Western classifications, patently non-categorical categories, for the same work (or author) could logically appear under more than one rubric, perhaps even in all four. To illustrate how cumbersome is the application of the traditional Western genre theory to non-Western works, Miner startles us by characterizing the *renga*, a Japanese form of linked-poetry (211), as narrative rather than lyric, defining narrative as "literature of radical continuance" and lyric as "literature of radical presence" (87). Yet, one would be hard put to maintain that *rengas* tell stories: they are the verbal footprints of a phenomenological event with multiple poesis occurring — the immanence of the moment seems paramount. The primary principle of

1 One is, however, impressed and shocked to learn that three major translators of Edgar Allan Poe into French — Baudelaire, Mallarmé and Verlaine spoke little or no English; nor did two of the major translators of Western works: Lin Shu and Yen Fu. The fact that these aberrancies go virtually unnoticed is merely another indication of the subversive textual bias in the transmission of foreign works in translation.



composing *renga*, as its first theorist, Yoshimoto, reminds us, is "an appeal to the people present." This emphasis would coincide with that attribute Miner considers closest to lyric: "literature of radical presence." But continuity of composition is also crucial in the *renga* form: that reflects a "literature of radical continuance." Miner himself has doubts about baldly characterizing *renga* solely as narrative (212). Unaccountably, despite qualification piled on qualification, he insist on categorical purity: there is a curious Laocoönic reluctance on Miner's part to abandon the sacred trinity of drama, narrative, and lyric even when the divisions are patently — as with *renga* — untenable. *Renga* conform to both radical continuance and radical presence: the form is clearly both lyric and narrative.

Miner's other insistence, which amounts almost to an obsession, is his determination to see literature as either factual or fictional. This is most prominent in his discussion of lyric and his claim that "Chinese think that poetry is factual" (108). While it is clear that Chinese do not often resort to persona that differentiate the narrator from the author (though Li Po has many lyrics that adopt clear persona, and Pai Juyi uses persona repeatedly in his narrative poems), I would submit that while Chinese lyrics tend to be autobiographical, they are neither factual nor fictional. While there may be no clear persona, still Chinese lyrics embody an implicit persona of the self — humble, often pitiable, neglected, nostalgic. Whether these are personal traits peculiar to each poet, or the traits of persona which poets adopted throughout the ages is an important question. While Chinese lyrics are often datable (many of them are preceded by inscriptions as to the actual circumstances of the scene or the setting which inspired the poem), that does not mean that the locutions in the poem are *factual*: they are no more demonstrated truths than outright falsehoods. Indeed, the question may be not as relevant as Miner supposes: is it necessary for us to believe that Wordsworth actually saw daffodils when he "wandered lonely as a cloud," "When all at once I saw a crowd, / A host of golden daffodils, / Beside the lake, beneath the trees, / Fluttering and dancing in the breeze"? Or was that sight reconstructed in memory out of more than one viewing: is the scene factual or fictional? Similarly, the point is not whether a Chinese lyric is factual, but rather whether the occasion behind the words is authentic and immediate. The poem creates the present of the experience: its immediacy, its presence is what counts, not some documentable moment prior to the poem. The experience or occasion may prompt a totally fictitious construct, imagined out of history and legend, as in some of Du Fu's poems which recall the past. Indeed, the poem Miner cites, Du Fu's "The Fine Lady" ("Jiaren") illustrates some of the problems in determining either factuality or fictionality in a Chinese poem. The lyric is an evocation of a pitiable beauty who has been mistreated by life: whether this is a construct of the

poet's imagination or a description of an actual person would be hard, perhaps pointless, to determine. But the Chinese poem has a vocative quality (an invoked presence of the "you" of the reader) that is totally lost in Miner's translation (following David Hawkes version). To take the twelfth line (*xin ren mei ru yu*), which Miner-Hawkes renders: "for a new woman he prizes as his gem," but which in the original reads, simply: "The new person is beautiful as jade." Without specifying persona, this could reflect the unfaithful husband's view, or it could reflect a general impression not restricted to one person's point of view. The consequence of this natural ambiguity is that the "actuality" of this scene would be difficult to establish, and the line hovers between indicative fact and subjunctive fiction. The fifteenth line further illustrates the vagaries of translation: what is translated as "but he has eyes only for the new one's smiles" reads: "But, look! the new one smiles!" The line isn't merely a description of the husband's impression, as in the Miner-Hawkes version, but a shared experience which involves the reader as well as the persona in the poem. In this context, it becomes immediately clear that determining factuality and fictionality in these lines is a futile enterprise. The line hovers between actual evocation, a situation indicated and described, and imaginative reconstruction, a situation conjured up and metaphorized.

Miner may be overly — and unhelpfully — categorical when he strives to distinguish between the Western tradition of fictionality and the Eastern tradition of factuality. The differences lie elsewhere, in the different contexts of first-person discourse. It may be said that Chinese lyrics are not so much autobiographical for the poet as personifications of autobiography which admits the sympathetic reader into the poet's ambit. The experience is not so much the poet's as one that the poet and the responsive reader shares. This may not be obvious when we encounter these poems centuries later and in translation, but Chinese lyrics were not "published" in the modern sense — recorded to be read by unknown readers. They were routinely addressed to specific individuals or a specific coterie of individuals who shared the same backgrounds, made the same allusions, were familiar with the same texts, etc.

*Comparative Poetics* is fun to argue with: Miner is a fecund theorist, always dissatisfied with pet formulations and overweening claims. However, given the extraordinary breadth of his reading, some of his formulations are unnecessarily arcane, the result of very passive editing on the part of the publisher, which, deferring to Miner's erudition, failed to remonstrate with him when his writing is needlessly obscure. A sentence like the following should have been edited: "Plot is typically a feature of literary narrative, but it is not necessary to, or identical with, narrative, but it is not necessary to, or identical with, narrative" (149). Only on second reading does one realizes

that there may be a typesetting error, and that an entire clause has been inadvertently repeated. Obvious as this is upon reflection, the context of gnarled prose in which it is situated by no means make it easy to detect an obvious solecism. Nor are obscurities always the problem: even when the thought is perfectly clear, certain formulations should have been modified for stylistic reasons: "On such a view, history teaches lessons or enables one to predict the future. One of the most widespread such conceptions is that dominant civilizations or peoples or institutions have their rises, their flourishings, and their declines" (226). The thought is highly accessible, but the clumsiness of the exposition betrays an editor asleep at the wheel, passively conducting his august passenger through galleys, page proofs, and the final book with nary a remonstrance on the need for lucid, fluid prose.

For a work of such wide-ranging scope, there are surprisingly few errors, but two are conspicuous: Gottfried von Strassburg is spelled Gottfried von Straussburg (130, 239, 241; correct in the index, 252). And the author of "Six Chapters of a Floating Life," has been confused with the transliteration of the title in Chinese. The family name is not Fu (nor is the name character as the *fu* in "fu sheng," "floating life"), but Shen. The reference should be to Shen Fu, not Fu Shen, as it appears in the text (157, 158) and the index (252, 257). The source of the error is clear in the footnote on page 158, which cites the title erroneously as: "*Fu Shen Liuji* (*Fu Shen's Six Records*); it should be "*Fu sheng liu ji*" ("floating life: six chapters"). To the Chinese ear, reading Shen Fu as "Fu Shen" is as disconcerting as it would be for a Westerner to be reading about "Rex Oedipus." (EUGENE EOYANG, INDIANA UNIVERSITY)

\**I Quaderni di Gaia*. Roma: Carucci Editore, 1990-. (Issues 1.1 and 1.2 [Spring and Autumn 1990] and 2.1 [Spring 1991]). No issue price cited.

Questa rivista promuove e raccoglie lavori del docente, dei laureati, degli studenti e degli amici della cattedra di Letterature comparate del Dipartimento di Italianistica dell'Università La Sapienza di Roma e si rivolge a tutti coloro, italiani e stranieri, che studiano la letteratura da un punto di vista generale, internazionale e transdisciplinare, con la proposta di un laboratorio aperto a prove saggistiche, informazioni e discussioni.

The latest addition to the growing corpus of criticism on matters comparative has chosen the classical Earth, Gaia, as its eponymous protectress; faithful to this project, the articles of the first three issues (Spring and Fall 1990, Spring 1991) span the whole globe — although research on European literatures has so far received the most attention.

In the three issues published to date, the theoretical outlook of the periodical is borne out in a handful of essays by Antonio Cammarota and Armando Gnisci, which position *I Quaderni di Gaia* within the historical

development of Comparative Literature and from there proceed to articulate what could be termed an annotated autobiography in terms of the main current critico-political issues (notably, the question of Eurocentrism, gender and ethnic studies, pacifism, and — logically enough given the periodical's focus — global ecological activism).

Thus, issue 1.1 (April 1990) features Antonio Cammarota's "Gli strumenti del lavoro comparatistico: Una rassegna delle bibliografie, dei manuali e dei periodici principali," a most useful *survol* of the main monographs and periodicals in the field, and Armando Gnisci's "Due pezzi facili," an exhortation to "scientists and humanists" to ponder the possibility of a new, post-1989 "species consciousness" [Gattungsbewußtsein?] inspiring, among other things, the — in Italy's peculiar one-party democracy ever so cathartic — "presa di potere ... di una sinistra con l'ecologia dentro" (68; emphasis in the original).

The cultural and political assumption underpinning *I Quaderni di Gaia's* vision of its task is that, because the open wound of the artificial divisions caused by the Cold War has finally been healed, as of now

l'Europa può identificarsi e offrirsi, nello stesso tempo, come "cronotopo" in cui si conservi attivamente tutto il passato della civiltà planetaria (*la memoria del mondo*) — non un museo per lo svago di texani e australiani, ma il *conservatorio* delle tradizioni, delle differenze e della natura — e come dimensione in cui si sperimentano modelli di sviluppo politico-ecologico equilibrato: un *laboratorio* di futuri possibili (1.1, 72; emphasis in the original).

Is the consequence as certain as the historical premise? Or, quite on the contrary, will the harmonization of the European nations be long in coming and, indeed, difficult and costly for all parties concerned?

Be that as it may, in issue 1.2 (October 1990), peace and the ecological movement, "in vista della realizzazione di un mondo delle differenze e della pace" (8), feature in the limelight of Armando Gnisci's "Essere in movimento." At the same time, with "Comparatistica e teoria letteraria: Note in margine ad alcune recenti pubblicazioni," Antonio Cammarota continues the effort undertaken in the previous issue.

The most explicit self-positioning of *I Quaderni di Gaia's* vis-à-vis the themes that most preoccupy North American academia is to be found in II.1 (April 1991), in Armando Gnisci's "Essere comparatisti in Italia oggi":

L'assalto portato agli studi comparati dai "black studies," dai "gender studies" (dedicati non solo al femminismo ma a tutte le altre possibili "differenze"); l'assalto, ancor più al cuore degli studi di letterature comparate, portato da alcuni critici severissimi contro il loro eurocentrismo, messo in crisi dalle nuove prospettive multiculturali su scala mondiale; e così via.... Io non li vedrei tanto come attacchi alla cittadella comparatista

*comparata*, riconosciuto quale il solo che assicuri fin dalle proprie origini – con il suo credo tollerante, internazionalistico, connettivo e neo-umanistico – la *viabilità* di un nuovo sapere.... (2.1, 6)

Further important contributions to the history of the theory and praxis of Comparative Literature are provided by György M. Vajda ("Una cronologia delle opere letterarie del XX secolo" [1.1, 95-101]), Adrian Marino ("La letteratura europea oggi" [1.1, 103-16]), and Hugo Dyserinck ("Per una storia della comparatistica letteraria" [1.2, 67-77]).

On the more strictly *text immanent* watershed, the articles that appear in the first three issues of *I Quaderni di Gaia* offer a broad spectrum of interests – from Rumanian studies (Luisa Valmarin's and Fiammetta Ricci's articles on Eminescu's *Lucafarul*), to Classical and Womens' studies (Elena Gajeri's "Un mito letterario: La figura di Hypatia"), to interdisciplinary contributions (Emilia Partini's "Il presente e la memoria: Musica e poesia nelle concezioni poetiche di Eliot e Stravinsky" and Mariano Cirino's "Il cielo sopra Berlino [Der Himmel über Berlin]: Catastrofe e redenzione della città"). Further topics broached are the theory and practice of translation (Michele Camandona's "Il concetto di classico e le traduzioni dei classici greci e latini in Giappone" [1.2, 79-85]), and Hans-Georg Grüning's "Teoria della traduzione e traduzioni per nozze nel Settecento italiano" (2.1, 83-100), Maltese literature (Armando Gnisci's "Europa Malta Mediterraneo" (2.1, 49-55), and Arnold Cassola's "La letteratura maltese in lingua italiana dalle origini a tutto il secolo diciassettesimo" (2.1, 57-82); finally, Calvino and "epistemological pluralism" (discussed in Franca Sinopoli's "Approssimazioni alla molteplicità in alcuni testi della cultura contemporanea" [2.1, 13-29]).

A particularly welcome contribution is in my view Carla Valentino's "La 'Società europea di cultura' di Venezia e il 'Centre européen de la culture' di Ginevra: Due istituzioni a confronto nell'Europa della 'guerra fredda' (1950-1970)" (2.1, 31-48), which spells out some of the institutional implications of the European post-Yalta division. In discussing, e.g., details of the *querelle* surrounding Pasternak's Nobel prize in 1959 (36-37), the author gives us here an urgent reminder of the extent to which culture can be "political," not in any subtle, sub-textual way, but in a very obvious and obtrusive sense.

If any objections can be raised to the diverse and thoughtful, as well as thought-provoking, team gathered around *I Quaderni di Gaia*, those objections, I surmise, will have to center around the possibly overoptimistic enthusiasm with which it has adopted as a basis for its methodological credo a somewhat thaumaturgic view of Europe's gradual advance from military confrontation to economico-cultural convergence. The outbreak of world peace is, of course, an unspeakable relief for all humanity; that it has much to do, either as a cause or as a consequence, with a shared culture, common

traditions, climate, religion, and the like remains a considerably more arguable belief.

To reduce a complex question to its starkest terms, Europeans should know better than anyone else that the more inimical two nations are, the more for all intents and purposes they "share the same destiny"; and that, since Julius Caesar at the latest, some of the cruelest wars were fought among people speaking the same language. (CARLO TESTA, UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA)

\*VIRGIL NEMOIANU and ROBERT ROYAL, eds. *The Hospitable Canon: Essays on Literary Play, Scholarly Choice, and Popular Pressures*. Philadelphia and Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1991. 269 + ix pp. US \$65.00.

Although we frequently refer to the current debate about canons and canonicity, there is actually nothing current about it. As so many of the contributors to this collection of twelve critical essays observe, discussions about canonical value are as old as the concept of value itself. By remaining aware of the historical, epistemological, and etymological ground upon which their essays on canonicity are based, most of the critics in this volume are able to avoid some of the debilitating assumptions that mar so much of the recent commentary on canons: the assumption that the issue is strictly contemporary; that canons are the agents of institutions that need to be exposed and overturned; that canonical discourse is one of domination and hegemony; that canons/canonicity need to be replaced by new discursive models rooted in a materialist analysis of how value is contingent and culturally defined.

These now-canonical views of canonicity are most powerfully articulated in two earlier, influential collections of essays on the topic: Peter Widdowson's *Re-Reading English* (1982) and Robert von Hallberg's *Canons* (1984). As its title and subtitle suggest, *The Hospitable Canon* promotes an alternative view of canons and canonicity as positive agents that can enhance our understanding of history and culture. Most of the contributors seem to agree that canons enable us to ground ourselves in democratic processes that provide us with the means of making moral, ethical, and social choices. In their foreword, the editors point to their deliberately idealist pursuit:

Many of the contributors to this volume ... seem to believe (as, in the editors' opinion at least, most reasonable people do also) that cultural and intellectual pursuits have an integrity, autonomy, and sphere of their own, that are precious and worth preserving, not only for their own sakes, but precisely for the good of that more comprehensive body of relationships we call society. (vii)



In addition to the ways in which these essays contribute to what the editors call the "autonomous integrity of the cultural sphere" (vii), they are also intended to remind us "of the multiple ways in which any literariness, and, even more so, the literariness of 'canonized' works, is a ludic phenomenon" (viii). The editors draw on Bakhtin's notion of "the democracy of play" to argue that "authors and critics, scholars and readers, contemporaries and the posterity are all caught up in a non-rational, but certainly joyful activity ... when they engage in writing, reading, and listening" (viii). Although I could not describe my reading of this volume as a "joyful activity" (when *was* my last joyful reading of literary theory?) it was certainly worthwhile. Many of the contributors advance fresh perspectives or provide new data. And two of the essays — those by Charles Altieri and Virgil Nemoianu — really stand out. They invite us to rethink the meaning, power, and value of canons. Their conservatism — their willingness to explore the ways in which canons authorize a cultural grammar that can be shared — is communitarian, traditional, and idealist in the extreme. In fact, their conservatism is so extreme that it strikes me as subversive and paradoxically radical.

Altieri's "Canons and Differences" is a provocative piece that rethinks his earlier essay on the canon that appeared in a special issue of *Critical Inquiry*. It is Altieri who offers the most convincing case for the defence of an idealist aesthetic rooted in a belief in the cultural function of the canon. Altieri supports what he describes as "the curative and normative functions of a traditional ideal of a literary canon" (2). For Altieri, the canon serves an essential communicative and historical role. It allows us to understand our own cultural values and to see how we have represented and endorsed those values; it sets standards against which new claims to authority are judged; and it provides a focus for discussions about political ends and "cultural positivities" at a time when many interests lie in "demystifying prevailing beliefs" (3). The range of reference in Altieri's essay is impressive. My only objection is that no publication data is provided for these many references. (This lapse applies only to the Altieri piece, but there is little doubt that the entire volume could have used a much stronger copy-editing hand: publications are inconsistently cited, information is missing, and no clear style or format has been followed.)

Nemoianu's "Literary Canons and Social Value Options" echoes Altieri in its assumption that canons "may well constitute a frame — brittle and incomplete — for continued civilized conversation between literature and its society" (216). Nemoianu makes an important distinction between "curricular" and canonical works. While curricular works "are chosen for utilitarian reasons, to satisfy some needs — political, ethical, practical" (219), canonical works "incorporate values, questionings, intentionalities, plots, and constants of human nature" (220). Most important, canonical works are an

outcome of "democratic pressures" — they perform the crucial function of "mediating between highbrow and lowbrow, or between curricular and commercial works" (221). This sounds like an argument about canon and genre, but it is more of a philosophical meditation on how the canon embodies and transmits "communitarian consensus" (226). The extent to which a canon does this is a measure of its value as a moral agent.

There are several other important pieces in this volume — Michael G. Cooke's comments on marginality, Pierre A. Walker's suggestive essay on the religious rhetoric of critics writing on literary canons, Glen M. Johnson's detailed analysis of "The Teaching Anthology and the Canon of American Literature," and Christopher Clausen's articulate consideration of theme, value, and "universal meaning" in canonized literary works. Since space limitations force me to select and highlight, let me summarize the central arguments of two of these contributions that I found particularly useful.

Cooke argues that the marginalized is always dependent on the centre, and vice versa ("If we are not attacking/defending fixed positions, margin and center come to be seen as positions in a ceaseless and elaborate negotiation not only among texts and among critical minds ... but a negotiation also with time" [62]). Because this negotiation is central to the definition of any challenge to the canon, promoters of the margin should recognize and build upon their necessary relation to the canon, which Cooke examines as a trope of centrality and constancy.

Walker builds upon the recognition (first developed by Frank Kermode) that concepts of canonicity are rooted in religious discourse that is tied to the early "exegetical labors of the church" (182). But Walker goes further than Kermode in his suggestion that "critics who write about the literary canon do more than just borrow the word 'canon' from religious discourse; they adopt an attitude of reverence towards their subject that is proper to the religious devotee" (182). The evidence is convincing. Walker demonstrates how the vocabulary and posture of religious reverence colours the theoretical assumptions of four prominent commentators on the canon: Frank Kermode, Harold Bloom, Terry Eagleton, and Jane Tompkins. In Walker's view, the "attacks on the reverence of traditional literary criticism" in these writers' works, "whether allied to an attack on the literary canon or not, typically offer no alternative to the reverence itself, simply an alternative reverence" (187). In short, Matthew Arnold's legacy "is still with us" (195) — "traditional literary criticism is a displaced religion" (194).

Many people who write about the canon would take issue with this statement. In fact, this collection is full of ideas that are offensive to contemporary theory. Most of the contributors to the volume know this; some of them seem to revel in it. I enjoyed their enjoyment. But I also left *The Hospitable Canon* feeling that I had been given some new old tools that

would help me work through my own musings about how canons operate. In this sense, the book is truly valuable. (ROBERT LECKER, MCGILL UNIVERSITY)

\*INGEBORG HOESTER, ed. *Zeitgeist in Babel: The Postmodernist Controversy*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991. 269 + xv pp. US \$37.50.

*Zeitgeist in Babel* collects seventeen essays on postmodernism (as a new direction in the arts and architecture) and on what one might call the idea of the postmodern (the *Zeitgeist* of the title). They are introduced by a lucid and useful overview of the postmodernist debate by Hoester and punctuated by less useful excerpts ("interventions") from Derrida's "From One Newism to Another through Some Post-isms (New Criticism, Postmodernism, Post-Marxism, Post-structuralism, New Historicism)." Thirteen contributions have appeared before, in one form or another (some have a whole history of previous appearances); the others are new.

The collection's first section – "Revisiting Constitutive Discursive Practices: Architecture, Americanist Literary Criticism, the Anti-Greenbergian Art Scene" – focuses on the set of artistic strategies that in the course of the seventies and the early eighties came to be identified as postmodernism. It reprints the central chapters of Charles Jencks's *What Is Post-Modernism?* (1986), Clement Greenberg's *The Notion of "Postmodern"* (1980), Rosalind Krauss's "The Originality of the Avant-Garde: A Postmodernist Repetition" (1981) and two lesser known essays by C. Barry Chabot ("The Problem of the Postmodern," 1988) and Donald B. Kuspit ("The Unhappy Consciousness of Modernism," 1981). In the opening essay Jencks presents his often repeated – and persuasive – argument that postmodernist architecture is essentially "double coded," an argument that has by now become widely accepted outside the field of architecture (see, for instance, Linda Hutcheon's *A Poetics of Postmodernism* of 1988). Krauss's article, that deals with the visual arts, including photography, represents the late 1970s and early 1980s deconstructionist postmodernism of the group associated with *October*. Greenberg is utterly dismissive of the "postmodern" (while practically limiting his discussion to the purist, self-containing modernism that he has spent a lifetime defining and defending in the field of painting). Chabot's overview of literary-critical theories of postmodernism is rather disappointing in its narrow focus on Ihab Hassan, Jerome Klinkowitz, and Alan Wilde. Kuspit, finally, like Greenberg limits himself to modernism, arguing that modernism, while striving after aesthetic purity, is yet "haunted by the desire to communicate beyond itself" (53), a proposition that Greenberg would be reluctant to endorse. Of these five essays, then, two

focus on the Greenbergian art scene rather than on the (postmodern) anti-Greenbergian art scene of the section's subtitle, and the essay on the "Americanist Literary Criticism" of that subtitle also does not really deliver what would seem to be promised (I hasten to say that this is of course not Chabot's fault).

The second section takes up "The Debate in Philosophy and More Politics of Discourse" and opens with Richard Rorty's eminently sensible discussion of the rather acerbic exchanges between Habermas and Lyotard in his "Habermas and Lyotard on Postmodernity" (1984), in which Rorty sets himself up as a relaxed referee and awards the victory to Habermas (on points). Rorty's analysis of Habermas's position is followed by Martin Jay's equally penetrating (though rather more committed) "Habermas and Postmodernism." Peter Koslowski's "The (De-)Construction Sites of the Postmodern," originally published in German in 1986, suffers in the comparison. Koslowski argues that, fortunately, "the exhaustion of utopian energies points to the beginning of the postmodern epoch" (143) – an obvious swipe at Habermas's continuing insistence on the necessity of completing the project of the Enlightenment. He then tells us, somewhat paradoxically, that the postmodernism of this new epoch (his own and that of, for instance, Lyotard) "is liberating because it points the way out of the iron frame of history" (146). So does the pluralism of Matei Calinescu, in his "From the One to the Many: Pluralism in Today's Thought" (1983). But Calinescu is equally wary of the total relativism that pluralism may bring in its wake and opts for a middle course that is reminiscent of Rorty's postmodern bourgeois liberalism. Gianni Vattimo, too, addresses the problem of total relativism in "The End of (Hi)story" (1987), seeking a rather dubious solution in Heidegger's concept of *An-denken*. The sixth essay in this section, Susan Rubin Suleiman's "Feminism and Postmodernism: A Question of Politics" offers an excellent and well informed discussion of the rapprochement between feminism and postmodernism that had its cautious beginnings in the early 1980s and gained momentum during the decade. There is not much to criticize here, except that Suleiman chooses to focus on the American scene and ignores the earlier rapprochement between feminism and poststructuralism in the U.K.

The third section, entitled "The Cultural Diversity of Modernism/Postmodernism Dialectics," would seem to promise discussions of the relations between multiculturalism and postmodernism – one of the more obvious lacunae in this collection – but instead returns to the aesthetic strategies of the postmodern, collecting essays that discuss modernism and postmodernism in the fields of film, music, the theater, and literature. Most of the essays are new – only David Hayman's "Nodality of Plot Displaced: The Dynamics of Soler's *H*" (1984) is reprinted – and most of them are

quite good, with the exception of Hayman's myopic musings on Sollers's equally myopic text. Unfortunately, Jost Hermand's "Avant-Garde, Modern, Postmodern: The Music (almost) Nobody Wants to Hear," which devotes itself primarily to the postwar German scene, goes out of its way to dislike everything it comes across in the way of music. To Hermand what others have had the audacity to call postmodern music is still modernism, but in debilitated forms: "like the work of the exotic camp, neo-romantic music remains mere modernistic experiments in sound" (204). There is no denying that Hermand has an impressive knowledge of music, both contemporary and otherwise, and that he offers a very well-informed account of postwar German music, but the polemical edge is clearly overdone. Charles Boone's "Has Modern Music Lost Power?" is equally informative but has a much wider range, including recent multi-media performances such as those of Pete Rose/David Moss and Richard Zvonar/Jill Neff. Boone is obviously fascinated by musical developments since the early sixties and writes engagingly and with admiration about the various modes within contemporary music, although he, too, is cautious with respect to a breakthrough to musical postmodernism ("If there is to be a new, postmodern trend in music it will surely come out of all this ..." 214).

Maureen Turim is less hesitant in speaking of postmodern film, but notes that the short history of film does not lend itself easily to the sort of periodizations that one finds in, for instance, twentieth century literature. Her "Cinemas of Modernity and Postmodernity" offers a subtle discussion of the problems involved in cinematic periodization and of possible solutions. Erika Fischer-Lichte, in her "Postmodernism: Extension or End of Modernism? Theater between Cultural Crisis and Cultural Change," signals similar problems with respect to twentieth-century theater. Pointing out that most, or even all, of the standard strategies of postmodern art were already part and parcel of the interbellum theater — in the Dada "plays" of Tristan Tzara, but also in Pirandello's *Six Characters in Search of an Author* or O'Neill's *Mourning Becomes Elektra* — she addresses the problem of how to distinguish between this interbellum "postmodernism" and the postwar art that we have come to call postmodern. (It might also be said that she offers a convincing solution.) It has, finally, been a happy thought to conclude all of this with Stefano Rosso and Umberto Eco's "A Correspondence on Postmodernism" (originally published in 1983). Eco can't help being interesting and informative, even if he is just thinking aloud, as in this piece.

*Zeiteist in Babel* offers an interesting collection of positions on the postmodern, both in its various artistic and in its philosophical guises. Some articles are clearly below the standard set by, say, Jencks, Krauss, Jay, or Suleiman (to mention only a few) and there are some puzzling omissions.

I have already mentioned the connections between multiculturalism and postmodernism that are not explored here, and one could also think of the work on the sociology of postmodernism that has appeared in the British journal *Theory, Culture & Society*. The British are, more in general, conspicuously absent here. But it is good to have so much important material collected in one volume. (HANS BERTENS, UNIVERSITY OF UTRECHT)

\*PETER ALAN DALE. *In Pursuit of Scientific Culture: Science and Society in the Victorian Age*. Madison, Wisc.: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989. 338 + ix pp. US \$17.50.

\*STUART PETERFREUND, ed. *Literature and Science: Theory and Practice*. Boston, Mass.: Northeastern University Press, 1990. 248 + vi pp. US \$37.50.

Writing during the waning dark years of the Second World War, Herbert J. Muller, the well-known American scholar whose writings helped establish what is known today as the discourse of literature and science, considered the question of "literary criticism in the world of Einstein" and came to the conclusion that there exists an inherent link between the humanistic tradition and the philosophy of physics:

In sum, what is implied in the philosophy of modern physics is no specific form of idealism or system of values but an organic, dynamic, functional pragmatic view in which values and ideals may be shaped more realistically. And this in turn is essentially a restatement of the old humanistic tradition, as it has passed from Montaigne to Thomas Mann. In the philosophy of physics and humanism alike, the specific doctrinal content is variable, subject to revision in the light of our new knowledge or of changed conditions. Most important is the guiding attitude, the principles that generate the doctrine at any given stage. (Herbert J. Muller, *Science and Criticism: The Humanistic Tradition in Contemporary Thought* [New Haven: Yale University Press, 1943], 95)

Muller's empiricist views articulate the central problem in any consideration of the relationship between science and the humanities, that is the question of representation. What is at stake in this question is best understood in the words of Muller's French counterpart, the NRF critic Ramon Fernandez: Art "does not make reality known, it makes reality exist" — it is "a realization of the real" (cited by Muller, 259). The historical source of this problem is to be found at the juncture of the humanistic tradition and the epistemological paradigm which gained full force in the seventeenth century. The inevitable result, at least for later centuries, was the bitter opposition created by the attempt to accept the confluence of two seemingly incompatible traditions, humanism and science. Kant's *Third Critique* is a perfect example of this legacy which, today still, pits those who believe in the



transcendental value of literature against those who would see in it a naturalistic function. These issues represent the essence of the preoccupation of the two works reviewed here.

The seventeenth century's complex arguments invoked to replace the prevailing ontological paradigm with an epistemological one was ultimately embodied in the linguistic paradigm which resides within the central issue of the separation of the "natural" from the "human sciences." Clearly, much of the oppositional tradition in literary criticism and theory springs from this clash. Richard Rorty, the provocative and influential Cambridge philosopher, gives life to the argument in his piece called "Consequences of Pragmatism." He calls for a needed separation between literary criticism and the natural sciences because the intention to make literary criticism more scientific, he argues, is merely a metaphysical dream. By voicing this opinion, Rorty is in fact adding his voice to a large chorus of detractors of the epistemological tradition, and the villain of the piece is none other than positivism. "Positivist-bashing," writes most emphatically one of the contributors to the books reviewed here, "is meant to distract young literary theorists from noticing — namely, that we are all the true heirs of literary positivism" (*Literature and Science* 18). The strongest point made by both Dale and Peterfreund is the assumption that a clarification of this relationship is necessary. Consequently, their books are attempts at bringing about some kind of understanding to a problem which, given its magnitude, must continue to generate a debate. The weight of this debate must be stressed, for, as Peterfreund indicates in his introductory views, in spite of the 1980's resurgence of interest in the question, a resurgence marked by the publication of a spate of books (Michel Serre's *Hermes* is perhaps the best known), a number of book-length essay collections (Roy Porter and G.S. Rousseau's *The Ferment of Knowledge*, among many others), and the appearance of learned journal issues devoted to the question, the surface has not been scratched yet. Indeed, both *In Pursuit of a Scientific Culture* and *Literature and Science* attempt to push the problem further. Peterfreund, as an example, rejects recent studies as unable to reflect strongly enough on the change of climate. This is the reason why he proposes a collection of articles which make the claim for a renewed self-scrutiny. He writes in his presentation:

All the contributors make a start out of the assumption that, typically, the discourse of literature and science, like any other discourse of a given culture, is language-bound — logocentric, not logocentric — and that language itself is the repository of ideological values and critical and methodological praxis, as well as the boundary between the operational ... and the valutive. Within this literature and science seek to confront the indeterminacies that lie beyond, although without any false hope of reducing, let alone totalizing, those indeterminacies. (6)

This interesting point takes us back to the notions raised at the outset of this review and reminds us that the problem of language is far from being settled. Ample proof can be found if we only consider the arguments which separate Rudolf Carnap and Karl Popper regarding the place of meanings within a theory of language (see Ian Hacking's 1983 *Representing and Intervening* for an account of this debate, or Richard Rorty's lucid arguments in his 1989 *Contingency, Irony and Solidarity*).

Peter Dale takes a slightly different approach, but it is evident that he too takes us back to the contemporary problems raised here. A central objective in his investigation lies in his refutation of the traditional view of positivism. Dale does not deny the existence of what he calls a naively inductivist positivism, the anti-human kind which prompted the attacks of philosophers from Nietzsche to Heidegger, Gadamer, Habermas, Derrida, but he makes his move by detecting within the positivist project, and for the period under investigation, a train of thought which displays a growing aesthetic consciousness. This is an interesting observation in more than one sense because the presence of this train of thought reveals how, at the very height of positivism, the entire project was itself faced with a kind of "deconstruction" and, as a result, presaged the impasse that followed.

The necessity of working in this direction appears in full light if, following Dale's lead, we reassess some of the better known views. Gadamer's examination of aesthetic concepts is a case in point. In an otherwise brilliant and epochal study of the problem, Gadamer fails to recognize sufficiently the transfer of aesthetic judgment into scientific method as represented, for instance, by the thinking of the psychologist Hermann von Helmholtz on the matter of scientific hypothesizing. This failure, explains Dale, is characteristic of the late nineteenth-century neo-Kantian tradition from which Gadamer descends. In short, Dale's examination of British positivism, inseparable, as he argues, from Continental positivism, shows that "the break between romantic aestheticism and positivist science was far from radical" (7).

Without going into the details of Dale's argument, it is useful, nonetheless, to offer a brief overview of the theoretical direction adopted by the author, for his argument illuminates not only Victorian science, art, and society, but the entire spectrum of Western cultural history — that is the intellectual matrix from Kant and the philosophers who followed, to Freud, Marx, and the much maligned Auguste Comte and his positivism. Positivism, argues Dale, has been perceived as "a reaction against romanticism's pursuit of aesthetic totalization, its supreme privileging of the artist as prophet-deliverer of a moribund social order." Yet, he underlines, his research shows that "the position of the aesthetic continue, in the immediate aftermath of the romantic movement to be a matter of immense concern to scientific thinkers" (7). In this respect, one is rapidly reminded of the

position taken by this century's logical positivists. Einstein's belief in the transcendence of art is one such example. At the core of this argument, one finds again and again the humanistic (and social) preoccupations of many thinkers. No wonder then, that, much closer to us, the old arguments surface again. In his explication of Derrida's deconstructionist approach, Mark Krupnick cites deconstruction's alliance with "the voiceless, the marginal, the repressed," and its refusal to transcend "the old, bad (metaphysical) order..." (2). Dale provides his reader with a historico-philosophical definition of positivism, and, doing this, he adopts the perspective of those who wish to write a revisionary aesthetic and revisionary intellectual history (9). The author offers a thoroughgoing assessment of research on the question of positivism's intellectual roots, and, instead of the usual uncritical rejections, he presents, beyond the expected, views on positivism's theory of knowledge and of society, a theory of language, and a theory of mind. The interest of the work resides in this particular approach, for, as suggested above, these views illuminate our present critical concerns. Also, through this approach, Dale's revisionist history adds a voice to those who are seeking to rehabilitate the work of some of the followers of the teachings of Auguste Comte. Among these works we should cite Antoine Compagnon's *La Troisième République des lettres: de Flaubert à Proust* (Seuil, 1983), an incisive study of Gustave Lanson's much denigrated reign. The genealogy is significant to an understanding of Dale and Peterfreund's concerns since it was through Lanson's disciples Morize and Rudler that the scientific method took a hold in institutions of higher learning in the United States and in Britain.

However different in their approaches, both works reviewed recommend themselves to the reader because they most eloquently widen the dialogue between science and the humanities. Whatever the temptation, towards desire or meaning, the journey which take both poet and scientist follows the same winding path. (PAUL A. ROBBERECHT, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

\*EDWARD SAID. *Musical Elaborations*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1991. Pp. 105. Paper US \$26.95

It is an interesting fact about postcolonial criticism, and about the place of music in contemporary culture, that very little has been done to map the postcolonial role in the production and performance of music. Mainstream classical music is dominated by white males in almost every economic, political and social respect, yet the periphery played and still does play a prominent and varied role in the formation of artistic sphere. The rise of peripherals from the ranks of a socially unacceptable underculture (dancing

boys and girls, actors and actresses, courtiers and courtesans, etc.) to luminous fame as divas (the majestic Jesse Norman comes to mind), star instrumentalists and teachers in the late twentieth century is of paramount importance in the history of music.

Music criticism and musicology, as well as the worlds of performance and composition, are strikingly removed from the main fields of cultural criticism. In an exchange between Pierre Boulez and Michel Foucault the latter remarks that, except for a passing but idle interest in jazz or rock, most intellectuals who care about Heidegger or Nietzsche, about history, literature, and philosophy, regard music as too elitist, irrelevant or difficult for their attention.<sup>1</sup> Musical discourse is probably less available to Western intellectuals than the obscurer realms of medieval, Chinese or Japanese culture. It is therefore predictable and yet odd that post-colonialism, much concerned with almost all forms of power and knowledge, has offered little in the way of music criticism. Postcolonialism in music seems to be roughly at the stage where literary post-colonialism was twenty years ago: a sort of separatist enterprise which attempts to identify peripheral musicians of the past who spoke with a voice of their own. But it would be wrong to fix the blame exclusively on music criticism or on postcolonial theory. The problem is that music today is as massively organized a white male domain as it was in the past. Without significant exception, peripherals, like women, play a crucial but subaltern role.

This is true in almost any random sampling of recent events — operas, recitals, orchestral performances — in which issues of interest to post-colonialism are in evidence, but for which postcolonial critical responses are not likely to be encountered. The question of whether there is a "peripheral" musical style, for example, emerges when Third World critics perform or write about music as in the case of Edward Said's *Musical Elaborations*; a remarkably rich and entertaining narrative.

Performance, which now extends from "authentic" plain chant to Berlioz and Wagner performed on instruments of the period, is a remarkable phenomenon which has become the single most characteristic aspect of our musical life. It is a development which has taken place with astonishing speed over the past couple of decades, though as Said amply demonstrates, this success could not have been achieved without the work of scholars, instrument-builders, enthusiasts, and pioneers dating back more than a century. Now that it has gone beyond the innocent revival of music everyone had forgotten, to strike at the roots of how we perform the music everyone knows, the authenticity question rouses the strongest feelings among

1 Michel Foucault, "Contemporary Music and the Public," John Rahn, trans. *Perspectives of New Music* 24 (Fall-Winter 1985): 6-12.

musicians — who justifiably feel that traditional performing styles are being implicitly challenged and criticized (think of Nigel Kennedy and the idea will be clear enough) — and raises questions about the museum culture of our day, our lack of commitment to new Third World composers and music and our escape into the distant past. With its claim that the past knows best, Classical Music movement appears to attack the very idea of cultural continuity and development.

According to Said, Classical music enthusiasts have always been open to accusations of being arrogant — of claiming that their way to perform was the only way — and of being effete. Does a reliance on history somehow remove from the musician the need to perform with passion and involvement? In the days of Roger Norrington's Beethoven, John Eliot Gardiner's Händel and Nikolaus Harnoncourt's Mozart such an accusation may seem outdated, but some of the variations which Said has demonstrated show that in the past the charge was certainly justified. When Erwin Bodky wrote a program note for concerts with his Cambridge Society for Early Music in Boston, Massachusetts, in the 1950s, he declared:

[Classical] ... Music was a highly aristocratic art and restraint governed even the display of emotion.... This deprives concerts of [Classical] ... Music of the atmosphere of electricity which, when present, is one of the finest experiences of the modern concert hall. Who seeks but this may stay away from our concert series. We want to take this opportunity, however, to thank our artists for the voluntary restraint in the display of their artistic capabilities which they exercise when recreating with us the atmosphere of equanimity, tranquillity and noble entertainment which is the characteristic feature of [Classical] ... Music (123).<sup>2</sup>

This statement goes against the grain of Said's *Musical Elaborations* which argues two principal subjects, and they remain somewhat at odds with one another. The first is a dutiful act of loyalty to the fashionable notion that works of art must be removed from the sphere of aesthetics for subjection to cultural-historical analysis. The most illuminating sort of writing about music, Said says, is "humanistic" rather than merely aesthetic or technical — it must have its various roles in society and in history, its relation to the discourses of political power, strenuously investigated, just as literature is nowadays primarily a matter for "cultural studies" and routinely submits "to ideological or psychoanalytic analysis" (29). Said argues at length with Adorno, who practised the same thing, though before it became the vogue, with magisterial strength and gloomy inclusiveness. Said, deferential but still his own man, characteristically points out that to treat modern music as a

reflection or portent of the world's present or impending ruin is actually a Eurocentric view, taken, with unconscious colonialist arrogance, to apply universally.

Said knows far too much about music to believe that the musical canon is, like the literary one, a white male bourgeois fraud. Any interpreter approaching the Classical musical canon in the late twentieth century is faced with an interpretative language distended with cliché: the result of the same works having been repeated for decades, if not centuries. The concert platform is the scene of these repetitions, the place where the Classical music canon is done to death night after night and year after year. In the course of his own musical career Said (reminiscent of Glenn Gould) found that he was adding to the already overrepresented program. And like Gould who stopped playing in public, Said plays in solitude in order to stamp his performance with individuality and intimacy. The second subject of his transgressive sonata is, roughly, the experience of music in solitude, of private performance and properly creative listening. This is far more interesting, and it establishes the right of Said's narrative to be taken more seriously than if it had offered nothing but a Foucauldian exercise in musical "archaeology" or a new historicist negotiation between musical and other discourses.

Said's second principal subject, though still classifiable as cultural criticism, is his study of the conditions of modern performance — for instance, the alienating social arrangements of the concert hall. "Performances of Classical music," he rightly observes, "are highly concentrated, rarefied and extreme occasions.... Performance is thus an inflected and highly determined point of convergence where the specific and the general come together" (17). Put differently, performance is a feat quite distinct from composing, which it has in large measure displaced from public interest. Nowadays sharply differentiated from composers, performers are also clearly marked as separate from their audiences. Most members of the audience play no instrument, cannot get to know music by playing piano transcriptions as they once did, and in any case could not hope to play the way the pianist does: so they observe him in an alienated but reverential ignorance, much as they might a pole vaulter. This is true as the most effective deterrent to concert-going is the nonsense in which all, performers and audience alike, feel obliged to participate, perhaps to establish that elusive rapport — the absurd, ritually prolonged applause, the ceremonial entrances of leader and conductor, the marching off and on-stage, the standing up and sitting down, all reaching its farcical nadir in the yelling, stamping foolery of the Proms. Said laments, along with Adorno, Gould, and others, that social and technological developments have gone far towards ruining Classical music by making it available in this way, or in recorded

2 Quoted in Alan Durant, *Conditions of Music* (London: Macmillan, 1984) 123.



performance, invariant and therefore falsifying. He also deplores the musical pollution of our aural environment "the demotion of music to commodity status" (72). On the other hand, he dislikes the way musicologists barricade themselves behind abstruse textual analysis, not risking the more "humanistic" approach which places music in social and psychological settings. It sometimes appears that he wants music to suffer all the pains literature is currently undergoing. This is conscientious, but it seems strikingly at odds with the preferred inwardness of his own experience of music; and it makes for a certain apparent confusedness of exposition. It is not easy to grasp the structure of these three lectures right away; listening to them must have been strenuous, despite the relief of musical illustrations. Said talks about a great many things, digresses, honors his critical commitments, and returns, with some relief, to music proper. "So there is a continuous struggle between an intense private love of music," says Frank Kermode, "and a conviction that the modern way of treating the discourses of art as unprivileged in relation to other discourses ought to be applied to music as to everything else" (1).<sup>3</sup> Hence the stress on professional performance. Said pays handsome tribute to Toscanini, Gould, and Umm Kalthoum, the Nightingale of the East. He has to weigh against their admired interpretative skills the fact that they in different ways conspire to the maintenance of a social order: Toscanini giving performances appropriate to the sponsorship of a giant industrial concern, Gould abjuring the concert hall but making that very gesture an index of apartness and a permanent part of his performance, Umm Kalthoum's "peculiar rigor as performer [which] derived from an aesthetic whose hallmark was exfoliating variation, in which repetition, a sort of meditative fixation on one or two small patterns, and an almost total absence of developmental (in the Beethovenian sense) tension were the elements" (98). Said most approves works which transgress social norms, or musical norms socially imposed — for example, *Così fan tutte* and Bach's Canonic Variations on *Vom Himmel hoch*, the latter because it is so enormously and gratuitously in excess of the "pious technical sentimentousness" of the chorale: "pure musicality in a social space off the edge" (81). What Said admires in Toscanini, Umm Kalthoum, Gould is their majesty, presence, power of delivery. There is an intensity in

the way they perform, he seems to be saying, and a refusal to compromise or cave in to the demands of the concert hall and society at large. He, like them, delights in repeating: Inner hearing is the fundamental prerequisite of all true music. (MUSTAPHA MARROUCHI, UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO)

\*THOMAS JENSEN HINES. *Collaborative Form: Studies in the Relation of the Arts*. Kent, Ohio: The Kent State University Press, 1991. 205 pp. 29 illust., US \$28.00.

Thomas Jensen Hines's *Collaborative Form* is interesting reading. With his lively and detailed explications of selected twentieth-century collaborative works (those combining two or more art forms), Hines revivifies pieces, many of which have been or run the risk of being forgotten or ignored because of their experimental nature. Hines does these works a good turn, for through his clearly written descriptions and his choice of illustrations, he makes sense of these works and, consequently, creates a larger audience for these unconventional pieces. They are on view once more.

In each of the book's chapters, Hines meticulously leads the reader through the intricacies of one or two of these collaborative works. As if determined to remove them from their marginalized condition, Hines places these selected works on display before his audience. As a result, Arnold Schoenberg's *Herzgewachse* (the setting of a poem by Maurice Maeterlinck), Wassily Kandinsky's *Der gelbe Klang* (music by Thomas de Hartmann), and Oskar Kokoschka's *Mörder, Hoffnung der Frauen* (staged in Vienna in 1909) come to life again, and collaborative publications like Kandinsky and Franz Marc's anthology, *Der blaue Reiter* (1912) or René Char's work with Georges Braque and Joan Miro, in a sense, get re-issued. In addition, a more recent piece, *Triad* (1977) choreographed by Alwin Nikolais (Nikolais Dance Theater), again moves in and out of its sequences — this time before the mind's eye. What has been seen by only a few and what was published in limited, expensive editions become more accessible through Hines's book.

Hines's description of these performances and texts are helpful, for they do not presume too much. Each begins with a brief historical background which places the collaboration among the various artists and arts in some perspective. The explications of the works themselves are composed so that someone coming for the first time to one of these works, for instance, Kandinsky and Marc's *Der blaue Reiter*, can follow Hines' argument and make sense of what otherwise might be difficult to comprehend. Moreover, the person may feel moved out of a pleasant curiosity to find a copy of the anthology in the library (there is a helpful bibliography at the end of the book). In this respect, I was particularly impressed with not only the chapter

3 In an illuminating essay titled "Off the Edge," Frank Kermode argues that Said often digresses from talking about music to talking about politics: a subject that deserves the attention even of those who do not view matters in the same light as Said does. Said's most urgent political moment in *Musical Elaborations* comes when he speaks of Paul de Man and how the frivolous Nazi sympathiser was recommending a homeland for the Jews in Palestine. Said counterpunches by arguing that there already existed a Jewish home at the time de Man was writing war-time journalistic essays (38-39). For more details on the subject see "Off the Edge," *London Review of Books* (7 November 1991): 3-4.

on Kandinsky and Marc's *Der blaue Reiter* but also with the one on Kokoschka's *Mörder; Hoffnung der Frauen*.

Hines's approach to these works removes "the veil of mystery" that often has obscured them. His discussion allows the reader to engage these texts and performances with less hesitation. In this respect, Hines's book places these fringe pieces closer to the center and, by implication, makes it easier to realize how these experimental works ultimately influenced the more conventional. Although Hines does not entertain the point, his examples of collaborative form make contemporary attempts to juxtapose and join modes of art and thought less unique — it connects them to a tradition. His examples are reminders that much which we think of as being original has been attempted previously.

Throughout the book Hines formulates "rules" as to what constitutes "collaborative form" (his term). He is intent upon defining this form, of isolating it and distinguishing it from such popular terms as "multi media." He seems to be working out of and against a tradition that often dwells upon the distinctions among "the sister arts" and that insists that when the arts come together in a work, one of them must dominate. Hines suggests that "collaborative form" is distinct from "composite form" because in the former, each of the arts combines to create a new form that does not draw attention to its constituent parts. Instead, in a collaborative form, each medium blends with the others to create a new whole. No part is primary. Such, in fact, is the interdependency of the arts that to subtract one is to destroy the form. The resulting original work, evidently because it avoids narrative, tends not only to drift towards abstraction and to engage a more "spiritual" or symbolic element but also, of course, to suspend the usual sets of expectations (9).

This past week, while I was thinking about Hines's book, I went to several events which were part of the 1992 North American New Music Festival (Buffalo, New York). In particular I attended one performance entitled *Wading* (1992) produced by Michael Rowe, composed and performed by Don Metz (composer/guitarist), John Bacon, Jr. (composer/percussion), Al Kryszak (paintings), Ed Sobala (lighting/projections), and Michael Basinski (text). The performance began with the guitarist playing what might be popularly termed a "post-modern" version of the blues in a lighted space. After he told a "vaudeville" joke, he moved behind a set of draped sheets (the shapes of which duplicated the painted canvases hanging on the walls). When the light shifted to the sheets, the percussionist, who was sitting behind them, began to play. A shadow drama of his movements and those of others walking in circles appeared — some were in focus; others, out. Then hidden singing voices spoke sound poems superimposed on the sheets. As the work progressed, the percussionist moved to another space and to a set

of electronic/synthesized surfaces. A video camera trailed him and projected images of details of him onto another sheet as well as onto a TV screen; eventually, the guitar (electrified this time) joined in and so did more lights and patterned images. "Wading" or moving to another space, the percussionist played "found objects" with his feet and slid behind another sheet. More lights, patterns — like those in the paintings — and shadows, and self-images played over, on, and around the percussionist's and guitarist's sounds.

My inadequate and clumsy description does the event little justice. It was an exciting performance. Throughout, the sounds, patterns, and shadows blended and translated into each other. The musicians became paintings; sounds became shapes, and colors became sounds. While I was watching the performance, I thought of Hines's list of rules about collaborative form. I decided to test them. Was *Wading* an example of collaborative form? All the rules seemed to apply, except one. Indeed, the work was abstract; the arts blended into one another; something original was being created (I certainly had to suspend the usual sets of expectations); yet, there was a primary mode. For me, in *Wading* the music was predominant. Does this mean that *Wading* could not qualify? According to Hines, it could not. But I did experience it as "collaborative," for the way in which the modes of art blended by continuously turning into each other — even crawling into each other — was sufficient to integrate the performance for me. My experience made me doubt whether Hines's insistence on there being no primary element is realistic. I found myself going over his descriptions of performances and thinking that no matter how much, for instance, Nikolais's work blends its elements, the foundation is still the movements of dance. That element predominates.

I suggest that Hines is being untrue to experience when he states that "there can be no primary form in collaborative art" (169), for art forms can still blend even when one predominates. As this experience of watching *Wading* instructed me, it is not, as Hines writes, "a logical impossibility" (169) to have a primary form in collaborative form. I wonder: is it really possible to have collaboration without some kind of predominance? Our social models should be enough to teach us that such a "rule" is impossible.

The "rules" Hines lists are helpful, but problematic. I was disappointed that the book's conclusion did nothing more than reiterate the generalities of the introduction. The concluding list of rules seems to place a straitjacket on a form that by its nature needs to play with space and time — that desires to exercise its limbs and let its various parts display their strengths and weaknesses.

In a few other respects I was dissatisfied with the book. While I was reading it, I could not help but sense that something was missing. I shall attempt to put a name to that deficit.

I was struck in reading Hines's descriptions of the collaborative works how many included accounts of violence and conflict. I wish he had addressed this element not just in terms of the individual performance or text but also in relation to the nature of collaborative form itself. Hines recognizes that each art has its idiosyncracies, but what happens when these are juxtaposed and come into conflict? I suggest that collaboration does, paradoxically, include violence as well as harmony. As I read, I could not help but think of Suzanne K. Langer's claim that "there are no happy marriages in art — only successful rape" (*Problems of Art*, 86).

I was also slightly disturbed by the fact that the historical background was limited. Hines gives an interesting account of how a particular piece came to be published or staged; however, he does not touch the larger historical context. Many of the collaborative pieces he chooses to discuss took place and grew out of specific political and economic realities that also shaped the work and the form. In this observation, I am not criticizing the work from the usual historicist perspective. I am merely suggesting that the view of these collaborative pieces is not broad enough. It is as if in the writing of this book Hines looked through a lens that frames only the most immediate circle around the work under study. The lens constricts; it cuts out the essential periphery.

The broader perspective should have entered into Hines's treatment of the theoretical material. His narrow (formal) focus really makes this book less of a theoretical work than it pretends to be. As a theoretical study it seems to be deficient; however, as a descriptive book that prolongs the life of what could be so easily forgotten, it is superb. (ANN C. COLLEY, STATE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE AT BUFFALO, NEW YORK)

\*R.S. STURGES. *Medieval Interpretation: Models of Reading in Literary Narrative, 1100-1500*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1991. 302 pp. US \$39.95

Le sous-titre de ce livre en indique assez clairement l'intention et les limites. Sturges entend présenter, à propos de textes choisis (arbitrairement?) au cours de quatre siècles, des échantillons de lecture et de méthodes d'interprétation, parmi celles qui sont actuellement en cours. Chemin faisant, Sturges prend position et dégage ses options personnelles, éclectiques du reste, et à mon sens inégalement fondées.

D'emblée, il présente le "moyen âge" comme une période de changements incessants. On ne peut que le louer de rejeter ainsi les vieilles conceptions

monolithiques de cette ère historique; mais qui aujourd'hui partage encore de telles conceptions? On va tenter dans ces 300 pages de saisir l'insaisissable: le mouvement même qui ne cesse de faire glisser les unes sur les autres, en couche stratifiées et instables, les formes et les significations. Les textes sur lesquels porte cette expérience sont représentatifs: peut-être un peu trop même, et l'on peut se demander pourquoi ces textes-là plutôt que d'autres fascinent les médiévistes américains, comme s'ils résumaient la civilisation du moyen âge. Loin de moi l'idée de nier la qualité ni l'éminence de ces textes; il n'en reste pas moins contestable d'ausculter (comme le font tant d'auteurs) une longue et très riche tradition culturelle dans la même petite douzaine de textes inlassablement repris — et si substantiels (il est vrai) qu'on peut, en les isolant ainsi, leur faire dire à peu près n'importe quoi. C'est là sans doute une manifestation parmi d'autres d'une inertie propre à la pratique universitaire. L'inévitable *Chanson de Roland*, le *Lancelot* de Chrétien de Troyes, le *Perceval*, la *Queste* et la *Mort Arthur*, Marie de France, le *Voir dit* de Guillaume de Machaut (dont nous ne possédons du reste à ce jour aucune édition digne de confiance: celle de Paulin Paris, la seule, résulte d'un tripotage du texte qui le dénature), Chaucer, Malory.... Tel est le corpus de Sturges. Rien que de oeuvres de haute culture. Certes, on ne peut reprocher à l'auteur de se limiter au narratif; mais la poésie dite lyrique illustrerait lumineusement sa thèse. J'en dirais autant de l'admirable théâtre européen du quinzième siècle. Surtout, pourquoi pas quelques textes mineurs ou marginaux, ou qui furent de succès médiévaux même s'ils sont devenus illisibles pour nous, *Aspremont* plutôt que le *Roland*, *L'Atre périlleux* plutôt que *Perceval*, et les fabliaux avec la longue et mouvante tradition de nouvelles, le conte ironique, grotesque, voire obscur? Enfin, pourquoi ne pas, dans un livre aussi ambitieux, râfisser large dans le plan géographique? L'épopée espagnole, si différente de la française; les *Schwänke* allemands, les *cantari* du Trecento.

Le pivot de l'argumentation de Sturges est néanmoins solide, et lui permet de projeter, dans la direction limitée qu'il a éeue, une clarté efficace. Il part en effet de la considération d'une sorte de rupture progressive qui se produit, au onzième et au douzième siècles, dans le néo-platonisme altéré qu'avait transmis Boèce aux doctes d'Occident. La massivité des choses s'effrite, le statut sémiotique du monde se trouble, d'autres potentialités significatives émergent à mesure même que s'accroît l'attention portée par l'homme à son environnement terrestre. Des décodages multiples du réel deviennent possibles, peut-être tentants. Sturges distingue deux modes de pensée ("determined" et "undetermined") selon que le postulat initial est l'unicité sémantique de l'objet ou sa polyvalence, son "surplus de sens" selon le mot de Marie de France. Historiquement, on assiste au lent refoulement du premier de ces modes par le second.



Vus sous un tel angle, les textes médiévaux se rapprochent de nous. Invoquer à ce propos un "postmodernisme" critique (dont aucune définition n'est assurée) ne nous avance guère. Cela seul est certain, que les approches d'inspiration structuraliste des années 60 et 70 n'ont plus aujourd'hui de raison d'être. Ce qui reste, et à quoi Sturges se montre très sensible, c'est le mystère propre au texte médiéval, mystère qui, situé dans les profondeurs où la forme engendre le sens, se trouvera un jour, au-delà du quinzième siècle, apparemment dissipé, en réalité renié. Nous le redécouvrons, aujourd'hui. Sans doute est-ce en cela que nous sommes, oui, postmodernes – et que ce livre est très représentatif du médiévisme américain actuel. (PAUL ZUMTHOR, UNIVERSITÉ DE MONTRÉAL)

\*WALTER BERSCHIN and ARNOLD ROTHE, eds. *Ernst Robert Curtius: Werk, Wirkung, Zukunftsperspektiven*. Heidelberg: Symposium zum hundertsten Geburtstag 1986. Heidelberg: Carl Winter, 1989. 300 pp. DM 120.00

The proceedings of this symposium for Curtius's one-hundredth anniversary contain papers by the following scholars: Rudolf Walter Leonhardt (on Curtius as a journalist), Rolf Klopfer (as a translator), Wolf-Dieter Lange (on Curtius's correspondence with Philipp August Becker), Arnold Rothe (the Heidelberg years), Hans Hinterhäuser (on *Die literarischen Wegbereiter des neuen Frankreich*), Claus Uhlig (Curtius and TS. Eliot), Harold Weinrich (Curtius's concept of Germany), Robert Picht (Curtius and Franco-German relations), Lea Ritter-Santini (on architectural space as a correlative of cognition), Walter Berschin (German books published in 1948), Dag Norberg (reception in Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian countries), Manuel C. Díaz y Díaz (Spanish reception), Massimo Oldoni (Italian reactions), Stefan Gross (on the Epilogue to *European Literature and the Latin Middle Ages*, abbrev. *ELLM4*), Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, (on Curtius's lack of a historical consciousness), Earl Jeffrey Richards (Curtius as a proto-structuralist and semiotician, and his use of philology), and Walter F. Veit (on *ELLM4* as an *Ansatz* for new directions in literary theory). There are discussions of individual papers at the end of most of the five sections dealing with the various aspects of Curtius's life and oeuvre.

Together, these papers constitute a catalogue of most, but not all, criticisms levelled against Curtius over the years, to an extent that may not have been entirely anticipated by the organizers of this commemorative occasion. The present volume takes stock, once again, of the phenomenon Curtius, whose reception was the subject, three years earlier, of Earl Jeffrey Richards's *Modernism, Medievalism and Humanism: A Research Bibliography on the Reception of the Works of Ernst Robert Curtius* (Tübingen: Max

Niemeyer, 1983). The reasons why Curtius has caused so much critical ink to flow over the years is worth examining. In the first place, the publication of his *magnum opus*, *ELLM4*, had a major impact on the intellectual scene in post-war Germany (219). The intellectual vacuum of the period (206) is illustrated by Walter Berschin, who cites all the (minor) works that came out in 1948, when *ELLM4* was first published in Bern, Switzerland. Berschin does not mention another major study published in Switzerland (Bern, 1946) by another German Romanist, Erich Auerbach, whose *Mimesis* constitutes an instructive counterpart to *ELLM4*. A comparison of these two works is absent altogether. One wonders if the old controversy between *innere* and *äußere* Emigration is still playing a role in this case.

There are new elements as well. A detailed study of the younger Curtius in Heidelberg by Arnold Rothe provides insight into his character and lifestyle. He was choosey about whom he associated with (90); in this connection it is worth noting that he himself was not fully accepted by Stefan George, whom he admired. His preciosity earned him the nickname "The Abbess" (73). As a teacher he spoke to "the happy few" but attracted a large audience, even though he was not a born rhetorician; his seminars induced fear (82-84). The young English poet Stephen Spender characterized him as follows:

Curtius was an egoist, an egoist of the liberal, Goethe tradition. His life was organized with an enlightened selfishness.... He would not put himself out, even for his best friends, if he thought that his own resilience was going to be depressed by their needs.... I do not mean that he was unsympathetic, but that he was un-self-sacrificing. (94)

Curtius's early method was designed to combine enthusiasm, intuition (25, 29) and intelligence (30, 53), resulting in belletristic essays (103, 110) and a literary journalism unusual for an academic of his times. His translator's activity is characteristic of this phase, constituting a *Nachdichtung*, or aesthetic appropriation, rather than a professional rendering of the original. For Curtius, translation was an "erotic" activity (49). The contrast with *ELLM4* is therefore all the greater, since it purportedly was written with the precision of the natural sciences in mind (258). However, the reception of *ELLM4*, particularly in Germany, has demonstrated very clearly the subjective-ideological aspect of Curtius's conservative-restorative scholarship. This aspect, and the internal political significance of Curtius's role in cold-war Germany, are several times alluded to, especially in the discussions (e.g. 207), but nowhere systematically treated. Misgivings about Curtius's more dubious views and positions as propagated in his pamphlet *Deutscher Geist in Gefahr* (1932; see esp. chapter four, "Soziologie oder Revolution") are summarily dismissed as ideologically motivated (153, and see index, s.v.

Nerlich), but casually admitted elsewhere. Curtius's infamous comments about *abfällige Juden* in *Deutscher Geist* (see Michael Nerlich, "Romanistik und Anti-Kommunismus," *Das Argument*, 72 [1972], 276-313, esp. 286-287) are passed over in discreet silence, but the proposition that Curtius would have joined the resistance if he could have (Lausberg) is trotted out again by E.J. Richards (261, n.13). Even Harald Weinrich, a staunch apologist, does not consider *Deutscher Geist* to be a statement against fascism, despite the negative review in the *Völkische Beobachter* (145). For a positive evaluation of *Deutscher Geist*, see T.S. Eliot's "A Commentary," *The Criterion*, 12 (1932), 73-79. Eliot's own antihumanistic and authoritarian tendencies finally became apparent to Curtius as well (on his second essay on Eliot [1949] see P. Dronke, "Curtius as Medievalist and Modernist," *TLS* 4044, October 3, 1980, 1103-1106, esp. 1106, not cited here). It was Curtius's aversion to modern *Entwertung* and "sociologism," his rejection of the Weimar republic, and a personal crisis that led him to his "objective" method of *Toposforschung* as a last refuge, an intellectual bunker (136, 164). The change in attitude dates from 1929 (232-233) and it resulted in a change in orientation from France to Italy, from Paris to Rome, from modern to Latin literature, and from liberalism to conservatism (234-235). The objections to Curtius's new method are well known: formalism, functionalism, a- or supra-historicity, undervaluation of originality and poetic individuality (Dronke) and orality (Zumthor), exclusion of non-Latin elements, e.g. the significant encounters with Arabic and Jewish letters in Spain (199), and disregard of the manuscript matrix and its implications, or the concept of audience and reception (240-241). By comparison, Auerbach's work has withstood the test of time much better.

Why is it, then, that *ELLM4* can still be presented as the "Bible" of medieval Latinists (185)? Admittedly, it is still a convenient standby, in particular for scholars in other fields (212), but to insist on the preponderance of *ELLM4* today is to deny the accomplishments of the last forty years in the critical methodology of medieval literary studies in general and of medieval Latin in particular. Curtius's concept of the Middle Ages and its Latin literature as an essentially passive, monolithic conduit of transmission is a construct that denies its ethnic diversity, its newness and originality, its unslavish attitude towards the classical authors (213-214). Curtius himself was well aware of the inherent limitations of his *Forschungsobjekt*, continuity (215-217). "The tradition" inevitably involves imitation, mediocrity, and a closed canon. His answer to this problem is traditional as well: the cult of genius (Virgil, Dante, Goethe), a supra-historical concept of Beauty, and personal preference (216-217; cf. 281). Theory was not Curtius's *forte*, witness his own definition of his method: "Das Erleben muß im Feuer des Schaffens umgeschmolzen werden in das stählerne Gefüge der Erkenntnis"

(*Kritische Essays zur europäischen Literatur*, "Anhang," 435). Instead, he wrote from certain intestinal attitudes and convictions (219-223). In one who was reclaiming history, a sense of history was notoriously lacking (228). *ELLM4* did belong to the dominant intellectual paradigm until the mid sixties, when Jauss demonstrated its glaring deficiencies in his *Literaturgeschichte als Provokation der Literaturwissenschaft*; a revival is not desirable (240-241). The need for figures such as Curtius today is questionable especially in Germany, where the search for Arcadia now leads by way of Brokdorf, a *locus amoenus contaminatus* (242). His Europeanism – a Jungian conception of *Roma aeterna* by his own definition (243, 244) – has little relevance for European unity today, and is connected rather with the search for a new identity in post-war Germany (207). It is the merit of this collection of essays to have demonstrated one more time to what extent Curtius is a dated phenomenon. Maybe the time has finally come to take stock of what has been accomplished in the study of the practice of letters in the Latin middle ages since Curtius.

Finally, it should be noted that the proceedings of this symposium lack an *index rerum*, or a *Stichwörterverzeichnis* as a bare minimum; also absent is a register of citations of Curtius's works. As a result, the reader has to create his own indices. I offer the following notes. For critiques of *ELLM4* see esp. 128, 190-192, 196, 203-205, 206-208, 211-214, 219, 221, 223, 233-234, 244, 252, 255-256, 258, 262, 268, 275, 279, 281, 285; for *Deutscher Geist* in *Gefahr* 14, 145, 147, 150, 235, 237, 244, 247; for the German reception of *ELLM4* 193, 238, 240, 245, 260; for Curtius and National-Socialism 92, 146, 234, 237, 239, 244, 246-247, 256, 261 (n. 13); Curtius and art 29, 168, 173, 268; Curtius and religion 51, 101; humanism 13, 59, 118, 119, 120 (n.25), 124, 125, 130, 131, 146, 149, 161, 164, 217, 220, 240, 264. (HAJO J. WESTRA, UNIVERSITY OF CALGARY)

\*ROBERT R. EDWARDS and STEPHEN SPECTOR, eds. *The Olde Daunce: Love, Friendship, Sex, and Marriage in the Medieval World*. Binghamton: State University of New York Press, 1991. 311 pp. Paper US \$17.95.

This collection of thirteen essays is devoted to the investigation of the medieval manifestations of "desire, friendship, sexuality, and especially the *olde daunce* of love" (1). The collection falls into three sections, organized according to sources. Part One examines the historical context of marriage and especially the influence of Augustine on the subsequent development of the Church's doctrines pertaining to sexuality and marriage. The remaining ten essays are devoted to vernacular literatures; part two primarily to French and Italian literature, part three is devoted to Chaucer.

Elizabeth A. Clark begins the historical section with "Adam's Only Companion": Augustine and the Early Christian Debate on Marriage." Professor Clark reminds us that far from arriving at a considered and systematic view of marriage and human sexuality, Augustine developed his understanding over a period of some twenty years. His view of marriage as a social institution was never transformed into a theory of companionate marriage in part because of the reactive nature of Augustine's thought. He had at once to refute the errors of the Manichean, Pelagian and other heresies, which perverted the Christian view of creation, while seeking to temper the extreme asceticism of his contemporary, St. Jerome. Consequently, Augustine promoted the importance of the physical, sexual function of marriage at the expense of its consensual and companionate nature.

In "*Maritalis Affectio* Revisited" Michael M. Sheehan examines the means by which the ideology of marriage was diffused throughout society. He discusses the interrelationship of the notion of consent to marriage and the nascent ideas of marital friendship found in Augustine, which resulted in the conclusion that marital consent was informed by marital affection. In an examination of confessors manuals, liturgy, and sermons, all means by which the laity were instructed, Fr. Sheehan traces the nuances of marital affection and the depth of the relationship presupposed in this notion.

The quality of the marital relationship is approached from yet another perspective in Erik Kooper's essay, "Loving the Unequal Equal: Medieval Theologians and Marital Affection." This essay addresses questions about how a husband and wife might be considered equals. Professor Kooper examines concepts of equality, as it pertains to marriage and friendship, from Aristotle to Thomas Aquinas, who concluded that the greatest friendship is found in marriage because both flesh and spirit are joined. It is in the sermon literature of thirteenth-century Paris that the notion of marital partnership is fully articulated.

Quite a different theme emerges in A.C. Spearing's discussion of "The Medieval Poet as Voyeur" which focuses on the process by which the reader of medieval love literature becomes an onlooker at the sexual encounters of others. Professor Spearing examines a variety of texts ranging from the twelfth-century French narrative of *Tristan* to the *Roman de la Rose* and Chaucer's *Troilus and Criseyde* to show how the narrator's act of looking becomes more important than the sexual encounter itself, suggesting that "the excitement and the shame of voyeurism become parts of the narrative effect" (63).

In "Love and Power in the Twelfth Century, with Special Reference to Chrétien de Troyes and Marie de France" R.W. Hanning examines how these writers "create linkages and confrontations between the varied manifestations

of love, prowess, and art" (87). By tracing the intellectual and historical context of the growth of literary society and the gradual decline of warrior values, Professor Hanning shows how both Chrétien and Marie reflect society's disillusionment with physical force and their promotion, instead, of eloquence and love.

In "Chastity and Love in the *Decameron*" Giovanni Sinicropi examines the traditional opposition of these two themes in a variety of sources from a story written in India in the eleventh-century to the *exempla* of Jacques de Vitry and Cesarius of Heisterbach's *Dialogus miraculorum*. He then reads the story of Nastagio degli Onesti (*Decameron* 5.8) from a new perspective, concluding that in Boccaccio's story we see an affirmation of human love which "signals the dawn of a new age" (120).

The notions of marital affection and friendship are again brought to the fore in Jerome Mazzaro's essay "From *Fin Amour* to Friendship: Dante's Transformation." The various meanings of friendship in the *Divine Comedy* indicate a move away from courtly love, which distinguished love from marital affection, to a new understanding of marital affection which included love and, therefore, was conducive to virtue. Throughout the *Comedy* Beatrice functions as Dante's friend because "she reflects the truth of Dante's persona, and in doing so, she assists him in knowing himself" (134), which in turn helps him to achieve friendship with God.

Robert R. Edwards examines Chaucer as translator in his essay, "Faithful Translations: Love and the Question of Poetry in Chaucer." In the Prologue to *The Legend of Good Women* Chaucer is accused of disloyalty to love in the course of his translations. His translation of the *Roman de la Rose* led the wise to withdraw from love while that of Boccaccio caused men to be less trusting of women. Professor Edwards shows that as a translator Chaucer actually lays bare the complexities and contradictions which lie beneath the surface of the original texts.

John M. Fyler focuses on the sexual politics of language in "Man, Men, and Women in Chaucer's Poetry." He suggests that Chaucer was well aware of the sexual implications of language, for example, that some ways of praising women were antifeminist and that when men praise women their sincerity must be questioned. When the male narrator of *The Legend of Good Women* warns women about the treachery of men can even his advice be truly trusted?

Alan T. Gaylord presents a critique of the Franklin's Tale in "From Dorigen to the Vavasour: Reading Backwards." Conventionally, this Tale has been interpreted as a story of marital partnership but Professor Gaylord shows how, in the one instance in which we see the couple making a decision, the man acts with unchallenged authority. By adopting a strategy of resistance and reading backwards, we see the Franklin in a new light, as



one who aims to win and who seeks total control, despite a deferential surface.

The Franklin's Tale, along with Guillaume de Machaut's *Remede de Fortune* is the focus of the essay "Reason, Machaut, and the Franklin" by James I. Wimsatt. By placing the *Remede* as an intermediary between the *Roman de la Rose* and Chaucer, yet a different understanding of the Franklin's ideas about the marital relationship and friendship emerges. Professor Wimsatt suggests that, in spite of the irony Chaucer uses in discussing marriage, nevertheless, in the end the Franklin proves benign and optimistic.

Stephen Spector focuses on love and hate in his analysis of "Empathy and Enmity in the Prioress's Tale." The Tale is filled with dichotomies and contradictions and an apparent hatred of Jews. Rather than a generalized fear and hatred, however, he suggests that the Prioress fears the specific threat of spiritual taint and physical defilement.

In the final essay in the volume Marie Borroff also focuses on Chaucer's Prioress. In "Loves Hete" in the Prioress's Prologue and Tale" she suggests that for all the Prioress's snobbishness and self-indulgence, she nevertheless has a profound spiritual life. Ultimately she presents a simple faith based on "the thoughtless and instinctual bliss of the child surrounded by the loving care of its parents" (235).

This collection covers much ground in terms of time and space and discipline. It follows the threads of sex and love and friendship from Antiquity to the sixteenth century, from England to India, from philosophy to literature. In so doing, it provides a window into the complexities, contradictions, and nuances of the affective life in the Middle Ages. (JACQUELINE MURRAY, UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR)

\*DANIEL JAVITCH. *Proclaiming a Classic: The Canonization of Orlando Furioso*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991. 205 + x pp. US \$35.00.

This impressively learned and thorough study arrives at a timely moment in the evolution of literary criticism, and specifically in the evolution of our notions about what constitutes a literary canon and how that canon is created. As Javitch observes in his Introduction, current debates about the literary canon tend to represent essentially two points of view. There are those who maintain that "canonicity is created by a culture for specific reasons," and that the canon represents "the institutionalization of those literary texts that appear best to convey and sustain the interests of the dominant social order" (3). Then there are the "essentialists," who argue that canonical works possess "internal qualities ... [that] constitute the superiority of these works and earn them their canonical status" (3). While aligning

himself with those who believe that canonicity is created, not intrinsic, Javitch notes that

their arguments tend to lack sufficient historical specificity and corroboration. After all, if one maintains that canonicity is conferred upon literary texts and is not automatically earned by them, one should be able to indicate the specific cultural processes that bring about the canonization of these works. (3)

Accordingly, Javitch sets out in *Proclaiming a Classic* to define the process by which one Italian Renaissance poem, Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso*, achieved canonicity. While Javitch makes no claims to developing a "theory of canon formation" (5) from the experience of the *Furioso* alone, he nevertheless does point out that many of the processes by which the poem attained the status of a classic are typical of the processes of canonization that have operated with countless other early modern texts. Moreover, his methodology contains far-reaching implications both for literary criticism generally and for the study of canon formation that currently absorbs many scholars.

Particularly significant in the case of the *Furioso* were the debates that raged for several decades about whether the poem was an epic or a romance, and specifically, whether Ariosto in writing the *Furioso* had adhered to the classical rules of composition described by Aristotle and exemplified in Homer and Virgil. These debates, as Javitch persuasively demonstrates, came to reflect the critics' own cultural and literary agendas, and we can ultimately best understand the critical commentaries on the *Furioso* if we read them as the authors' attempts either to promote or resist evolving literary forms. Javitch states in his Introduction that he will not be examining internal features of the *Furioso* or speculating on which of those features may have contributed to the poem's ongoing popularity, and that he focusses instead on "how sixteenth-century readers interpreted and manipulated the text in their efforts to establish its poetic aristocracy" (4).

Javitch divides his subject into eight chapters along with a brief Introduction and Conclusion. In the first two chapters, "The Success of *Orlando Furioso* in the Sixteenth Century" and "The Legitimation of *Orlando Furioso*," Javitch establishes the poem's critical success (which dates from its second edition in 1521) and discusses the early defenses of the *Furioso*. This is perhaps the appropriate place to remark that I have always found the intricacies and byzantine plot twists of Ariosto's poem to be far easier to follow, and far less impenetrable than most of the sixteenth-century commentaries on the poem. The body of commentary and criticism on the *Furioso* is extraordinarily large; no other sixteenth-century vernacular text generated such a volume of criticism. Javitch's analyses of these commentaries, in these and subsequent chapters, is nothing short of

masterful. He brings to bear a scholarship that is truly impressive in its scope, encompassing as it does everything from Venetian publishers and the complexities of the printing trade to Renaissance neo-Aristotelianism and the ways in which Ariosto's detractors and defenders made use of it.

In the first two chapters, Javitch examines the early efforts at legitimizing the *Furioso* undertaken by Venetian publishers and editors (such as Valvassori, Ruscelli, and Dolce). He discusses the first defenses of the poem by Fornari, Giraldi, and Pigna, and the contribution that each defense made to the evolving debate about the poem's status as a classic. I must confess that before reading Javitch's study, these defenses had always seemed confusingly, even tiresomely, similar to me, but as Javitch's detailed and fascinating examinations make clear, each author had, in fact, a distinct vision of Ariosto's text that he wished to promulgate and this vision guides each defense. Javitch states in his Introduction that "the responses [to the poem] ... were ... the product of the different agendas and needs of the poem's various readers" (5), and his thorough analyses of these early texts and his careful elucidations reveal those agendas more clearly than has ever been done before.

In chapter three, "Commentaries on Imitations in *Orlando Furioso*," and chapter five, "Critical responses to Narrative Discontinuity in *Orlando Furioso*," Javitch focusses on critical treatment of the two major aspects of the *Furioso* to which detractors most often pointed: Ariosto's supposed divergence from classical literary models and his tendency toward interruption of and digression from his narrative. Javitch examines in detail the commentaries on Ariosto's imitations by Dolce, who emphasizes the poet's Latin models (Virgil, of course, but also, in a new emphasis, Statius) and Lavezuola, who takes the significant step of stressing Ariosto's imitations of Dante, Boccaccio, and other Italian vernacular poets. Javitch discusses some unforeseen consequences of these commentaries, for example that Lavezuola's writings unintentionally lent support to the accusations that Ariosto's imitations were too varied and mixed and contributed to his unorthodox style, which combined high and low subjects and mixed literary models.

The fourth chapter, "Affiliations with Ovid's *Metamorphoses*," provides a fascinating study of the *Furioso*'s evolution as a literary model. In his Introduction, Javitch points out that one clear indication that a text has achieved canonical status is that it becomes a model for other authors. In chapter four, Javitch shows the influence that the *Furioso* exerted upon the two major Italian translations of the *Metamorphoses* published during the sixteenth century: Dolce's *Trasformazioni* (1553) and Giovanni dell'Anguillara's *Metamorfosi* (1561). Both of these translations owed a considerable debt to the *Furioso*, both stylistically, in that each translation

is written in *ottava rima*, and in terms of content. As Javitch demonstrates, one result of these *Furioso*-influenced translations was the legitimization of many of the *Furioso*'s distinguishing stylistic features, including several that had been criticized as inappropriate in a literary work. Moreover, Dolce's and Anguillara's translations served to reveal Ovid's own rejection of certain classical norms and strongly affected subsequent sixteenth- and seventeenth-century perceptions of the *Metamorphoses*.

The remaining chapters concern later attacks and defenses of the *Furioso* and the ways in which the ongoing literary debates continued to evolve. In chapter Six, "Lionardo Salviati's Defense of *Orlando Furioso*," Javitch discusses Salviati's responses to Pellegrino's 1584 attack on the *Furioso*. Javitch shows how by the time of Salviati's defense, the arguments of the neo-Aristotelians against the *Furioso* had paradoxically served to reinforce the poem's increasingly canonical status by prompting supporters to defend the poem for its neoclassical qualities. Chapter seven, "Other Defenses of *Orlando Furioso* in the 1580s," demonstrates how by the 1580's the *Furioso* was being used to defend and justify a variety of manifestations of poetic modernism; in so doing, these later authors often distorted the poem just as severely as earlier defenders had done in order to illustrate its supposed affinities with the classics. Finally, in chapter eight, Javitch examines "Harington's English Refractions of *Orlando Furioso*" and shows how the process of translation contributed to the poem's canonization by enabling Harington to "domesticate" the poem by actually changing the text. Harington evidently experienced no qualms about rewriting passages of the poem that he deemed potentially troubling to Elizabethan sensibilities, and as Javitch illustrates, Harington's translation provides some of the clearest indicators as to what features of the *Furioso* were likely to problematize the process of its canonization by rewriting or simply omitting those features.

In reading this book one comes to understand not only the evolving critical reception accorded to the *Furioso* over the sixteenth-century, but the ways in which that reception advanced and furthered itself. Javitch is extremely effective in presenting this dialogic, interactive quality of the criticism. He reads these commentaries in entirely new ways, and as a result, he is able to define very accurately indeed the complex literary and cultural process of canonization as it operated in the case of this particular text. I have suggested that Javitch's achievement here carries extensive implications for texts other than Ariosto's poem and, as a Shakespearean, I am fascinated by the model Javitch presents for determining precisely how cultural factors converge to bestow canonicity upon a given text. My only concern about this book is that it may not receive the recognition it deserves; for at a time when lexical obscurity in literary criticism seems increasingly to be accepted as desirable, even necessary, Javitch's simple and elegant prose, and the

clarity of his analyses, seem to belie the complexity of his subject matter, and the major significance of his achievement. (MIRANDA JOHNSON-HADDAD, WASHINGTON, D.C.)

\*BRUNO DAMIANI and BARBARA MUJICA. *Et in Arcadia Ego: Essays on Death in the Pastoral Novel*. Lanham: University Press of America, 1990. 175 pp.

Introduced by prefaces from two distinguished scholars of Spanish pastoral literature, Francisco López Estrada and Elías L. Rivers, Damiani and Mujica's *Et in Arcadia Ego* is a volume of six essays, each concerned with the presence of death in one of the major works of European pastoral fiction: Sannazaro's *Arcadia* (Italy, 1485-1504), Bernardim Ribeiro's *Menina e moça* (Portugal, 1554), Jorge de Montemayor's *Diana* (Spain, 1559), Cervantes' *Galatea* (Spain, 1585), Sir Philip Sidney's *Arcadia* (England, 1577-86), and Honoré d'Urfé's *Astrée* (France, 1610-27). Their corpus is evidently representative of the genre that attained considerable popularity throughout Europe during its heyday in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but the authors have not undertaken to write either a history or a comparative study of the genre from the perspective of the presence and evolution within it of the concept of death. Although some comparisons are drawn, each work is studied independently of the others, using an approach that has both advantages and drawbacks.

On the positive side, careful scrutiny of each of the novels discussed has yielded considerable information about the different forms in which death is represented in pastoral fiction, the meanings attached to these forms, and the use of death as a metaphor for the condition of the suffering lover. However, the approach adopted also gives *Et in Arcadia Ego* a somewhat encyclopedic character, with references to death or its representation thematically organized in each essay. For example, the chapter on Montemayor's *Diana* is presented under the following headings: "The Rhetoric of Death", "The Desire for Death", "Symbols of Death", "Illusion and Reality of Death", "Tombs", and "Artistic and Didactic Functions of Death". In some instances, as in the commentary on Sidney's *Arcadia*, where the images of death and their meaning shift with changes in narrative modes, the authors attempt to use the motif as a way of venturing into a general interpretation of the structure of the novel and its contents, but in other cases, most notably in the chapter on Sannazaro's *Arcadia*, the catalogue of references results in a rather fragmented commentary and an equally fragmented view of the novels discussed.

The essays by Damiani and Mujica provide detailed commentary on each of the novels studied and demonstrate the extent to which death is a

significant presence in pastoral fiction, but they lack a broader perspective that would allow death to be studied as a motif used to understand the history of pastoral fiction and its underlying meanings. The authors' approach is partly the result of re-working previously published materials in which an overall view of the pastoral was not relevant, but it also derives from the character of the collaboration between them and the limitations of combining relatively autonomous essays, even if they are all centred on a similar theme. From a certain perspective, *Et in Arcadia Ego* is really a point of departure on which to base a broader study. Having drawn attention to death in the pastoral as an important motif that, as Damiani and Mujica claim in their Introduction (p. 2), had not hitherto been the subject of a general study, what is now needed is a comparative, historical study that would further illuminate the character of the pastoral as literature and its capacity to represent human experience through fiction. (RICHARD A. YOUNG, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

\*THOMAS AUSTIN O'CONNOR. *Myth and Mythology in the Theater of Pedro Calderón de la Barca*. San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1988. 365 + xvi pp.

As Thomas Austin O'Connor notes at the beginning of his Preface (vii), the 1980s "witnessed an explosion in Calderonian criticism in both quantitative and qualitative terms", much of it prompted by the attention drawn to the dramatist and his work during the celebration of the tercentenary of his death in 1981. While O'Connor's own book may have emerged from the same context, it also ranks with the best in recent scholarship and, in view of the scope and character of the corpus of plays he has studied, is rather a monumental work.

In an introductory chapter, the early history of the publication of Calderón's plays is reviewed. The chapter is a useful reminder of the many issues to be confronted when approaching the general question of publication in seventeenth century Spain, but, by documenting the process whereby a series of dramatic texts, initially intended as the bases for elaborate court spectacles, gradually acquired a reading public, O'Connor also addresses the central concerns of his enquiry, which are the reading of Calderón rather than the staging of his plays.

The next four chapters, constituting Part I of the book, are also introductory and deal, on the one hand, with the concept of myth and the critical assumptions underlying the author's reading and, on the other, with the themes of Christianity and honour in Calderón. The chapter on myth and that on critical assumptions contain no startling revelations, but O'Connor begins with first principles in both cases and develops a



comprehensive foundation for his subsequent commentaries. With respect to myth, drawing on earlier sources, he makes the important distinction between explicit and implicit myths, that is to say, between stories of the supernatural involving gods and heroes, and the "particular and essential assumptions which give meaning to the life of an individual or a community" (35). With respect to his critical stance, O'Connor draws on hermeneutical principles and practices, relying especially on the writings of Ricoeur as endorsement for an approach that eschews historical reconstruction and is unconcerned with the problem of anachronism. His intention is to "analyze and discuss the myth plays on their own terms, concentrating on the issues they raise and confronting the dilemmas they present" (48).

The themes of Christianity and honour in Calderón, considered in the second and third chapters of Part I, are discussed in the context of commentaries on two plays, *La devoción de la cruz*, as a piece that dramatizes the Christian myth of the Redemption, and *El médico de su honra*, as a work in which, through Calderón's uncompromising representation of the honour code, "the Christian world view has in effect been bracketed" (71). The two plays not only show the presence of explicit and implicit myths in Calderón, but are representations of the mythologies that prevailed in his time and inform his drama as a whole, including both religious and secular plays.

Finally, in Part II of his book, having established the foundations on which to base his commentaries, O'Connor addresses the principal corpus of his study. This consists of seventeen plays each derived from a story taken from Greco-Roman mythology. Each play is discussed separately, but the discussion is organized in six chapters in which the plays are grouped by thematic affinity, as follows: "Myths of Masculine Sexuality and Maturation" (2 plays), "Myths of Masculine Power" (3), "The Myth of the Prudent Male" (2), "The Myth of Love as a Salvific Force" (5), "Myths of Suffering and Destruction" (4), and "The Myth of Human Origins" (1). What emerges is a volume of commentary that, for its uniqueness in relation to the corpus of works studied, extends the range of commentary on Calderón in general. Moreover, by establishing that the myth plays, more than just dramatic configurations of traditional stories undertaken for the purposes of spectacle, are intended to represent human experience at its most transcendental levels, O'Connor has pointed to a direction that those who come after him will certainly want to follow thereby sustaining the momentum in Calderonian scholarship established during the last decade. (RICHARD A. YOUNG, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

\*JOCHEN ACHILLES. *Sheridan Le Fanu und die schauerromantische Tradition: Zur psychologischen Funktion der Motive von Sensationsroman und Geistesgeschichte*. SECL Studies in English and Comparative Literature. Vol. 7. Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 1991. 296 + xii pp.

This is a *Habilitationsschrift* accepted by the University of Mainz in 1989. In this study, Achilles takes into account all novels and tales written by Le Fanu and identifies some of those works by others which influenced Le Fanu's writings. Achilles' main thesis is that Le Fanu's place in the history of English literature is to be found somewhere between the Gothic and the psychological novel. Achilles wastes little time looking for autobiographical elements in Le Fanu's novels and tales, nor does he put much stress on the novelist's Irish background.

Students of English literature are usually familiar with "Carmilia," one of the world's best known vampire tales, and with *Uncle Silas: A Tale of Bartram-Haugh*, a classic damsel-in-distress novel. Le Fanu's other twelve novels are less known — in spite of several recent reprints and the collected edition of 1977.

In the introduction, Achilles sums up the little that is known about Le Fanu's life and points out some characteristic aspects of his work: the "duale Aufbau" and the "Verdrängungsdynamik der Erzählstruktur." In a second part, Achilles analyses and interprets — one by one — the most important works of English Gothic literature: Horace Walpole's *Castle of Otranto*, William Beckford's *Vathek*, Matthew Gregory Lewis' *The Monk*, Ann Radcliffe's *The Italian*, Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, William Godwin's *Caleb Williams*, and Wilkie Collins's *The Woman in White*. Part three is devoted to the tales of Le Fanu, part four to the novels. There is a "Zusammenfassung" in German and an "Abstract" in English, followed by an extensive bibliography and an index. We learn with surprise that no fewer than six volumes (two novels, four anthologies with stories) have been published in German translation since 1977.

While Achilles does not expect the reader to be familiar with all of Le Fanu's works, he does not give synopses and refers to the contents of the tales and novels in a more or less haphazard way. He is more specific in cases where Le Fanu took the plot of an early story and expanded it into a novel.

Having read Achilles's book, the reader is grateful for an informative, readable and well-balanced study, but he also asks himself: Is Le Fanu really worth the effort? Let us look at *Uncle Silas*: we are meant to tremble with fear for the life of Maud Ruthyn and hate the evil uncle and his nephew. But do we? If an intelligent person does all that can reasonably be expected of him/her and things still go wrong, then we are confronted by tragedy: we

feel pity and we are more or less deeply moved. But if a person's suffering is the result of stupidity and lack of imagination, if the person lacks courage and brains, then we feel no pity, rather anger and disgust. This would be the case were we to watch an ancient western movie in which the hero's future wife stands by, wringing her hands, while her future husband is being knocked senseless by some guy in a black hat. The idea that she could snatch the beer bottle from the table in front of her and lambast the villain never dawns on her brain. A modern reader will feel the same distaste for the heroine of *Uncle Silas*. She, by the way, does tell her own story, but is so passive, so ignorant about the facts of life, so "good," and so enormously stupid that the reader would not mind if Uncle Silas did get the upper hand — at least Uncle Silas knows the value of money and is capable of working out plans to get it. Maud Ruthyn, on the other hand, is content to faint once a day, and her friends are so helpless and naive that they have no chance against Silas. By accident and/or with the help of God, the evil government drinks the sleeping potion, goes to sleep in the wrong bed and is then killed instead of Maud. If evil is punished in the end, then it is without the help of the heroine and her allies.

Le Fanu's texts can be read today as social documents, but not as works of art. Compared to Jane Austen's *Emma* (1816), Maud Ruthyn (1865) seems a relict of an earlier century, a step back into those dark ages when women were pretty objects at the beck and call of superior men — with no personality of their own, with little schooling and no intelligence, and utterly without soul. (ARMIN ARNOLD, HÖHERE WIRTSCHAFTS- UND VERWALTUNGSSCHULE, OLTEN)

\*ANNY SADRI. *Dickens ou le roman-théâtre*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1992. 219 pp.

Les affinités de Dickens avec le théâtre continuent de fasciner les exégètes anglais et nord-américains du romancier victorien et de son oeuvre, à preuve le colloque organisé en 1986 par l'université du Texas à Austin sur le thème de "The Dickens Theatre" et dont les Actes ont été publiés en 1989 sous le titre de *Dramatic Dickens* (éd. Carol Hanbery MacKay); jamais cependant on n'en avait sondé toutes les potentialités avec autant de finesse et de brio que vient de le faire Anny Sadrin en offrant aux lecteurs francophones son *Dickens ou le roman-théâtre*. Il est permis de se réjouir que Béatrice Didier, qui dirige la collection "Puf écrivains" aux Presses Universitaires de France, ait songé à donner place à de grands auteurs étrangers aux côtés de tous les noms illustres de la littérature française qui figurent au palmarès de la collection et que, pour ce faire, elle se soit adressée à l'une des plus éminentes spécialistes françaises de Dickens. Sadrin est professeur de langue

et de littérature anglaises à l'Université de Bourgogne. Elle a soutenu il y a quelques années une thèse magistrale sur Dickens (*L'Etre et l'avoir dans les romans de Charles Dickens*, Paris, Didier-Érudition, 1985, à paraître en version anglaise à Cambridge University Press. Elle est aussi l'auteur d'une étude en anglais de *Great Expectations*, Londres, Unwin Hyman, 1988). Elle connaît bien la correspondance de Dickens qu'elle met à profit dans son développement en en traduisant elle-même de larges extraits. Bref, elle nous fait partager sa connaissance approfondie du romancier anglais dans un ouvrage aux proportions certes plus modestes que celles d'une thèse d'état mais qui, pour être concis, n'en est pas moins d'une densité et d'une subtilité exemplaires. Avec elle, la triade Dickens/roman/théâtre est abordée avec une intelligence audacieuse soutenue par une formation critique admirable. Un auteur canonisé de longue date — et étrangement momifié dans l'imaginaire des petits Français de ma génération — se révèle à tout prendre d'une perturbante modernité.

La thèse repose sur une observation liminaire paradoxale: "le roman dickensien a la couleur du théâtre, il en a la magie, la présence, l'immédiateté, la vivacité et l'affectation, la bouffonnerie et l'intensité dramatique, mais ce n'est pas du théâtre. Rien, ou presque, n'est en direct: la présence est re-présentée, l'immédiateté est médiatisée" (24). C'est justement le "non-dialogué de ces textes" que Sadrin va interroger afin de revisiter un théâtre qui a "cette particularité tout à fait exceptionnelle d'avoir une énorme distribution et d'employer un seul acteur" (36). Séduite par la rhétorique dramaturgique de son histrion britannique, Sadrin compose son ouvrage avec la dextérité d'un meneur de jeu attentif à la cohérence interne de son spectacle. Le livre s'ouvre sur un "[p]rologue" (9-37) qui évoque les multiples facettes des amours de Charles Dickens avec le théâtre; puis l'enquête se joue en trois actes et onze tableaux. Acte I: "Le narrateur en saltimbanque" (39-105). Pour débusquer le moi pluriel d'une voix narrative complexe, Sadrin nous convie d'abord à un "[p]etit défilé des monstres de textes" (39-53) à seule fin d'évacuer le concept caduc d'un narrateur au singulier; puis, elle ouvre les portes de *La Maison d'Après-Vent* pour cerner certaines des postures les plus équivoques d'une focalisation narrative protéiforme: "*Bleak House*. Masculin/Féminin ou la double narration" (54-89); Outre une démonstration pénétrante du "remarquable travail d'identification" accompli par Dickens, — "Charlotte Dickens"! — dans ce roman peu connu du public francophone, on trouvera dans ce chapitre des analyses ponctuelles très stimulantes sur l'énonciation de l'altérité et de la temporalité qui prennent en compte une approche contrastive fort pertinente de certaines données grammaticales anglaises et françaises. Cette première partie se clot sur "*A Tale of Two Cities*. Discours indirects" (90-105) qui permet à l'auteur, tout en mettant en lumière "la théâtralité

d'intention et de conception" du récit de l'*Histoire de deux villes*, de nous aider à être à l'écoute d'une narration polyphonique qui se dérobe de façon souvent déroutante : "Nous ne sommes pas conviés au spectacle de l'histoire mais au spectacle d'une écriture" (94).

À l'acte II, "L'acteur et son double" (107-57), l'éclatement narratif dont il vient d'être fait constat va être traqué dans ses retranchements les plus dramaturgiques et les plus intimes; d'abord dans "David Héros" (109-29), pages dans lesquelles on découvre comment "ayant ... renoncé à écrire ses 'Confessions', Dickens choisit, avec *David Copperfield* de romancer ses confidences" (128). Puis on assiste à "*Great Expectations*, tragi-comédie des méprises" (130-152). "*Our Mutual Friend* [nous présente] des [A]cteurs en quête de personnages" (139-52) tandis que le rideau tombe sur "Sydney Carton comédien paradoxal" (153-57) et que nous restons comme étourdis devant un Dickens "qui a toujours courtoisé dans l'écriture l'incertitude ontologique" (139).

L'Acte III, "Du spéculaire au spectaculaire" (159-218) nous entraîne dans l'univers des signes: "Accessoires" (161-82), en l'occurrence le miroir, "l'agent secret du narrateur et l'emblème de l'imposture" (164); le miroir "accessoire nécessaire" (168), les portraits, autant de figures rhétoriques qui hantent la création dickensienne et dont Sadrin sonde le message symbolique, enquête qu'elle poursuit et combine avec la métaphore du banquet dans "Mises en scène" (183-96), en se tournant cette fois vers *Our Mutual Friend*, (*Notre ami commun*), "roman très bunelien" (189) par le fantasmagorique hallucinant et macabre qui s'y déploie. Sadrin s'appuie en général sur les traductions de la Bibliothèque de la Pléiade mais dans ces pages où prime le décodage textuel, elle retraduit de grands pans de roman pour mieux faire sentir les connexions essentielles qui ont été escamotées par certains traducteurs; elle remet ainsi en question la fameuse "philosophie de Noël" de l'écrivain, déconstruction dont Dickens émerge avec son lot de cruauté et d'instincts sacrilèges. La représentation se termine avec "L'école du spectateur" (197-205) où Sadrin spéculé sur une influence possible de Pixérécourt, le maître français du mélodrame; elle pose le problème que s'est posé Dickens lui-même de l'engagement du lecteur/spectateur abordé par le biais de certaines stratégies narratives préfigurant la théorie brechtienne de la distanciation et engendrant ce qu'elle appellera plus loin "l'effet Woody Allen" (214). Sur spectacle du monde, rôde l'ombre de celui qui fut un roman-théâtre et qui "a semé dans nos esprits une durable perplexité" (218). Sadrin se réfère certes à l'oeuvre dans son ensemble; toutefois, elle privilégie certains textes beaucoup moins connus des francophones — *David Copperfield* excepté — que ne le sont *Olivier Twist* ou *Le Grillon du foyer*. C'est un aspect non négligeable de son témoignage. L'essai est très soigneusement annoté sans

que la lecture en soit pour autant alourdie; il est écrit dans un style alerte, précis, élégant, imagé, dont les tournures volontiers ludiques communiquent le vertige d'une pensée hardie et d'une intuition critique qui tiennent de l'équilibrisme.

Grâce à Sadrin et à son écriture-spectacle, des générations de lecteurs et de lectrices francophones vont jeter un regard véritablement neuf sur cet "illusionniste" de la fiction, cet "homme orchestre, protégé de l'avant-scène" (30) qui s'avère appartenir au domaine de l'irréel alors qu'on le croyait réaliste. Comparatistes férus de théorie littéraire, passionnés d'intertextualité, intrigués par la réception d'une oeuvre médiatisée par la traduction, donc nécessairement tangentielle, sémioticiens sollicités par les relations que la fiction romanesque entretient avec les autres genres littéraires et avec les arts du spectacle, tous trouveront inspiration et matière à réflexion dans ce livre brillant. (NICOLE MALLET, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

\*KARL ERICH GRÖZINGER. *Kafka und die Kabbala: Das Jüdische im Werk und Denken von Franz Kafka*. Frankfurt/Main: Eichborn Verlag, 1992. 267 pp.

"Ich will den Kafkalesern erst einmal die Augen öffnen für das, was unter der Oberfläche von Kafkas Texten an Jüdischem verborgen liegt" (13). This hermeneutic quest to uncover hidden Jewish elements in Kafka's texts and to challenge and convince "die Skeptiker oder Zögerer" (25) are central concerns in Karl Erich Grözinger's study. His overall argument is convincing indeed: the links between Kafka and mystic themes are numerous and the discussion is perceptive. Nonetheless, the eyes of the present reader were never opened to the general truth of Kafka's essential "Jewishness," nor to the claim that without a knowledge of the Kabbala one cannot understand Kafka, as is stated on the cover of the book: "Karl E. Grözinger ist als erstem der wissenschaftliche Nachweis gelungen, daß Gerschom Scholem's geniale Vermutung berechtigt war, man könne Kafkas Werk ohne die jüdische Mystik, die Kabbala, nicht verstehen." The main problems with Grözinger's study are the lack of scholarly research undertaken on Kafka, the resulting lack of a scholarly foundation for many of his assertions, and finally the religious orientation of his argument which prevents him from perceiving the humorous and ironic tone in many of Kafka's texts.

To begin with, Grözinger's goal, "Ich will den Kafkalesern erst einmal die Augen öffnen," ignores the fact that Franz Kafka's relation to Judaism is not altogether a new insight. Scholars in Italy, France, England, the USA and Canada have frequently addressed Kafka's Judaism, the most recent studies being Giuliano Baioni's *Kafka: letteratura et ebraismo* (1984), Ritchie



Robertson's *Kafka* (1985), Jean Jofen's *The Jewish Mystic in Kafka* (1987), Walter A. Strauss' *On the Threshold of a New Kabbalah: Kafka's Later Tales* (1988), and Régine Robin's *Kafka* (1989). None of these books are mentioned by Grözingen. As for articles, apart from those included in Grözingen's previous edition *Kafka und das Judentum* (1987), only two further articles on Kafka and Judaism are mentioned: one by Evelyn T. Beck (1970), the other by E. R. Steinberg (1962). Nevertheless, many articles on this subject have appeared since 1970. In Germany, too, Ulf Abraham (1983) related the "Türhütermotiv" in *Der Proceß* to a story in the Midrash (which is not kabbalistic), but Grözingen never mentions Abraham. Finally, Grözingen uses an old 1970 edition of Kafka's *Briefe an Milena* and seems to be unaware of Jürgen Born's and Michael Müller's recent 1986 edition which is particularly important for the question of Kafka's Judaism because it contains relevant and previously unpublished material.

Rather, the value of Grözingen's study lies within the larger ideological context of German post-war scholarship where, as a result of the Nazi atrocities, scholars have generally felt uncomfortable dealing with Jewish themes. Grözingen criticizes German Kafka scholars for failing to address Kafka's Judaism and attributes it to their lack of knowledge. His goal is modest, "ich als Judaist möchte zuallererst nur den jüdischen Hintergrund ... bereitstellen" (12). Coming from a *Judaist*, Grözingen's discussion of Jewish mysticism is more solid and scholarly than is the background information in previous books on Kafka and Judaism. In addition, many mystic texts are provided in translation, and Grözingen thereby establishes some striking parallels between Kafka's texts and those of the Jewish mystic tradition. Particularly perceptive is the chapter on Kafka's animal metamorphoses, "Die Tiergeschichten" (114-44). Here, Grözingen's motivation for this study comes across as well when he points out a connection between Hasidic themes and post-war German concerns: "Das Leben der vorigen Generationen, das als hybride Tiergestalt in die eigene Gegenwart hereinreicht, verpflichtet den Menschen zur erlösenden Tat. – Ein Verständnis der Erzählung, das gerade in Deutschland eine schmerzliche Aktualität besitzt" (134). The themes of transgression, guilt, punishment and redemption in these Hasidic tales fit well into the framework of post-war guilt feelings for the historical crimes of the previous generation. As an attempt to redeem the unredeemable German past, Grözingen's study deserves highlighting in the present climate of growing racism in reunified Germany.

The book's weakness is its lack of scholarly proof. Grözingen's criticism of German Kafka scholars, "die meisten Autoren ... beschränken sich auf Allgemeinplätze oder gehen von einem Bild des Judentums aus, welches nicht im entferntesten dem von Kafkas jüdischer Umgebung entspricht" (7)

is ultimately ironic because he himself never attempts to recreate Kafka's Jewish environment either. Thus, there is no sufficient scholarly evidence for his overall claim, "Die Texte Kafkas ... offenbaren ein erstaunlich hohes Maß an jüdischem Wissen, das sich Kafka außer eigener Lektüre in Gesprächen mit Freunden, in der Familie und aus der Beobachtung des Prager jüdischen Lebens insbesondere in der Synagoge erworben hat" (9-10). Beginning with the synagogues, Grözingen makes clear that he does not mean "die korrekten rabbinisch-halachischen Regeln der Orthodoxie und der philosophisch-theologischen Spekulation, sondern ein Wissen, das man eine popularisierte Kabbala und von ihr beeinflusstes jüdisches Brauchtum nennen mag" (10). Supposedly, this popularised Kabbala entered the synagogues "durch eine Unzahl volkstümlicher Moralbücher und Homiliensammlungen ... welche vom einfachen Juden, vor allem aber von den Predigern in den Synagogen und Lehrhäusern zur Vorbereitung ihrer Lehrreden studiert wurden" (14). No proof is provided.

Moreover, in the little we hear about Kafka's family, Grözingen exaggerates their observance of religious holidays by taking certain remarks literally without contextualizing them. For instance, he quotes the comment Kafka's mother made to Felice, Kafka's fiancée, on the occasion of Yom Kippur: "Wir hielten die jüdischen Feiertage wie rechte Juden. Neujahr hatten wir beide Tage das Geschäft gesperrt und gestern am Versöhnungstag haben wir gefastet und fleißig gebetet" (8.10.1916). Do we not have to reflect on this comment critically? Is it not likely that Kafka's mother was trying to reassure Felice that the family was indeed observing the holidays? Unless there had been some doubt as to the matter, there would have been no need to mention this fact. Similarly, in the "evidence" which follows, Grözingen misuses the source text. Kafka's remark to Felice, "Ich habe übrigens kaum zuhause ein Wort über Neujahr gesagt und Dir gar nichts, ganz entsprechend der Bedeutungslosigkeit, welche das Datum jetzt für mich hat" (11.10.1916) is followed by Grözingen's comment: "(Man beachte das 'jetzt!')" [38]. Actually, the context is that Felice's mother had expected a New Year's card, Kafka had not sent one, and is now justifying himself to Felice, insisting that he would have never sent one, no matter what, and ending his letter with "Liebste, nimm mich so wie ich bin." Why is Grözingen ignoring the specific context? It is not just an oversight, because Max Brod added a footnote to the letter to make the context clear.

As for Kafka's discussions and activities with friends, Grözingen has nothing to say about Felix Weltsch, Oscar Baum, Friedrich Thieberger, Hugo Bergmann and barely mentions Max Brod. Instead, he focuses on Georg Langer, Kafka's "Gewährsmann in chasidica und kabbalistica" (25). Grözingen could have mentioned that Langer taught Kafka and Brod Hebrew in 1921, which was accompanied by discussions of mysticism.

Hartmut Binder pointed this out as early as 1967, yet there is no mention of Binder's article. In addition, we know that Kafka knew Langer in 1915. However, Grözinger speculates that Kafka quite likely met Langer before 1915 (41). This would indeed nicely explain the kabbalistic imagery in *Der Prozeß*, in particular the doorkeeper thematic of "Before the Law" which was written in December 1914. But the assertion cannot be proven. Instead, it is just as likely that Kafka knew kabbalistic imagery through his contact with the Yiddish actors in 1911/12 or through his reading of the Zionist newspaper *Selbstwehr*, which frequently included popular Hasidic material. Grözinger also takes for granted that Kafka was familiar with the content of the books Langer read when he became a Hasid in 1913. These books are *Reshit Chochmah* (The Beginning of Wisdom) by the cabalist Elijahah de Vidas (late seventeenth century), as well as *Noam Elimelech* (*The Joys of Elimelech*) by Elimelech of Lisensk (1717-1787), a follower of the famous Hasidic rabbi Dov Ber of Mesritch (1710-1772), who was known to Kafka later by the name "der große Maggid." Since it can be shown that Kafka knew kabbalistic motifs from Hasidic tales and folklore, there is no need to go back to mystic sermons that Kafka may or may not have been familiar with.

At least at present, we have no proof that the Hasidic texts cited by Grözinger were "allesamt bekannt" (209) to Kafka. Grözinger does not seem to have consulted Hartmut Binder's *Kafka-Handbuch*, Jürgen Born's *Kafka's Handbibliothek* (1990), nor Klaus Wagenbach's old unverified list of Kafka's library in *Franz Kafka: Eine Biographie seiner Jugend* (1958). He mentions only one book that Kafka read, Martin Buber's *Der große Maggid*, and only one which Kafka owned, *Die Sagen der Juden* by Alexander Eliasberg – and here he is relying on second-hand evidence since the information is taken from a study by H.D. Zimmermann. In the case of *Der große Maggid*, Grözinger did not even examine the content of this edition, which includes evidence to support his claim. Furthermore, the Hasidic tales which Kafka read in *Das jüdische Echo* in 1917 are very important for Grözinger's argument, but he never identifies these tales (they were written by Chaim Bloch) and again resorts to speculation, "und wohl aus weiteren der von ihm so geliebten chasidischen Geschichten ... kannte Kafka die Rolle solcher Rettergestalten im jüdischen Volk" (175). There are indeed many "Rettergestalten" in the tales Kafka knew; it is frustrating that Grözinger provides no proof.

Finally, the increasingly religious orientation of Grözinger's Kafka strikes me as misleading. A textual analysis of the Hasidic texts and Kafka's texts would have revealed Kafka's ironic transformations of the mystic source texts. However, Grözinger uses the thematic parallels between Kafka's texts and popular kabbalistic thought as a foundation for his main argument

which consists in an affirmative reading of Kafka: "Vor diesem Hintergrund ist kein Grund dafür gegeben, in Kafkas Prosa Nihilismus zu suchen. Das Wahrnehmen und Ernstnehmen des Ausgeliefertseins an dieses Gericht ist das Wahrnehmen Gottes und seiner Herrschaft" (219). Kafka's dictum, "Schreiben als Form des Gebets" thereby becomes an indication of "Kafkas Auffassung von der Sprache, die sich bruchlos in die kabbalistische Lehre von den Gottesnamen und dem Alphabet als den Elementen der göttlichen Schöpfersprache einfügt. An ihr hat der Mensch als Träger eines Namens, insbesondere als sprechendes und betendes Wesen Teil" (223; 168). Grözinger comes to the conclusion, "Die Verzweiflungstat des Menschen, an einen persönlichen Gott zu glauben ... gewinnt für Kafka somit dennoch einen positiven Sinn" (210).

Even though Grözinger admits that Kafka's kabbalistic world feeling is in a "Krise," this is seen as consistent within the context of these mystic texts which represent a fine line between skepticism and belief. The religious framework of these tales ensured that skepticism was always followed by religious affirmation. But can this same pattern really be applied to Kafka? What speaks against this is that Grözinger misses the irony in Kafka entirely. For instance, he cites Kafka's remark "Alt-Neu-Synagoge gestern. Kol Nidre. Gedämpftes Börsengemurmel. Im Vorraum Büche mit der Aufschrift: Milde Gaben im Stillen besänftigen den Unwillen." At this point Grözinger adds the serious note, "[natürlich der himmlischen Richter, K.E.G.J.]" The whole context, however, puts Kafka's remarks into an ironic light.

In addition, on the occasion of Kafka's visits to Hasidic rabbis in 1915 and 1916, Grözinger believes Kafka went "dieses Zuhause aufzusuchen" (which had suggested itself to him through his reading of Hasidic tales) and speculates "Kafka hat solche Gelegenheiten offenbar genutzt, echte hasidische Erzählungen kennenzulernen" (101). He leaves out Kafka's response to the first visit which reveals that the surrounding religiosity left him cold: Brod reports Kafka as saying, "Genau genommen war es etwa so wie bei einem wilden afrikanischen Volksstamm. Krasser Aberglaube" (*Über Franz Kafka* 137). It is only much later that Grözinger acknowledges this statement, but by now he has concluded: "Aus all dem darf man schließen, daß Kafka vom wahren Wesen der osteuropäischen Wundermänner ... zutreffende Kenntnisse hatte ... – wenn letztere ihn ... auch zu dem verächtlichen Urteil des 'krassen Aberglaubens' geführt hatte" (180). However, in view of the fact that Kafka is just as skeptical and ironic on his second visit to a Hasidic rabbi, there are far too many "zwar ... aber," "wenn ... auch," "vielleicht," "offenbar" and "scheint" in Grözinger's argument to be convincing, particularly since he ignores Kafka's own skepticism, "trotz Kafkas Skepsis" (208).

Ironically, Grözinger objects to Bert Nagel's statement "Kafka's Gott ist noch der richtende und strafende Gott des alten Testaments" (8) by criticizing this "irrigé Auffassung, das Judentum hätte sich in seiner zweitausendjährigen nachbiblischen Geschichte nicht verändert" (8). Yet, he himself ignores the difference between religious thought in earlier periods and Kafka's modern response to it. Rather, Grözinger falls back on essentialist arguments ("Franz Kafka ... war Jude" [7], "Kafka denkt jüdisch. Dies ist ohne Vorbehalte festzustellen" [217]) and shows himself unable to perceive the humour and irony which characterize Kafka's transformations of the religious traditions of the past. Kafka's humorously ironic attitude is also not directed towards the Jewish tradition alone, as can be seen in his response to a quotation from the New Testament in the German translation of Leo Tolstoy's novel *Krajčerova Sonata* (*Die Kreuzersonate*). Here, the saying, "Ich aber sage euch: wer ein Weib anseheth, ihrer zu begehren, der hat schon mit ihr die Ehe gebrochen in seinem Herzen. (Matth. V 28)" is followed by an asterisk in Kafka's handwriting. Kafka has scribbled the following rejoinder at the bottom of the page, in which he counters the seriousness of the biblical quotation through a humorous portrayal of contemporary sexism and stereotypical behaviour:

Dieses Motto hat er noch nicht gekannt:  
Auf der Straße ein Dämchen, ein reizendes, geht  
und der männliche Kennerblick gleich sie erspäht  
und die Dame hat gleichfalls rapid es gesehen  
wie der männliche Kenner beginnt nachzugehen.

Are these the words of a pious man? Any attempt to place Kafka's evident interest in Judaism, and particularly in the mystic tradition, into a religious framework must take his ironic humour into account. (IRIS M. BRUCE, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA)

\*PATRICK O'NEILL. *The Comedy of Entropy: Humour/Narrative/Reading*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1990. 328 + 15 pp. CDN \$50.00

Defined as "a form of humour whose primary characteristic is its own awareness of its status as essentially *decentered* discourse" (xiii), "entropic comedy" functions in O'Neill's book as a broad cultural epistème that cuts across three different areas of study: a) intellectual history; b) narrative theory; c) twentieth-century fiction. The study of the emergence and rise of a modern anti-authoritarian form of humor is organized into three loosely connected parts that address different audiences—humor theorists, narratologists, and literary critics — "each of them potentially impatient with the excessive interest of the author in the other two" (xiv). O'Neill's book

is best served by a reader who shares its interrelated interests in epistemology, critical theory and narratology, but — in true entropic spirit — it can also be approached through a single concern with, say, the comparative poetics of humor.

The first part, entitled "Contexts: Entropy and Humor," moves from examples of the gradual weakening of the "Faustian quest" in Western literatures, to a comprehensive discussion of "entropy" as one of the chief paradigms of modernity. The main focus here is not on the conceptual meaning of entropy (other recent studies — LeClair's *Art of Excess*, Hayles's *Chaos Bound*, Paulson's *The Noise of Culture* — provide more rigorous overviews of the thermodynamic and informational definitions of entropy), but on its cultural application as a "metaphor for the crumbling of ordered systems, the breakdown of traditional perceptions of reality, the erosion of certainty" (8). After recapping somewhat didactically the parallel manifestations of cultural entropy, O'Neill argues that the history of science can be summed up as a plot of "abandonment of positions once judged impregnable for new positions previously held to be ludicrously mistaken" (13). The evolution of human knowledge has been traditionally represented as a "linear progression from ... an originary state of untroubled order and authority ... to a fallen state of rampant disorder rapidly approaching maximum entropy." The counter-narrative proposed by O'Neill, illustrating the mode of entropic comedy rather than that of tragedy, shows "the history of scientific knowledge ... to be entirely the result of the exploitation of this tragically perceived loss of certainty, the rewriting of maps once regarded as corresponding to an undisputable reality" (13).

Humor and narrative literature have also profited from this "exploitation of uncertainty," noise and randomness, avoiding thereby the deadening state of total order or total chaos (10). What O'Neill calls "entropic humor" results from an interplay of entropic modes of thought with various expressive media. While some of its manifestations are already familiar to theorists of "black humor," O'Neill's reconceptualization has several advantages: it replaces the term "black humor," which for many readers denotes a chiefly American phenomenon of the 1960's, with a broader concept that spans several Western and Central European cultures, extending its roots back to the eighteenth century when the erosion of confidence in the old authoritative value systems started. This concept reconnects literature to the larger cultural-paradigm of entropic humor from the formulation of a cross-cultural paradigm of entropic humor from the "disturbingly elastic range of heterogeneous connotations" in each individual culture (32).

The review of historical theories of laughter, humor, and wit (Chapter two) highlights the gradual shift in cultural norms that led to the



replacement of the "superiority theory" of laughter with other concepts emphasizing incongruity (42-43), the link with the transcendental (43-44), or "relief" from tension and constraint (45). All of these macrotheories of humor draw on contrast which "is always associated with an implicit or explicit notion of order" (46); but while the more traditional theories emphasize "the prevented disruption of order," entropic humor emerges precisely "when the gap between the real and the ideal begins to be perceived as extreme, when humour begins to be self-consciously aware of the futility of its own gestures towards reconciliation of opposites" (49). The "humour of entropy" can thus be regarded both as a "crisis of humour," and as a paradigmatic alternative to the "humour of order." What is not very clear from the typology proposed by O'Neill is whether these modes should be viewed synchronically, as competing possibilities within the same system; or diachronically, as the terms that mark an evolutionary curve from order to "rejection of all norms" and the "celebration of parodied norms" in "self-reflective humor about humour" (50). Chapter three reminds us that the two faces of our "bisociative" consciousness, tragedy and comedy, merge in the postmodern modes of the "serio-comic" and parodic humor; at the same time, however, this chapter continues to suggest an evolutionary narrative that moves somewhat linearly from the "seriousness" of realism to the skeptical comedy of modernism and the "flaunted disengagement" of postmodernism (61-63). O'Neill's book cannot reconcile these different accounts, one synchronic-typological, the other evolutionary, constructing a "two-faced telling of the tale."

The problem of narration is thus intertwined with that of humor and entropy, both in O'Neill's analysis, and in his own method. Part two, "Prefaces: Humour and Narrative," carefully stages the main narratological argument in detours through game theory and the philosophy of possible worlds. On their model, O'Neill constructs a phenomenological diagram of humorous response which explains how potential incongruity is actualized and trans-formed into a potential humorous situation which is in turn actualized as humorous experience (85). This diagram is then applied to narrative texts which are fertile grounds for the actualization of incongruity and its transformation into humorous pleasure. The nodes of humorous potential are found at the intersection of the various narrative planes (story, text, narration) and between its actants (real writer—implied writer—narrator—narratee—implied reader—real reader). The comic potential is generated not only by incongruity, but also by the proliferation of discursive choices in this "system of nested narrative worlds" (94). As O'Neill explains, "Narrative is lusus in that the narrative discourse always plays with the story, always adopts a particular mode of presentation and arrangement where many other arrangements would have been equally possible." (93) As

"separate products of the same ludic impulse to project fictive possible worlds" (103), narrative discourse and humor are "homologous" discourses, sharing some strategies and goals.

The third part, "Texts: Narrative and Reading," tests these ideas about "the general conceptual reach of the comedy of entropy" (131), studying its "systemic effects" in twelve twentieth-century narratives, arranged in three categories: entropic satire, entropic irony, and entropic parody. Entropic satire (chapter seven) is illustrated with Céline's *Voyage au bout de la nuit*, Heller's *Catch-22*, Grass's *Die Blechtrommel*, and Camus's *L'Étranger*. Much of the analysis follows the plot-and-character relation, with an occasional focus on structure and language. This approach is partly justified by the description of entropic satire as a "relationship of character and story-world [which], for all the possible vagaries of narrative technique involved, is essentially an entirely 'normal,' entirely realist one" (201). But the narratological questions are too sharply separated from the phenomenological ones that concern the realized world of characters and situations. The thematizations of entropy are intertwined with structural-rhetorical choices, particularly in a novel like *L'Étranger* whose introverted mode of entropic satire, by O'Neill's own admission, takes the corruption of the observed world for granted and focuses on the endangered, self-doubting observer.

Chapter eight discusses Kafka's *Der Prozess*, Sartre's *La Nausée*, Beckett's *Wait*, and Pynchon's *Crying of Lot 49* as examples of "entropic irony." The approach is partly modified, since entropic irony is defined as the "'modernist' relationship between character and *discourse*-world, between the character ... as a narrated entity and the narrative instance that shapes that character's being" (201-202). The author highlights better the self-conscious thematization of structural and interpretive problems, the interplay of possible worlds, the formulation and deconstruction of narrative claims. Especially his discussion of Kafka's *Trial*, manages to intermix philosophic, sociocultural and narratological problems, emphasizing the process-oriented and "theatricalized" narration of the novel.

Chapter nine explores four examples of entropic parody: Robbe-Grillet's *La Maison de rendez-vous*, Handke's *Die Hornissen*, Nabokov's *Pale Fire* and Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*. As a "comedy of narration," entropic parody deemphasizes the character and world relation (though one of its subtypes is "character-based," but only in the sense that it depends on the ludic manipulation of character), foregrounding instead the process of narrative construction (in the language-based type) and interpretive "mediacy" (in the reader-oriented type). O'Neill's analysis is more self-consciously aware in this chapter of the textual and ideological "resistances" that undermine the critic's effort of totalization. The reader (mostly a metaphoric, ideal one) is

evoked in an effort to highlight the process of gradual textual discovery, the fleshing out of contradictory narrative possibilities. Still, the theoretical model (metafictional parody) under which these innovative novels are evaluated is too narrow and formalistic. Intent on identifying those procedures which block narration, plunging the "naïve reader" of a "realistic bent" into a "hermeneutic quagmire" (272), O'Neill neglects the sociocultural implications of, say, the questions of identity and authorship in *Pale Fire*, which dramatize both Nabokov's personal conflicts as an exiled, multi-cultural author; and the divided allegiances of modern culture, reflected in the novel's heteroglossic discourse. Likewise, the formalistic-didactic sampling of linguistic problems in *Finnegans Wake*, cannot do justice to the rich discursive and ideological transformations of this text. The Joycean concern with the totalizing systems and grand narratives of Western tradition is mentioned only in passing, and solely from the restrictive perspective of parody.

A positive outcome of this failed attempt to deal with Joyce within the confines of entropic parody is O'Neill's careful repositioning of his narratological and typological analysis in the "Conclusion." Reminding us that all the taxonomies advanced in this book are "provisional, rather than absolute," and that the concept of "entropic comedy ... is only one voice in the orchestra of contemporary literary criticism, one reader's way of making a particular kind of sense of a particular body of texts" (302), O'Neill allies his own criticism with the mode of discourse he has been analyzing. The emblematic figure of his narrative of entropy is not Faust, but Bouvard and Pécuchet, Flaubert's comic scriveners who, having failed to produce a higher order in the universe, return to random, "egalitarian" copying. But if, "we postmoderns ... may well lack Faust's renaissance confidence in the existence of such final answers, ... that is no reason at all to stop reformulating the questions" (304). The questions this book reformulates so cogently have to do with our modern cultural makeup identified here as "entropic humor," the comic erosion and relief from totalizing systems (MARCEL CORNIS-POPE, VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY).

\*STEPHEN SUMIDA. *And the View from the Shore: Literary Traditions of Hawaii*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991. 330 pp. US \$30.00.

Hawaiian Literature? Is there one? Yes, indeed. And there is so much of it that Stephen Sumida's pioneering literary history can only hint at the riches it contains. Until the publication of *And the View from the Shore* (AVS), Hawaiian literature was truly the orphan child of the South Pacific. Its authors have been routinely omitted from bibliographies of Pacific writing and are rarely included in discussions of Polynesian or creole literatures.

Groaning under the shadow of James Michener's *Hawaii*, its texts are seldom reviewed, studied or anthologized as part of American literature either.

The very notion of a "Hawaiian" literature presents an enigma of which Sumida is acutely aware. It is a creole literature that incorporates the colonial, the post-colonial, "fourth world," and the diasporic. Yet it defies definition as any of them. It is multi-lingual and fiercely local. Yet it claims participation in a monolingual, national tradition, the American. All of which creates no small methodological problems for the literary historian. Sumida's solution is to develop his own method, which he calls "multicultural." By relating trends in Hawaiian literature to the existence of mainland Asian-American and Afro-American literatures, he tries to make American literature seem a little less monolithic, and by grafting Asian-Hawaiian writing to that tradition, he lays the foundation for a national connection. Granting Sumida this leap of faith, the reader will find AVS to be an insightful literary history and a daring experiment in literary criticism.

The organization of AVS is roughly chronological and loosely generic ("loosely" in that Sumida never adequately distinguishes between genre and mode). His method is to provide historical and cultural context where necessary, but mainly to rely on contrastive analysis, first between mainland and island texts, then among island texts in order to demonstrate his argument that 1) a distinctive literary tradition exists in Hawaii and that 2) there have developed uniquely Hawaiian forms. The first chapter describes three Hawaiian "genres" — the simple pastoral, the complex pastoral, and the heroic. The second chapter establishes certain trends in nineteenth century American literature that contribute to their growth and development. The next three chapters, which are based on previously published articles, contain the literary studies that led him to posit these "genres" and the last chapter is a fascinating, if somewhat sketchy look at Hawaiian literary life over the last three decades.

According to Sumida, the image of Hawaii as an earthly paradise has been both the bane and the basis of Hawaiian literature. It has resulted in what he calls the "simple pastoral," a "genre" arising from the blend of two distinct literary traditions. The first of these is Polynesian and can be found in the songs and chants that idealized "Havaiki" as an idyllic refuge from the Tahitian expulsion. The second is the European pastoral as it appears in nineteenth century American novels of adventure and self-sufficiency, like Herman Melville's *Typee*. The latter made possible James Michener's *Hawaii*, a novel intensely disliked in Hawaii and which Sumida calls a simple pastoral posing as a heroic. Since Sumida considers Hawaiian literature to be part of American literature, he must view Michener's novel as one form of the Hawaiian pastoral — a tale of voyage and discovery whose primary theme is erotic and whose narrative voice is English.

The other strain of Hawaiian pastoral devolves from the cultural revival instituted by King David Kalaakau in the late nineteenth century. Centred on the "mele hula" (dance song), this expression of cultural pride and political resistance used linguistic and kinesthetic subterfuge. Criticism of the colonial power and celebration of Hawaiian culture were hidden in allegory and in puns among the overtly innocuous lyrics. The traditionally erotic or war-like movements of the hula were sanitized for the benefit of the missionaries and bankers, who chose to view Hawaiians as children of paradise. In this way, multiple codes maintained the values of Hawaiian society and kept alive (often as a huge joke) the community's secret opinion of the colonizer.

According to Sumida the "local" Hawaiian pastoral draws on this valorization of island tradition in its choice of the childhood idyll as its predominant form. The Hawaiian veneration for children and the land is evident lexically as well as thematically. *'Oha*, meaning "taro growing from the older root," also means "offspring." Taro shoots are called *keiki*, or "children." The Hawaiian word for family is *'ohana*. But the most important feature of the childhood idyll is its replacement of English with Pidgin, the common language of all children born on the islands. Sumida's exploration of this form of the pastoral draws its examples from specific autobiographies and short stories; however, his discussion ranges expertly over the whole question of language choice in new literatures, particularly the creole.

The complex pastoral is the ironic and often satiric Hawaiian response to the simple pastoral. Sumida chooses as his examples two Bildungsromans, John Dominis Holt's *Waimea Summer* and Milton Murayama's *All I Asking for is my Body* for a perceptive examination of the cultural and aesthetic codes that were unknown and therefore mis-read by the first publishers to whom the novels were submitted. As interesting as Sumida's attempt to establish the complex pastoral as a genre of Hawaiian literature may be, this companion discussion of the reception and distribution of "post-colonial" texts overshadows the generic one in its analytic clarity.

Sumida claims that the heroic is secondary to the pastoral in Hawaiian literature. And when the heroic mode is used, it usually focuses on historical figures, as his lengthy outline of the O.A. Bushnell novels and the Aldyth Morris plays demonstrates. Their subjects are those islanders who met Captain Cook, the inmates of the Molokai leper colony, the first Japanese migrant workers, and so on. Sumida feels that the unusually democratic nature of this heroic literature stems from both the American heroic tradition and from the populist tendencies of the late Hawaiian monarchy. Of special interest are such immigrant sagas as Shelley Ota's *Upon their Shoulders* and Margaret N. Harada's *The Sun Shines on the Immigrant*. Unfortunately, Sumida's treatment of these sagas is overwhelmed by his

adulatory plot summaries of Bushnell's historical novels. As a result, his analysis of heroic literature as a "genre" goes no further than regarding it as a response to the journals of Captain Cook.

Clearly Sumida has not established the existence of unique genres but rather has identified an affinity for certain modes. Strangely enough, this failure seems more a strength than a weakness in a text which is disarmingly candid in its charting of new literary waters. There are many other criticisms that one could level at *AVS*. There is an obvious bias towards Japanese-Hawaiian writing, not a word about the Kuma Kahua plays, no discussion of the literature of "angst," and only the barest hint of the major contributions by literary journals and small presses. But then Stephen Sumida is not a disinterested party, as his valuable description of the relationship between Talk Story (a group for the promotion of the literary arts, which he helped to found) and the Hawaiian Literary Arts Council (HLAC) indicates.

What we can find on most of the pages of *AVS* is a new sort of literary history, one which indicates the frustrations and rewards of describing the diverse elements of any creole literature. Sumida identifies the problems facing the literary historian and frankly discusses his efforts (and sometimes his failures) in meeting those problems. His work doesn't just point out the necessity for considering the interface between participating languages and cultures, between the colonial and the post-colonial, it actually tries to do it — and for this he should be commended. (EVELYN ELLERMAN, UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA).



# BOOKS RECEIVED

Although the Book Review Editor cannot review all unsolicited books, henceforth books received will be noted. The inclusion in this list does not necessarily mean that a book will not be reviewed.

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- Bachman, W. Bryant Jr., trans. *Forty Old Icelandic Tales*. Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 1992.
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- Barrenechea, Ana María, dir. *Filología. La voz del Oro: Homenaje a Enrique Pezzoni. Año XXIV, 1-2*. 1989. Buenos Aires: Instituto de Filología y Literaturas Hispánicas, 1989.
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- Bini, Daniela. *Carlo Michelstaedter and the Failure of Language*. Gainesville, Florida: University Press of Florida, 1992.
- Black, Joel. *The Aesthetics of Murder: A Study in Romantic Literature and Contemporary Culture*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991.
- Block de Behar, Lisa, ed. *Términos de comparación: los estudios literarios entre historias y teorías*. Montevideo: Academia Nacional de Letras, 1989.
- Bogue, Ronald, ed. *Mimesis, Semiosis and Power: Mimesis in Contemporary Theory — An Interdisciplinary Approach*. Vol. II. Philadelphia/Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1991.
- Bové, Paul A. *Mastering Discourse: The Politics of Intellectual Culture*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1992.
- Caramaschi, Enzo, ed. *Comparatistica: annuario italiano*. Firenze: Leo S. Olschki, 1991.
- Caws, Mary Ann. *City Images: Perspectives from Literature, Philosophy, and Film*. New York: Gordon and Breach, 1991.
- Chisholm, Dianne. *H.D.'s Freudian Poetics: Psychoanalysis in Transition*. Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1992.
- Dedalus: Revista Portuguesa de Literatura Comparada*. Lisboa: Universidade de Lisboa 1 (Dezembro de 1991).
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- Doleželová-Velingerová, Milena, ed. *Poetics East and West*. Toronto: University of Toronto: Monograph Series of the Toronto Semiotic Circle, number 4, 1988-1989.
- Dumoulié, Camille. *Nietzsche et Artaud: pour une éthique de la cruauté*. Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1992.
- Easthope, Antony & John O. Thompson, eds. *Contemporary Poetry Meets Modern Theory*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1991.
- Ermath, Elizabeth Deeds. *Sequel to History: Postmodernism and the Crisis of Representational Time*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- Felman, Shoshana & Dori Laub. *Testimony: Crises of Witnessing in Literature, Psychoanalysis, and History*. New York: Routledge, 1991.
- Finlay, Marika. *The Potential of Modern Discourse: Music, Peirce, and Perturbation*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990.
- Fóti, Véronique. *Heidegger and the Poets: Poésis, Sophia, Techné*. New Jersey London: Humanities Press, 1992.
- Fuchs, Stefan F.-J. *Dekaden: Versuch zur ästhetischen Negativität im industriellen Zeitalter anhand von Texten aus dem französischen und englischen Fin-de-siècle*. Heidelberg: Carl Winter Universitätsverlag, 1992.
- Gearhart, Suzanne. *The Interrupted Dialectic: Philosophy, Psychoanalysis, and Their Tragic Other*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992.
- Ginzburg, Lydia. *On Psychological Prose*. Judson Rosengrant, trans. and ed. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
- Gómez-Moriana, Antonio & Catherine Poupency Hart., eds. *Parole exclusive, parole exclue, parole transgressive: Marginalisation et marginalité dans les pratiques discursives*. Longueuil, Québec: Collection L'Univers des discours, 1990.
- Greenblatt, Stephen J. *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture*. New York London: Routledge, 1990.
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- Kruger, Loren. *The National Stage: Theatre Cultural Legitimation in England, France, and America*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992.
- Julien, Eileen. *African Novels and the Question of Orality*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992.
- Lecker, Robert, ed. *Canadian Canons: Essays in Literary Value*. Toronto Buffalo London: University of Toronto Press, 1991.
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- Mann, Paul. *The Theory-Death of the Avant-Garde*. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1991.
- Maxwell, Richard. *The Mysteries of Paris and London*. Charlottesville, Virginia: University Press of Virginia, 1992.
- Miller, D.A. *Bringing out Roland Barthes*. Berkeley Los Angeles Oxford: University of California Press, 1992.
- Minahan, John A. *Word Like a Bell: John Keats, Music, and the Romantic Poet*. Kent, Ohio: Kent State University Press, 1992.
- Minahen, Charles D. *Vortex: The Poetics of Turbulence*. University Park, PA: Penn State Press, 1992.
- Nemoianu, Virgil & Robert Royal. *Play, Literature, Religion: Essays in Cultural Intertextuality*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1992.
- Orlowsky, Ursula & Orlowsky, Rebekka. *Narziss und Narzißmus: im Spiegel von Literatur, Bildender Kunst und Psychoanalyse*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1992.
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- Pivato, Joseph, ed. *Contrasts: Comparative Essays on Italian-Canadian Writing*. Montréal: Guernica, 1991. (Reprint)
- Plett, Heinrich, F., ed. *Intertextuality: Research in Text Theory*. Berlin New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991.
- Pott, Hans-Georg. *Neue Theorie des Romans*. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 1990.
- Quinones, Ricardo J. *The Changes of Cain: Violence and the Lost Brother in Cain and Abel Literature*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1991.
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- Rojtman, Betty. *Une grave distraction*. Paris: Éditions Balland, 1991.

- Ryan, Judith. *The Vanishing Subject: Early Psychology and Literary Modernism*. Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1991.
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- Sévry, Jean. *Chaka, Empereur des Zoulous: Histoire, Mythes et Légendes*. Paris: Éditions l'Harmattan, 1991.
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